



PERSONAL  
FREEDOM  
OUTREACH

VOL. 4, NO. 3

JULY-SEPT., 1984

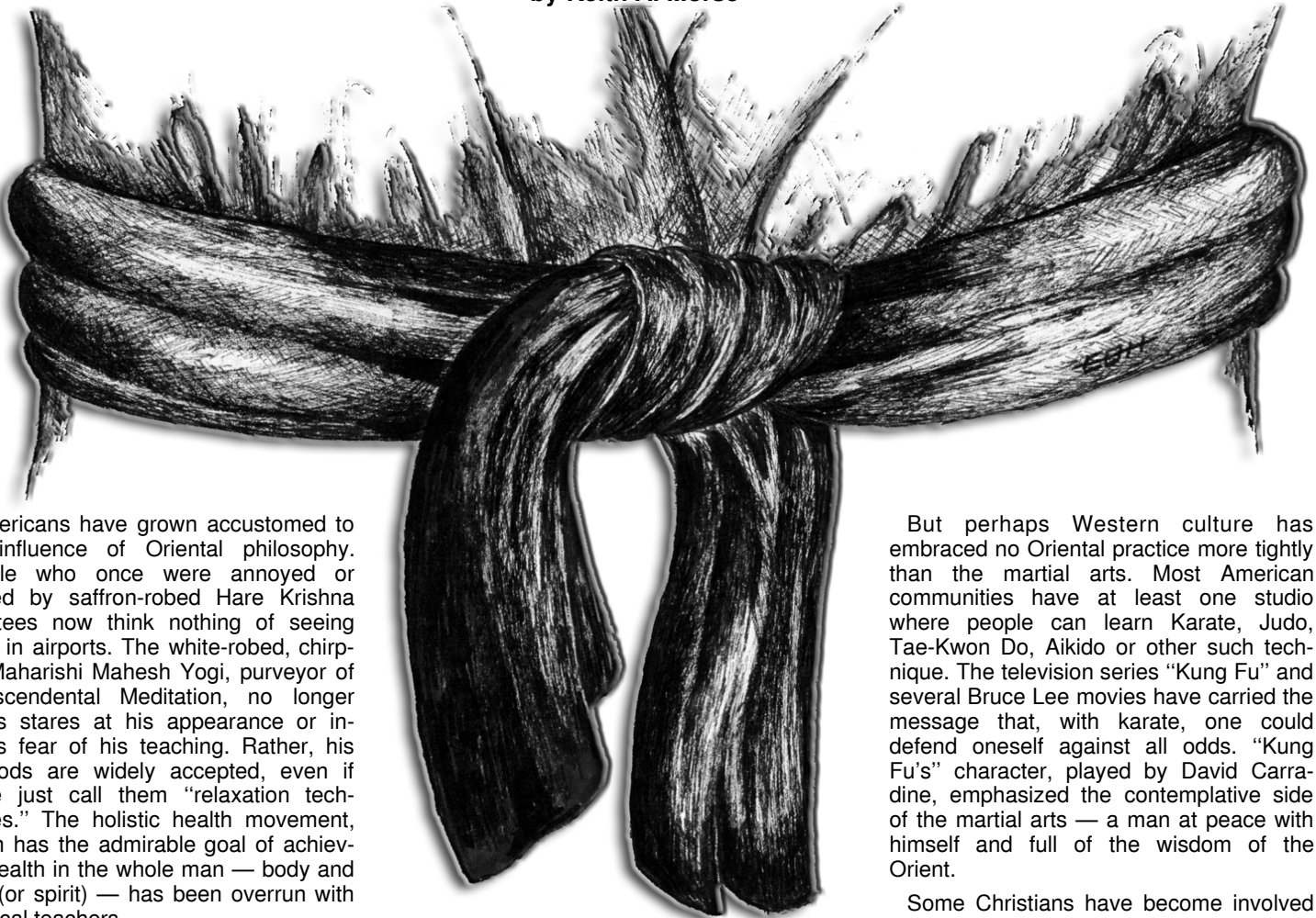
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newsletter

# THE MARTIAL ARTS

## Should Christians Get Involved?

by Keith A. Morse



Americans have grown accustomed to the influence of Oriental philosophy. People who once were annoyed or scared by saffron-robed Hare Krishna devotees now think nothing of seeing them in airports. The white-robed, chirping Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, purveyor of Transcendental Meditation, no longer draws stares at his appearance or inspires fear of his teaching. Rather, his methods are widely accepted, even if some just call them "relaxation techniques." The holistic health movement, which has the admirable goal of achieving health in the whole man — body and soul (or spirit) — has been overrun with mystical teachers.

Eastern philosophy has crept into our scientific laboratories. Carl Sagan, host of the PBS series "Cosmos," said that the Hindu religion, with its cycles of birth, destruction and rebirth, probably comes closest to describing the way our universe began and predicting how it will

end. Respected researchers in all sorts of fields — astronomy, physics, biology and chemistry, to name a few — share Sagan's view that Eastern philosophy may hold the answers to some of nature's toughest riddles.<sup>1</sup>

But perhaps Western culture has embraced no Oriental practice more tightly than the martial arts. Most American communities have at least one studio where people can learn Karate, Judo, Tae-Kwon Do, Aikido or other such technique. The television series "Kung Fu" and several Bruce Lee movies have carried the message that, with karate, one could defend oneself against all odds. "Kung Fu's" character, played by David Carradine, emphasized the contemplative side of the martial arts — a man at peace with himself and full of the wisdom of the Orient.

Some Christians have become involved in the martial arts. Some churches have established martial arts classes, perhaps because their leaders saw it as a way for members to encourage fellowship and perform outreach. At least one traveling evangelism team uses Karate to attract an audience.

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# EDITORIALS

## THE PROBLEM THAT NOW CONFRONTS US

During the last few years, we at Personal Freedom Outreach have learned of many people leaving the Watchtower Society. These ex-Jehovah's Witnesses tell of how they began to question the need for the Society to exercise so much control over their lives or question the many false prophecies that Watchtower leaders had made over the years. After much consideration, they say, they felt compelled to leave.

Some of these people even have started ministries, exposing the Watchtower Society for the false prophet and enslaver of men that it is. Drawing on their firsthand experience, these people have been able to coax many others out of the Society. It often is said that people are going out the back doors of Kingdom Halls faster than the Witnesses can get them to come in the front doors. We in the cults ministry often feel the flush of success when we learn of the latest exits. We even gloat.

But something is missing from some of these "liberation" stories, something that should wipe the smiles from our faces and fill our eyes with tears: Many who leave the Watchtower Society are not joining the body of Christ.

Oh, they are studying their Bibles. They are fellowshiping and praying. They are talking about all kinds of "Christian" topics, using all kinds of "Christian" words. They may even call Jesus Christ their Lord and Savior. But somehow, their words don't ring true.

Then they are asked, "Who is Jesus?" And they answer, "He is Michael the Archangel" or "Well, I'm not sure but he certainly is not God," and it all becomes clear.

These people have left the Watchtower Society, but, doctrinally, they are still Jehovah's Witnesses. They still view what they learned in the Society as sound biblical teaching. They still see Christ through eyes of misunderstanding.

Mouthing the words "Jesus Christ is my Lord and Savior" does not make one a Christian. Ask a Mormon who his Lord and Savior is. Christ Himself told us that paying lip service to Him cannot save us (Matthew 7:21-23). If a person can believe anything he wants about Christ and still be saved, then there really is no point in having a cults ministry. There is no faith to defend.

Christ laid out an important issue before His disciples. In Matthew 16, He asked them, "Who do men say that I am?" and "Who do you say that I am?" Today, He asks the same question. We must decide who He is and must choose what we will believe: What man says or what the Holy Spirit has revealed in the Scriptures. We can count on salvation only if we have put our trust in the real Jesus.

The Bible is clear about who Jesus is. Any Christ who is not God in the flesh is not the Christ of the Bible (John 20:28, Titus 2:13, John 1:1). Paul warned in 2 Corinthians 11:4 to beware of those who preach another Jesus and says in Galatians 1:8 that those who preach another Gospel — and another Jesus — should be accursed.

What people who have left the Watchtower Society must remember is that if the Society cannot be trusted in matters of prophecy (take the 1975 fiasco, for example), it cannot be trusted in matters of doctrine. The Watchtower cannot even get small points right. Take the Society's insistence that Jesus was killed on a torture stake and then read John's account of Christ's encounter with Thomas after the resurrection, which clearly states "the nails," proving Christ was stretched out on a cross. Jesus said in Luke 16:10, "He who is faithful in a very little thing is faithful also in much; and he who is unrighteous in a very little thing is unrighteous also in much."

Jesus also said, in Matthew 7:16: "You will know them by their fruits. Grapes are not gathered from thorn bushes, nor figs from thistles, are they?"

Neither is good doctrine gathered from a false prophet.

The object of a false prophet is to lead people away from the true God, not to provide sound biblical doctrine. Former Watchtower followers should recall that the doctrine they received was not from God's Word, but from publications by the Society, the same Society that says one cannot properly understand Scripture apart from its guidance (*The Watchtower*, October 1, 1967, pg. 587).

If the words of Watchtower founder Charles Taze Russell are heeded, it is not even necessary to own a Bible, just Watchtower publications (*The Watch Tower*, September 15, 1910, pp. 298-299). In fact, according to the Society, it might be better if the Bible were not studied at all, as it admits that some who currently read the Bible exclusively have begun to believe the "doctrines of Christendom" — a Watchtower euphemism for such beliefs as the Trinity, Christ's deity, etc. (*The Watchtower*, August 15, 1981, pp. 28-29).

Is this the kind of group anyone should turn to when looking for spiritual truth?

While it is true that we are not saved by fine-tuned knowledge of doctrine, seeking the counsel of Scripture does give us guidelines for our relationship with God. The Bible teaches that salvation is found only in Jesus Christ (Acts 4:12). Either Jesus is God or He is not. He is not Michael the Archangel to some, and just a "way-shower" to others. Those who profess Christ must answer the all-important question, "Who do you say that I am?"

Scripture refers to Christ as a "stumbling block" (1 Peter 2:8; Isaiah 8:14). It is a shame to see well-meaning people negotiate their way through the Watchtower maze and escape the Society only to fall when they are about to encounter the real Jesus. We in the cults ministry have a duty to show people the real Jesus — and reprove them if necessary — in order that they may find true spiritual satisfaction.

It is not wrong for Christians to expose those former Jehovah's Witnesses who, while claiming to be Christian, deny the true nature of our Lord Jesus. It is our duty to expose the deeds of darkness and anyone who denies that Jesus is God is doing such deeds, knowingly or not. We must earnestly defend the faith (Jude 3). The Apostles repeatedly condemned false doctrine — they shed tears over it. It is about time we did the same.

With earnest prayer and the grace of God, these misled Witnesses can be brought into the love of the true body of Christ. Bill Cetnar, a former high-ranking Jehovah's Witness and PFO East director, spoke well when he said that getting kicked out of the Watchtower Society was only the second-best day of his life; the best day was when he found out who Jesus really is. Cetnar added that it is no big deal to be an ex-Jehovah's Witness; what really counts is being an ex-Jehovah's Witness for Jesus.

—KAM/MKG



## THE DEBATE CONTINUES

Church strife continues over the exclusive use of the King James Translation of the Scriptures, but many who are involved in the controversy are unaware of the confusion and divisions within the "King James only" camp itself.

The following is a look at positions within the "King James only" movement:

1. The most bizarre by far is the view taken by Peter Ruckman of Pensacola, Fla. (See Personal Freedom Outreach Newsletter Vol.2 No.2,

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# NEWS UPDATE

## LDS APPOINTS NEW APOSTLES, OTHER OFFICIALS

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has announced the appointment of two men to fill vacancies on the Council of the Twelve Apostles, the church's highest governing body. The vacancies had stood for three months and 15 months, respectively, before being filled during the church's 154th general conference in April.

The church also appointed six men to its First Quorum of the Seventy and leaders for two women's groups.

The council appointments were surprising in at least two ways. First, the church went outside its full-time hierarchy in choosing Utah Supreme Court Justice Dallin H. Oaks and heart surgeon Russell M. Nelson. They were the first non-clerical appointees in more than 20 years.

Second, the church announced that all new appointees to the council would serve three-to five-year terms, rather than for life.

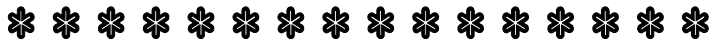
Called to serve on the LDS quorum were John K. Carmack, Spencer Osborn, Robert Harbertson, Dever Harris, Russell Taylor and Philip T. Sonntag. They also were told that their appointments would be for three to five years, rather than for life.

The church "released from service" the presidents of its Relief Society and Young Women's Organization, Barbara Smith and Elaine Cannon, and replaced them with Barbara W. Winder and Ardeth G. Knapp.

LDS official Gordon B. Hinckley also announced at the conference that the church was planning to build temples in Bogota, Colombia; Toronto, Ontario; Las Vegas, Nev.; Portland, Ore.; and San Diego, Calif.

Church President Spencer T. Kimball, who has been in frail health for some time, made an appearance at the conference.

—KAM



## KRISHNAS TOLD TO PAY UP

The International Society for Krishna Consciousness has been ordered to surrender assets it had been hiding and pay a \$9.7 million judgment for the "brainwashing" of a California girl. In a subsequent court ruling, the sect was told that any corporation it had formed was liable to pay damages in the suit.

The judge presiding over the case called the corporations "alter ego" companies that had been fraudulently formed to hide the money and prevent a complete payoff. The mother of Robin George won a \$32.5 million judgment last year after suing the Hare Krishna sect for holding the girl, then 15 years old, against her will. Later, the award was reduced to \$9.7 million.

—KAM



## RLDS OKS ORDINATION OF WOMEN PRIESTS

Delegates representing the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints voted in April to allow ordination of women as priests. They accepted a revelation to do so that was announced by their President-Prophet Wallace B. Smith as the "mind and will of God."

"All are called according to the gifts which have been given to

them," Smith's proposal said. "This applies to the priesthood as well as to any other aspects of the work. Therefore, do not wonder that some women of the church are being called to priesthood responsibilities."

In 1972, all other RLDS leadership roles had been opened to women. The larger, Salt Lake City-based Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints does not allow women in the priesthood.

—KAM



## ARMSTRONG, WIFE REACH SETTLEMENT

A tentative divorce settlement was reached in late April between Herbert W. Armstrong, leader of the Worldwide Church of God, and his estranged wife, Ramona. Terms of the settlement were not immediately announced.

According to court documents, Mrs. Armstrong had been seeking as a settlement \$150,000 a year, a luxury home in Tucson, Ariz., the home's furnishings, a 1978 Mercedes-Benz automobile, half of a reported \$5 million account in a Tucson bank, and at least \$1 million in legal fees - including those incurred to defend herself against criminal charges of theft, trafficking in stolen property and perjury.

The criminal charges stem from pretrial testimony that Mrs. Armstrong, 45, gave about the disappearance of some gold flatware.

The church has filed a lawsuit in federal court seeking the recovery of \$400,000 in property from the Tucson home.

Armstrong, 91, lives in Pasadena, Calif.

—KAM



## MORMON LETTER SURFACES

An extremely early letter pertaining to the origin of Mormonism has come to light and is being prepared for publication by Mormon scholars. Written by Martin Harris, one of the witnesses to the Book of Mormon, it bears the date of October 23, 1830, just seven months after the book went on sale in Palmyra, N.Y.

The letter will bring a major reinterpretation of Mormon history by LDS scholars, since it links the church's origin to Joseph Smith Jr.'s money-digging activities. Harris, in the letter, tells W.W. Phelps, an inquirer who later joined the church and became an apostle, that Smith found the gold plates from which he produced the Book of Mormon by looking into his "stone," the same one he used in searching for hidden treasure.

In the typical money-digging practice of the early 19th century, the treasure was located either by looking into a "seer stone," the same way one would look into a crystal ball, or by using a divining rod. The treasures were thought to be guarded by spirits who put spells upon them to keep them hidden. The searcher's task was to break the spell and find the treasure.

According to the Harris letter, Smith knew about the gold plates four years before he obtained them, but was unable to get them because of the "enchantment" upon them. The letter tells Phelps that an "old spirit" came to Smith three times during dreams one night and told him to "dig up the gold." However, the letter says, when Smith went to dig up the gold, he found "a white

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# Reincarnation

## IS IT COMPATIBLE WITH CHRISTIANITY?

by M. KURT GOEDELMA

More than ever, Americans are accepting as fact the idea of reincarnation — that a soul leaves one human body upon death and enters a newly born one. Surveys show that nearly 60% of Americans believe reincarnation is possible.

The broad acceptance of reincarnation can be attributed to several factors. Among them are purported scientific evidence; testimonies from prominent people, such as actress Shirley MacLaine and actor Glenn Ford, who tell of their “former lives”; best-selling books (such as MacLaine’s *Out On A Limb*) that describe the afterlife and rebirth cycle; and such “Christian” reincarnationists as Jeanne Dixon and the late Edgar Cayce. Tabloids such as the *National Enquirer* also have helped spread the belief in reincarnation with constant attention to the topic.

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, books such as Richard Bach’s *Jonathan Livingston Seagull* and Ruth Montgomery’s *A World Beyond* sold briskly and planted the seeds of Hindu and occult philosophy, from which the doctrine of reincarnation springs, in the minds of readers. By the late 1970s, the ideas of Bach and Montgomery largely had been replaced by those of Elisabeth Kubler-Ross, writer of such books as *On Death and Dying* and *Questions and Answers on Death and Dying*, and Raymond Moody, writer of *Life After Life* and *Reflections on Life After Life*.

These two writers propose that physical death is the beginning of another, spiritual life and that all people find rest and peace in that new life. Both Kubler-Ross and Moody reject the Christian notion of a judgment by God. Both also believe in reincarnation.

While some Christians have offered a critique of reincarnation, much of the church has remained ignorant about its implications. Faced with the widespread silence from the church and apparent evidence, many Christians may have come to the conclusion that reincarnation is real — or at least they are not ready to rule out the possibility that it is real.

### WHAT IS REINCARNATION?

Reincarnation, the teaching that a soul moves from body to body in a birth-death-rebirth cycle, is a development of the Hindu-Buddhist teaching of soul transmigration. Transmigration includes the possibility that a soul can be born into the

body of an animal. The status of the body a soul is born into, ranging from a house fly to a well-to-do person, is an indication of the quality of life that soul lived in its previous body. A good life brings rebirth into a higher form; a bad life brings rebirth into a lower form. This upward and downward graduation fulfills the Law of karma, a central tenet of Hinduism. Karma teaches that good deeds are rewarded and bad deeds are punished. Hinduism’s goal is for the soul to break out of the Karma cycle and become one with the universe.

The Western mind, apparently not liking the idea of being reborn as a mosquito or a slug, has excluded animals from the cycle.

Reincarnationists also believe that souls have pre-existed eternally. Montgomery, in *A World Beyond*, a book she claims was written by automatic writing and transmitted from medium Arthur Ford, who was waiting in the spirit world to enter another body, writes on page 7:

“Now let us start with the premise that each person is a continuing entity through all eternity. No beginning and no ending, despite what some moralists say about our life beginning with physical birth as a baby and ending with Judgment Day. Bosh! There has never been a time when we were not, and we always will be, even though in constantly changing forms and stages, for we are as much God as God is a part of us.”

### WHAT IS ITS APPEAL?

The most obvious appeal that reincarnation holds for Westerners is its promise that life goes on and we get as many chances to get it right as we need. If there is reincarnation, man has no compelling need to make peace with a righteous God in this life or even to treat his fellow man with love and respect. If a man has as many lives as he needs to attain perfection, he might think, “Why not live it up this life and leave good works and making peace with God for another life?”

The need to make peace with God actually would never occur to true reincarnationists, who do not believe in a personal deity. Reincarnation goes hand in hand with pantheism, the belief that everything is God and God is in everything, including each human. The doctrines of pantheism and reincarnation are the cor-

nerstones of Hinduism and occultism, which have grown popular in the Western world.

On pages 84-85 of his book *Miracles*, C.S. Lewis says this about the appeal of pantheism and reincarnation to mankind:

“Pantheism is congenial to our minds not because it is the final stage in a slow process of enlightenment, but because it is almost as old as we are. It may even be the most primitive of all religions. ... Pantheism is in fact the permanent natural bent of the human mind; the permanent ordinary level below which man sometimes sinks ... but above which his own unaided efforts can never raise him for very long.”

### WHAT IS THE EVIDENCE?

However, modern man is not about to admit that his thinking has sunk to this spiritual lowest common denominator, so he looks for evidence to justify his beliefs. His efforts have produced plenty of “evidence” supporting the doctrine of reincarnation.

The most common defense for reincarnation is the phenomenon of “past-life recall” — the ability to remember details of apparent previous lives. It can be achieved through hypnosis and spontaneous or intuitive recall, which sometimes is called *deja’ vu*.

Some past-life accounts given by hypnosis subjects can be attributed to the subject’s fantasizing or leading by the hypnotist. However, there are two other explanations. One could be called the “Bridey Murphy Effect,” which was detailed in the book *The Search for Bridey Murphy*. The book told the story of a woman who, when under hypnosis, could give details of Ireland and even speak Gaelic, a language apparently unfamiliar to her. Her ability was attributed to her living a previous life in Ireland. However, research turned up the fact that she once had been cared for by a Gaelic-speaking grandmother who used to tell her tales of old Ireland. The “past-life memories” turned out to be forgotten childhood experiences brought out by hypnosis.

Some recalls hold up under all scrutiny and appear genuine. To understand these, we must realize that a person who is under hypnosis is surrendering control of his or her mind to someone else. The hypnotist

may take the reins. He or someone else may plant suggestions in the mind. In his book *Reincarnation and Christianity*, Dr. Robert Morey says that "a hypnotic trance is the exact mental state which *mediums* and *witches* have been self-inducing for centuries in order to open themselves up to spirit or demonic control" (pg. 24).

This being the case, it is not hard to imagine a demonic being taking over the will of the hypnotic subject and speaking through him. The demon, with access to knowledge from all of history, could piece together memories and have the hypnotic subject speak them, thus encouraging the idea that the subject is recalling past lives. Perhaps — and maybe more likely, given the nature of demons — he spins plausible tales that are impossible to either disprove or verify. What fun they must have, duping gullible humans with tales from a dozen different people, all claiming they once were Cleopatra!

*Deja' vu*, the feeling a person gets upon encountering a strange place or a person he has never met that he has seen that place or person before, often is used to buttress the reincarnation teaching. Most every person can recall such an experience. Dr. Walter Martin, in a tape of an address called *The Riddle of Reincarnation*, cites an experience he had while viewing a mountain in Switzerland. He knew that he had seen this particular vista before, even though he had never been to Switzerland.

Upon returning home, Martin discovered the reason for his recall: a postcard with a picture of the very mountain he had seen. A person actively uses only 10% of his brain, which continually is storing information that is never recalled unless prompted by an experience such as Martin's.

### DOES THE BIBLE TEACH REINCARNATION?

Reincarnationists sometimes cite Scripture to support their belief. The four references they use most often are John 3:3, Matthew 11:14, Hebrews 7:2-3, and John 9:2.

In John 3:3, Jesus tells Nicodemus that to see the Kingdom of God one must be born again. Jesus, the reincarnationists say, is teaching that a series of rebirths is necessary to achieve perfection. This interpretation does not hold up, however. Nicodemus expressed his puzzlement and spoke of a second physical birth (not exactly like the one spoken of in reincarnation, but similar). Jesus promptly corrected Nicodemus, calling the rebirth He was speaking of a spiritual one (John 3:4-5). Thus, Jesus did not expound the Law of Karma, but refuted it.

Reincarnationists also call attention to Jesus' statement in Matthew 11:14 that John the Baptist was Elijah. However, one must look further in Scripture. Luke 1:17

says that John would precede Christ "with the spirit and power of Elijah."

John the Baptist, a man who was filled with the Holy Spirit from the time he was in his mother's womb, himself denied that he was Elijah (John 1:21). Scripture also states that Elijah never experienced physical death (Hebrews 11:5) and during the earthly ministry of Christ still existed as Elijah, as evidenced by his appearance with Moses at the Mount of the Transfiguration (Matthew 17:3).

Another pet Biblical passage among reincarnationists is Hebrews 7:2-3. This verse, they say, tells us that Jesus was Melchizedek in a previous incarnation. However, one need only read the verses cited to see that the Old Testament character Melchizedek was "made like unto the Son of God," not that he was Jesus (the Son of God). The writer of Hebrews is saying only that there is no record of Melchizedek's birth, death or family. Moreover, Melchizedek's priesthood was unique in that it was not transferred to another. Melchizedek was only being likened to Christ, not being called a previous incarnation of Him.

The fourth Scripture often cited by reincarnationists is John 9:1-3, which tells of a man born blind and the disciples' question as to whose sin was the cause of his blindness. The question may, on the surface, appear to be in accord with the Law of Karma. However, Christ's reply that the man's blindness was in no way related to sin renders the reincarnationists' stand indefensible.

Having looked at what the Bible *does not* say in support of reincarnation, let us turn to what the Bible *does* say against reincarnation.

### MAN'S ONE CHANCE

In just one verse, the Bible devastates the concept of reincarnation. Hebrews 9:27 says that "it is appointed for men to die once, and after this comes judgment."

Those seeking more Scripture can turn to James 4:14, which says: "Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away." The Psalms are full of references to the temporary nature of man's life. Psalms 39:5, 103:15 and 44:4 are only three examples.

These verses also refute the theory that souls have pre-existed eternally, as does the account in Genesis 2 of man's beginnings.

### THE PROBLEM OF EVIL

While the Law of Karma appears to deal with evil with its system of rewards and punishment, on a larger scale, it leaves the problem unsolved. Mark Albrecht, in his book *Reincarnation: A Christian Appraisal*, writes on page 119:

"Reincarnation's endless cycles never solve the problem of evil; evil is eternal. The idea of evil continuing forever is unthinkable in Christianity. Evil was conquered by the death and resurrection of Christ and will be put away forever when he returns to judge the world."

### REINCARNATION AND SPIRITISM

Reincarnationists also often violate the biblical injunction against spiritism.

The Bible is clear in forbidding attempts to contact spirits of the dead, which many reincarnationists try to do when a soul purportedly is "between" incarnations. Leviticus 20:6, 27, Deuteronomy 18:11, Isaiah 8:19, 1 Samuel 28, and 1 Chronicles 10:13 make clear that God does not want His people engaged in such activities. No New Testament writer ever said this ban had been lifted. Noted reincarnationists such as Ford, Cayce, Dixon, Montgomery and Kubler-Ross openly admit their spiritualistic and mediumistic practices.

Worse yet, some of these authors, most notably Cayce and Dixon, claim that their beliefs are compatible with Christianity. In Matthew 7, Christ warns His followers that false prophets will come as wolves in sheep's clothing. These self-proclaimed "Christians" are fulfilling Christ's warning.

Reincarnation is in no way compatible with the Christian faith. The Bible teaches that the wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23), reincarnation is the same lie that Satan told Eve in the Garden of Eden: "You surely shall not die." The Bible teaches that salvation from sin and its eternal consequences is a gift that God freely gives (Ephesians 2:8-9); reincarnation teaches that salvation will come when a person perfects himself.

Christ, who created us, knows we have only one life and He has seen what we do with our only chance. That is why He offered Himself as a sacrifice for our sins. Our Savior took our "bad Karma" upon Himself. "My yoke is easy, and My load is light," He said in Matthew 11:30. Even if we could come back again and again, there is no reason to.



For more information, see:  
*Reincarnation: A Christian Appraisal*, Mark Albrecht, InterVarsity Press \$4.95.  
*Reincarnation or Resurrection*, John Snyder, Moody Press, \$4.95.  
*Reincarnation, and Christianity*, Dr. Robert A. Morey, Bethany Fellowship, \$2.50.\*\*  
*Reincarnation, Edgar Cayce & The Bible*, Phillip J. Swihart, InterVarsity Press, \$1.25.  
*The Riddle of Reincarnation*, Dr. Walter R. Martin, Vision House Publishers, \$98.\*\*

\*\*These books are available from PFO-Midwest. Please add 65¢ for postage and handling when ordering. Please check with your local Christian bookstore for the other selections listed.

## THE MARTIAL ARTS

(from page 1)

The rising crime rate has caused many people to consider taking up the martial arts for self-defense. Men and women are learning techniques they hope will save their lives, dignity and wallets when they are confronted by a mugger or rapist and give them self-assurance when they see a group of shadowy figures approaching them on an unlit street.

However, there are some aspects of the martial arts that should give pause to Christians who either are involved in them or are considering involvement.

### The Martial Arts are Violent

The very terms "martial arts" and "self-defense" should tip off the Christian that something is wrong. Nowhere in the Bible are Christians told to resort to violence in defense of themselves<sup>2</sup>. Jesus, in His Sermon on the Mount, said about self-defense: "You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.' But I say to you, do not resist him who is evil; but whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if anyone wants to sue you, and take your shirt, let him have your coat also. And whoever shall force you to go one mile, go with him two. ... love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you" (Matthew 5:38-44).

### The Martial Arts are Man-Centered

When Christians take up the martial arts for self-defense, they are saying to God, "I don't trust you to protect me." Christians are to depend on God for protection. Even death itself should not scare the Christian. In Matthew 10:28, Jesus said, "Do not fear those who kill the body, but are unable to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." The Apostle Paul says in Philippians 1:21, "For me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain." It is best to leave the matter to God, for as Jesus said in Matthew 6:29, "Which of you by being anxious can add a single cubit to his life's span?"

Many, though not all, martial arts

students are taught to revere their teachers to the point of worshipping them. There is nothing unbiblical about respect for authority, but within the martial arts, this veneration can reach levels that violate the First Commandment (Exodus 20:3).

### The Martial Arts are Rooted in Eastern Religion

Some martial artists may never have to defend themselves. Reputation or prudence may get them out of every potentially violent situation and the only blows they ever strike are in the practice studio. It is true that most martial artists do not go around looking for a fight. Joe Hyams, in his book *Zen in the Martial Arts*, describes an experience in which he used his expertise to avoid a battle he probably could have won.

But even the Christian who never uses martial arts to purposely injure another and trusts the Lord to protect him is getting involved in a religion that contradicts the teaching of the Bible.

Masutatsu Oyama, in his book *This is Karate*, says:

"In many countries around the world, the question, 'What is Zen?' often turns up. Usually we answer that Zen is karate and that karate is Zen" (pg. 320).

By "Zen," Oyama is referring to Zen Buddhism. In describing Zen Buddhism, Oyama says:

"Concentrate on sincerity and on unifying your spirit. Forget yourself, forget your enemies, forget winning and losing, and when you have done so, you will be in the spiritually unified state that is called *mu*, or nothingness, in Zen. When you have spiritually reached the state of impassivity you will have entered a corner of the Zen world of *mu*" (ibid.)

This impassive, "spiritually unified" mental state is identical to that achieved in yoga or other meditation-relaxation techniques, hypnosis (see related book review on page 8) or trance mediumship. The Bible forbids such emptying of the mind (Deuteronomy 18:11), calling it one of the

"works of the flesh" (Galatians 5:20).

The mental state brought about by such meditation gradually conditions one to adopt a different world view from what a Christian should have. The emptying of the mind brings about a feeling of union with the universe. The word "yoga" means "yoking" or "union." After this experience, the subject can come to believe that he is at one with God or is God, because God is in everything. Arrival at this pantheistic conclusion is the goal of Eastern religions, which teach that man can solve all his problems if only he will realize that he is divine.

It is not surprising that people in this mental state open themselves up to possible demonic influence. The lie they come to believe is almost identical to one Satan told Eve in the Garden of Eden: "You will be like God." Even Christians, who have protection from outright Satanic possession, are wise not to court the spiritual oppression this kind of mental state can invite. Yoga is not for Christians. The only "yoke" we should ever take up is Christ's (Matthew 10:29-30).

Most martial arts teachers include meditation as part of their instruction. The mental conditioning that meditation brings is largely responsible for the amazing physical feats that advanced martial artists do. Focusing the attention on the single task, such as breaking many boards with a bare hand, is brought about by achieving the impassive Zen mental state.

Christians have no business being involved in the martial arts, even at the most elementary level. The one benefit that can be derived from the martial arts — exercise — is available in so many other spiritually harmless activities that there is no reason to open oneself up to the spiritual hazards or commission of sin that these techniques lead to.

### Endnotes:

1. For a study of the influence of Eastern religions on science, start with *The Marriage of Science and Religion*, by the Spiritual Counterfeits Project.
2. The author is not applying this statement to the subject of wars, which in his estimation sometimes are justified.

## NEWS UPDATE

(from page 3)

salamander" at the bottom of the hole he was digging. The salamander transfigured itself into a spirit and told Smith that he could not let him have the treasure because he had failed to bring along his older brother, Alvin. Smith says that even though he offered to bring what remained of his brother, who was dead, the spirit refused to surrender the treasure and left, saying he had tricked Smith once again.

The letter also says that Joseph's "Urim and Thummim," by which he purportedly translated the golden plates, actually were a pair of spectacles with stones for lenses. Harris also mentions

Smith's visit to certain scholars to whom he showed copies of the characters purportedly copied from the gold plates. Unlike Harris' later statements, this early letter reportedly claims that the scholars were unable to translate the characters, but did call them "short-hand Egyptian."

Along with the publication of the letter, there is expected to appear a photo reproduction of a November 1825 money-digging contract signed by Smith, his father, Josiah Stowell and others. Young Smith at the time was Stowell's treasure-hunter and the document dictates in what proportion any treasure would be divided should there be a discovery. The document's contents were published in 1880, but only recently has the original been located.

—WPW

## EDITORIALS

(from page 2)

April-June 1982.) Ruckman claims that the King James translators actually were inspired by the Holy Spirit to bring forth an infallible translation. That they did not claim this for themselves is obvious from the original preface. Ruckman goes so far as to claim that the King James English corrects the Greek and Hebrew manuscripts. Ruckman also claims that all other versions are of Satan. Many even within the "King James only" movement see Ruckman as cultic and wildly extreme and readily disown his position.

2. Edward Hills teaches that Erasmus, a 16th-century humanist and Roman Catholic priest, corrected the Byzantine manuscripts and brought forth a Greek New Testament that was next to perfect. This version in subsequent revisions became known as the "Textus Receptus." That Erasmus used readings from the Latin Vulgate version in his Greek New Testament does not deter the followers of this view.

3. Zane Hodges and Wilbur Pickering hold to the superiority of the Byzantine line of manuscripts. These manuscripts date from the 5th to the 15th centuries. Although much earlier manuscripts disagree in places with the later Byzantine manuscripts, some take the "faith" position that if the originals ever turned up, they would agree with the Byzantine line. No two of these manuscripts agree on every point.

4. Dean Burgon has written extensively to try to show that the

final court of appeal for the superiority of the King James is found in four areas:

- a. The writings of the church fathers and their citations from the New Testament.
  - b. Ancient versions other than the Greek.
  - c. The lectionaries of the pre-medieval church.
  - d. The tradition of his Anglican church.
5. Donald Waite's position varies among positions 2, 3 and 4 above.

Perhaps the division that the "King James only" people cause is a more public display of the confusion and division that exists among them. Instead of fighting over versions, Christians should proclaim the salvation that is in Jesus Christ and live out the message of the Bible we possess.

### Bibliography

John William Burgon, *The Revision Revised*, Conservative Classics, Paradise, Pa., n.d.  
Edward F. Hills, *The King James Version Defended*; Eye Opener Publishers, Junction City, Ore., 1956.  
Gustavus Paine, *The Men Behind the King James Version*; Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Mich., 1977.  
Peter Ruckman, *The Christian's Handbook of Manuscript Evidence*; Pensacola, Fla., 1970.  
For the finest treatment available on this subject, see *Demystifying the Controversy over the Textus Receptus and the King James Version of the Bible* by Douglass Chinn and Robert Newman; Biblical Seminary, Hatfield, Pa.

—GRF

## BOOKS IN REVIEW

(from page 8)

guesswork. His statement that the small Moslem structure, "the dome of the spirits," is called that because the Spirit of God was there is presumptuous. Kaufmann conjectures that the Holy of Holies may have been there. Standard sources such as Hoade's *Guide to the Holy Land* record the popular Arab belief that the spirits of departed Moslem saints assemble there for worship at night. Lindsey, tying the name of the dome to the presence of God, is creating an interpretation that is not supported by facts (see Hoade, pg. 226). Fourteen years ago, in *The Late Great Planet Earth*, Lindsey said on page 57, "There will soon begin the construction of this temple." How soon is soon? Today in Israel, mainline orthodox Jews have no interest in rebuilding a Temple. They believe the Messiah will do it in His own time.

2. The second major flaw involves a picture spread across pages 136 and 137 that shows Lindsey in the "Upper Room." This traditional "Upper Room" is in a building that goes back no earlier than the Crusader period. Lindsey himself gives a 14th-century date for the building (pg. 138). This reviewer is quite familiar with the room, having toured Israel 16 times. The first floor of this building is used by the Jews, who have installed a centaph in memory of King David (see *The Archaeology of the New Testament*, by Jack Finegan). Lindsey confuses things a bit on pages 135 and 138, referring to the "Upper Room" as the Dormitium. The Dormitium is a nearby Benedictine church that is dedicated to Mary's "falling asleep in death." The two buildings are different. But that is a minor problem compared with Lindsey's highly speculative interpretation of effects seen in the picture on pages 136 and 137. The picture shows a shining light around and above Lindsey and a mass of light in the window.

The caption reads, "Another Miracle at the Upper Room? This photograph was taken of Hal Lindsey while speaking in the upper room concerning the initial coming of the Holy Spirit upon the disciples at Pentecost (Acts 2:1-40). Don Mollenbuerg snapped the photo with an electronic flash at the moment Hal was explaining the Holy Spirit's appearance in the form of 'tongues of fire.' Several amazing details appear in the picture.

First, the obvious tongue of fire arching up and over Hal's head. Second, the bright light in the form of an angel by the totally boarded-up window. Third, behind the tongue of fire is a figure like a hand holding a cross. Many experts examined the thirty five millimeter camera, the negative, and the print, but were unable to explain the phenomena."

Are the "experts," the photographers, given credit on page 200? It would be interesting to know who these experts are. One photographer gave this reviewer a natural explanation for the effects seen in the picture.

Another problem is that the window in the picture is described on page 137 as "the totally boarded-up window." In this reviewer's many visits to this "upper room" — the last being in February 1984 — the south windows pictured never have been boarded up. As a matter of fact, part of the same window in the same upper room can be seen in the book on page 135 with the sunlight shining brightly through it!

In subsequent editions, the flaws perhaps can be corrected, along with the caption on page 55, which says, "At an excavation near the western wall, archaeologists have uncovered beautiful, marble columned streets dating back to the time of Jesus Christ." The picture is actually of the Byzantine Cardo (4th-5th century A.D.) in the Jewish quarter of the Old City.

We are much safer staying with the Biblical "picture" of angels and staying away from speculation and sensationalistic guesswork. Imminent temples and "pictures of angels" may appeal to the naive and may sell books, but cannot be classed with serious prophetic study. *Prophetic Walk* has diminished the respect this reviewer had for Lindsey's work and diminished Lindsey's credibility as a writer. The book could be of great value if corrected. If not, I believe it will become just another oddity and will not rank with any first-rate books on prophecy or archaeology.

—GRF

EDITOR'S NOTE: Both Fisher and Personal Freedom Outreach have sent letters to Hal Lindsey, asking him about the photograph on pages 136-137. At press time, no reply had been received. If one is received, it will be noted in a future issue.



# BOOKS IN REVIEW

## HYPNOSIS AND THE CHRISTIAN

by Martin and Diedre Bobgan

Bethany House Publishers, 61 pages, \$2.50

Christians are divided over the propriety and safety of hypnosis. Noted cult researcher Walter Martin and Christian apologist Josh McDowell believe it is beneficial under controlled conditions.

However, educational psychologist Martin Bobgan and his wife, Diedre, sum up their findings on hypnosis in one sentence on page 53: "Hypnotism is demonic at its worst and potentially dangerous at its best."

The Bobgans note the growing popularity of hypnosis, but point out that it has been used for centuries by yogis, witch doctors and Sufi practitioners.

This well-documented book points out that hypnosis rests on subtle forms of deception by the hypnoterapist and questions the ethics of hypnosis. The authors stack up many valid arguments against its use. The question of the violation of the will in hypnosis also is addressed. The grave question posed by the Bobgans is, "At what point does the door of darkness open and the devil gain a foothold?" The book shows that the plenary state of hypnosis (describing the future) differs little from clairvoyance. The authors point out other dangers of hypnosis — for instance, that hypnotic states induce or model mystical states, and that because there is an altered state of consciousness, there also is a distortion of reality in the subject's mind. The authors warn that passive mental states may open one to demonic incursion.

This helpful book could be improved if it showed in detail the history of hypnotism. The Egyptians and Greeks ministered to the sick by trance and suggestion. Through the Middle Ages and into the late 1800s hypnosis and trances were considered occultic. There also could be more scriptural elaboration by the authors. The rejection of hypnosis can be based on a wider range of Scriptures than just those cited in Chapter 7. For instance, the book could be strengthened by detailing that:

1. Scripture indicates that we are always to be in control,

obeying God and making responsible decisions with a clear, sober mind (Philippians 4:8; 1 Peter 1:13-17).

2. Scripture, discipline and, sometimes, suffering are the major components of real change and sanctification in the Christian life (1 Timothy 4:7; 2 Timothy 3:16-17). There is no shortcut to sanctification.

—GRF

For further study, "Hypnosis," by Joseph Propri, *The Journal of Pastoral Practice*, Vol. 5, No. 4, 1982, Presbyterian & Reformed Pub., Philipsburg, N.J., pages 25-35.



## PROPHETICAL WALK THROUGH THE HOLY LAND

by Hal Lindsey

Harvest House Publishers, 200 pages, \$24.95

The latest effort by the man who wrote *The Late Great Planet Earth*, *Satan is Alive and Well on Planet Earth* and other popular works on Christianity is of some value in terms of the fine pictures and maps of Israel and for the historical and archaeological information it contains. However, two serious flaws mar the book.

1. The first flaw, in this reviewer's opinion, is Hal Lindsey's conclusion that the rebuilding of a Jewish temple on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem is imminent.

On page 75, Lindsey says of the Temple Mount: "It is mind-boggling to realize that this piece of bedrock, which was the site of the Ark of the Covenant and God's Presence, will very soon be the place where the Antichrist will take his seat and proclaim himself God. We are literally in the very last days of the church age."

Lindsey claims to base his conclusions on the conjectures of Ashur Kaufmann, a physics professor at the Hebrew University in Israel. Kaufmann, whose ideas are explained in the March-April 1983 edition of the *Biblical Archaeological Review*, does not take a definite stand regarding the location of the Herodian Temple. He makes some intriguing assumptions but says nothing about its rebuilding. Research at the Temple Mount is difficult because a mosque stands there and digging around it is forbidden by the Moslems. Lindsey misses the intent of Kaufmann's research, which was only to suggest a theory about the spot upon which the temple built by Herod stood.

The best thing this reviewer can call Lindsey's conclusion is

(continued on page 7)



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## NEWSLETTER

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