

March 17, 1959

Rev. Benjamin N. Adams  
124 Geneva Way  
San Francisco 12, California

My dear Rev. Adams:

I was very happy to get your letter of March 9, and I think this is the first really valid criticism I have ever had from a minister as concerns the Urantia Book. I have gotten hold of several the last year, but it was evident that the critics had never even superficially read the Urantia Book.

If minor discrepancies were to be found in the Urantia Book I have always suspected that they would probably be found in Part IV because that is the part of the Book that was prepared by the midwayers. The midwayers' mind level is but a trifle above that of the human mind.

My own preoccupation with the Urantia Book has been along two lines. First, I was concerned as to whether or not this was some fraudulent psychic phenomena or possibly a case of subconscious dissociation on the part of the subject such as I was familiar with in the fields of automatic writing, trance mediums, etc. I was the last of my family to accept the Urantia Papers. I finally decided that the whole thing was beyond my ability to understand.

My next concern had to do with the consistency of the Papers. I finally decided that a fraud could not go on the witness stand for twenty-five years, to be examined and cross-examined by 250, and to give more than a million words of testimony and never once contradict himself. I decided that this subject must be telling the truth in order to discuss such a wide range of topics and not once slip into a contradiction.

You ask about others who have critically examined the Urantia Book. From a standpoint of general science I think the studies of the late Sir Hubert Wilkins were perhaps the most extended and exhaustive. For more than twenty years he periodically spent time in Chicago going over the Papers. He would work weeks at a time, ten hours a day, and his final conclusion was that the Papers were consistent with the known facts of modern science.

Since the Book was published, a young physicist in Philadelphia has been a very careful student of the physics of the Urantia Papers. About a year ago he wrote a paper, with many diagrams, for the Gravitational Society, in which he advocated that the cosmology of the Urantia Book was the only one that was possible from the gravitational standpoint.

I was very interested in your criticisms as proposed in your letter to Dr. Douglass. I would offer the following comments on these criticisms:

1. I think the spelling of the name of the teacher in Alexandria is undoubtedly an error in transcribing the manuscript into typewriting. An "an" was undoubtedly transcribed as an "cu". I remember when we were sometimes in doubt as to whether a letter was an "n" or a "u" in the manuscript. Of course, we who were preparing this matter, did not know the name of this teacher so could have easily made this mistake.
2. As far as I could detect, there is only one Philip recognized in the Urantia Book. I note what you say in this matter.
3. Now as to the bestowal of the Spirit of Truth—the possible discrepancy between the end of one Paper and the beginning of another we all noted it one time and discussed it further when the Book was going to press. You should remember that the midwayers prepared a narrative that was many times larger than was finally given us as Part IV. of the Urantia Book. It may be that in deletion some difficulties were encountered. Our understanding is that the prayer meeting which Peter conducts at the close of one Paper is not the same as that at the opening of the next Paper. The one ended at the Day of Ascension, the other opened up the Day of Pentecost.
4. About Paul and Hebrews — of course, we all puzzled about that the same as you, and it occurs two or three times in the Papers. We have finally come to the conclusion that it was of composite authorship and the Apostle Paul had something to do with the presentation.
5. About Nathaniel's father I can offer no suggestions except that I know that the manuscript was very clear that it was Bartholomew.

3.

6. About the spelling of "chazen". Our mandate forbade us in any way to alter the text of the manuscript, but gave us jurisdiction over capitalization, spelling, and punctuation. We were told to select our authority and stick to it. Evidently, the authority we chose spelled "chazen" with one z.
7. Your notation about Meub is a puzzler to me. We have just looked in the atlas, and, of course, you are right. I have no explanation for this matter—either a mistake of the scribes or a mistake in copying. I cannot say, but evidently you are right in this matter.
8. The intricacies of Jesus' crucifixion and the Day of the Passover I am not competent to appraise. In fact, I was not aware that there was any difference in the Gospel of John and the Synoptics, but I am glad that you are inclined to agree with the Urantia Book.

I was indeed cheered to get such an encouraging estimate of the worth of the Book from one who had made such a careful study of it.

I am taking the liberty of sending you a copy of an outline which I gave to a dozen ministers who came to meet with me about six months ago. I told them that while I was unable to explain to them about how we had got the Book I was able to explain to them how we had not got the Book.

I do hope that we will have the pleasure of seeing you and Mrs. Adams one of these days. I am sure, if you have the occasion to come back East, you will not fail to let us have a visit with you.

With all best wishes, I am

Sincerely yours,

William S. Sedler

WSS/ar