



# PERSONAL FREEDOM OUTREACH

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## newsletter

# THE DEFECTIVE PROPHET

## A Christian Look at Kahlil Gibran

"I have not sent these prophets, yet they ran: I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied." (Jeremiah 23:21)

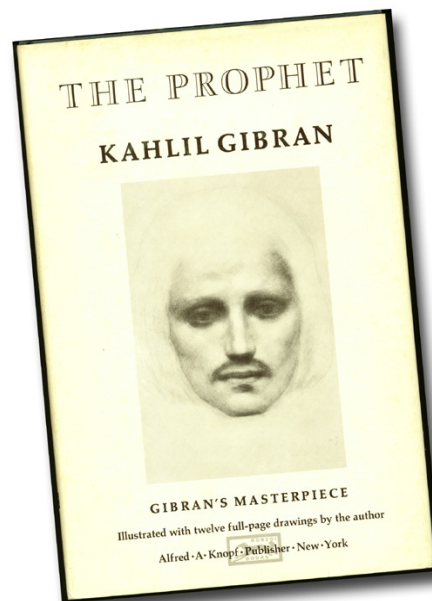
Kahlil Gibran is certainly more well known today than when he lived. He was born in Bsherry, Lebanon, in 1883, and died in New York on April 10, 1931. Thirteen of his books were printed between 1918 and 1950, the best known one being **The Prophet**. His books are available in almost any major bookstore.

While his writings are not easy to understand, they do communicate a world view and a religious point of view. Gibran was a poet, a painter and a mystic, which he described as "someone who has drawn aside one more veil." His mystical tendencies are seen in obscure statements such as: "There are whole days at a time when I feel that I have just arrived from another planet. I am a man without yesterdays on this present earth."

For the best view of Gibran, one should first look to his followers, not his detractors. They will present him most faithfully and helpfully. There is no doubting that his admirers hold him in awe and veneration. Consider these statements from Barbara Young's biography of Gibran:

"The atoms of his dust shall live and die a thousand times in Lebanon. And ten thousand times ten thousand pilgrims shall kneel upon that sod and call him blessed." (**This Man From**

by Rev. G. Richard Fisher



Lebanon, pg. 42)

"He was one of the rare gestures of the Mighty Unnameable Power, and in his voice and his being were vested an authority not to be confounded with mere human excellence, for he was never wholly and entirely in this world." (ibid, Foreword, pg. 7)

On hearing Gibran for the first time, Young says, "I knew that I had heard startling and essential truth spoken with power and a beauty that I had never heard or read anywhere up to that moment." (ibid, Foreword, pg. 9)

Young seems to believe that Gibran's authority and power continue in his writings when she states, "The power and authority of the utterances contained between the covers of these books overshadowed every other feeling for the time being, and this was well." (ibid, Foreword, pg. 11)

Not only does Young's belief about Gibran's books rival Christian beliefs about the Bible, but her beliefs about the man himself rival Christian beliefs about the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

She says: "His greatest and most enduring masterpiece was traced neither with pen on paper nor brush on canvas, but with his deathless spirit upon the spirit of the race... If he had never written a poem or painted a picture, his signature upon the pages of the eternal record would still be ineradicable. The power of his individual consciousness has penetrated the consciousness of the age, and the indwelling of his spirit is timeless and deathless." (ibid, Foreword, pg. 13)

Are these just the overemotional reactions of a misguided, zealous follower? As we'll see, this kind of veneration comes from what Gibran taught.

Why do we call Gibran a "defective prophet"? We do so because Gibran's whole message is defective in biblical terms. He was given to dreams and vague "prophecies." He

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# EDITORIALS

## WHERE IS COPELAND HEADING?

In a February '87 "Prophecy" (**Voice of Victory** magazine), noted prosperity teacher Kenneth Copeland delivers some very strange, confused and garbled statements. His writing was at best confusing and disjointed and at worst bordering on a heretical view of Christ. Copeland writes:

"A very outstanding time is on the way. A time is coming when there will be manifestation of angels more than usual, more than what there has been in the past. Many of you are going to witness for yourselves the angel that has been put in charge and in command of your ministry and your life. Many of you are going to have visitations from the Spirit realm. Many of you will have divinely appointed visions and dreams. Well, don't get all puffed up about it and say, 'Boy, I really must be something. Look what God's doing for me.' No, you're just part of the times.

It's time for these things to happen, saith the Lord. It's time for spiritual activity to increase. Oh, yes, demonic activity will increase along at the same time, but don't let that disturb you.

Don't be disturbed when people accuse you of thinking you're God. Don't be disturbed when people accuse you of a fanatical way of life. Don't be disturbed when people put you down and speak harshly and roughly of you. They spoke that way of Me, should they not speak that way of you?

The more you get to be like Me, the more they're going to think that way of you. They crucified Me for claiming that I was God. But I didn't claim I was God; I just claimed I walked with Him and that He was in Me. Hallelujah. That's what you're doing.

No, you don't think you're God, you just know you're the family of God. And you've begun to act like God."

What has happened to the Holy Spirit's charge over the Christian's life? What has happened to the authoritative directives of the Word of God to guide us? What has happened to all of Christ's claims to deity? Can they be dismissed by this "prophecy"? Anyone with the least knowledge of the doctrine of Christ knows full well that Jesus took the titles of God, did the works of God, accepted worship and claimed to be the "I Am."

Where is Copeland heading?

—GRF



## JIM BAKKER'S EVASION OF SCRIPTURE

It's hard to believe that Jim Bakker does not know the Scriptures and it's hard not to believe he is evading or ignoring portions of God's word in his attempt to regain control of the PTL ministry.

Bakker, the defrocked TV evangelist who refused to appear before the heads of his denomination, the

Assemblies of God, must have once passed an ordination council. That means he must have known clearly the requirements of that ordaining body, specifically those found in Matthew 18. The Assemblies of God found sufficient evidence to oust Bakker on charges of homosexual activity, adultery, misconduct and deceit. This bars Bakker from any possible reinstatement (see **Time** magazine, May 18, 1987).

Bakker, by insisting that he reassume his control of the PTL ministry, can only be feigning ignorance of three things any Gospel minister should know well. They are:

**Genuine repentance must be demonstrated.** It is easy for anyone to say, "I've confessed — I'm forgiven you must accept me without question." However, that smacks more of manipulation than it does of repentance. Consider John the Baptist's statement in Matthew 3:8: "Bring forth fruit that is consistent with repentance — let your lives prove your change of heart" (**Amplified New Testament**). Confession is not repentance. Bakker's refusal to attend his own hearing and face his accusers indicates there is no change of heart or life. His attitude speaks more of evasion.

Bakker's admitted attempt to cover sin with hush money tells of a twisted moral sense and does not demonstrate repentance. His cries of innocence sound hollow since he certainly could have addressed the charges and proven his innocence before his accusers.

W.E. Vine, in his **Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words**, details the meaning of biblical repentance: (**metanoeo**), "to change one's mind or purpose, always in the New Testament involving a change for the better, an amendment."

**When needed, restitution should follow repentance.** The Bakkers by their own admission took salaries in excess of a million dollars a year and paid staff members in six figures. Added to this were other "perks," expense accounts and a sinful misuse of money. Bills remained unpaid and debts into the millions accrued. But this is not new to Bakker.

In May 1979, **Christianity Today** magazine reported that Bakker was in deep financial trouble, using unethical business practices to mislead creditors. CT reported on Bakker's shady business practices and questionable tactics such as stalling payments by postdating checks or sending out checks without signatures. Eight years ago, Bakker was blaming his mismanagement on staff that he formally claimed "was the finest management team imaginable."

Bakker said recently on ABC-TV's **Nightline** show that he would clear up his "mistakes" by assembling 25 of the finest people in the country on a new board. Shades of 1979! So it appears that Bakkers' stunts and patterns are of long standing. Bakker will not admit to misleading anyone or bilking anyone. He will not admit that he lived in obscene luxury. (Jerry Nims, the new PTL executive committee chairman says that Bakker was "totally out of control businesswise." See **USA Today**, May 22, 1987.)

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# NEWS UPDATE

## PFO — WATCHMAN FELLOWSHIP MINISTRIES TO MERGE

The ministries of Personal Freedom Outreach and Watchman Fellowship will join forces through a merger. The new entity will incorporate both ministry's names, calling itself Watchman Fellowship: A Personal Freedom Outreach. The merger is expected to be consummated by the end of the year.

Some benefits of the merger will include: increased missions visibility, less duplication of research and other work, simplification of joint ministry literature and materials, and a monthly publication exposure.

The current PFO newsletter will remain a quarterly journal and maintain its current publication schedule of January, April, July and October. The Watchman Expositor, Watchman Fellowship's newsletter, will publish the other eight months of the year.

A list of offices, directors, officers and other relevant information will be published in a forth-coming issue of the WF/PFO Journal.

—MKG



## MICHAEL JACKSON LEAVES THE WATCHTOWER

Pop singer Michael Jackson, the most celebrated Jehovah's Witness of recent years, has "disassociated" himself from the Watchtower Society. Jackson, formerly a member of a Los Angeles congregation, said he "no longer wants to be known as a Jehovah's Witness."

The Watchtower Society, in a form letter to Jackson, said it "no longer considers Michael Jackson to be one of Jehovah's Witnesses." Neither officials from the Watchtower Society nor a spokesman for Jackson would comment on the matter.

Disassociation or disfellowshipping from the Watchtower Society usually means the former member is to be "shunned" by family members and friends who belong to the society. A federal appeals court recently ruled that the shunning practice is a protected action under the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

Jackson's flamboyance and eccentricity has been an embarrassment to the Watchtower Society over the years. Tension finally surfaced among Watchtower leaders in 1983 when Jackson released a music video to his song **Thriller**, which depicted occult activity. However, Jackson followed with an apology to fellow Witnesses in the May 22, 1984 issue of **Awake!**

While a Jehovah's Witness, Jackson did engage in door-to-door witnessing on at least two occasions, once each in Dallas and Birmingham, Ala.

—MKG

## DID THE NEW AGE DAWN?

New Age adherents gathered Aug. 16-17 at sites around the world to pool their mental energies and wait the dawning of a new age of peace and human harmony. The dates were selected because the Mayan calendar pointed to them as days when, for the first time in 23,412 years, the planets would be so aligned as to produce a "cleansing energy focus" for humans to seize and direct toward peace. Failure to seize this focus, New Agers believed, would result in a period of earthly catastrophe. New Agers gathered at California's Mount Shasta; Chaco Canyon, N.M.; Machu Pichu, Peru; the Great Pyramids of Egypt; the Dagon Cliffs of Mali, Africa; and other places to await the "harmonic convergence," as they called it. Believers hummed, meditated, danced, tried to swim with dolphins and just waited for the moment to arrive. Shirley MacLaine, actress and trance channeler, awaited the convergence in Moscow.

As Aug. 17 passed into Aug. 18, there appeared to be no change in man's attitude or his condition on Earth. Wars continued, children still went hungry, millions were still without jobs and, most importantly, people were still in need of the saving power of Jesus Christ. New Agers, however, claimed success, saying that things would get better.

—KAM



## CITY OF JOSEPH PAGEANT MISSION WORK REPORT

The counter-cult ministries of PFO, Watchman Fellowship and CARIS (Midwest) combined efforts in an outreach program during the Mormon's recent "City of Joseph" pageant in Nauvoo, Ill.

Gospel Truth Ministries, of Grand Rapids, Mich., provided copies of Floyd McElveen's publication, **God's Word, Final, Infallible and Forever** for free distribution to those attending the pageant and city residents.

In addition to the counter-cult missionaries, area Christians aided in the distribution of literature. Eleven local Christian churches were listed in McElveen's book for those desiring spiritual help or additional information. Local television and radio also featured the outreach work during news broadcasts and public service programs.

The Mormon church utilizes the annual pageant as a public relations tool to bolster the LDS image as the "true" Christian faith and to introduce Mormonism to non-members. Similar pageants take place in Palmyra, NY and Manti, Utah. Counter-cult mission work also occurs in these areas during the events.

—MKG

# Evaluating

# THE URANTIA<sup>®</sup> BOOK

by Stephen F. Cannon

The recent media attention given to “trance channeling” (see Shirley MacLaine’s two best-selling books, **Out On A Limb** and **Dancing in the Light**) has also led to a resurgence of interest in trance revelations. Among these “New Age” revelations is a weighty volume called **The Urantia Book**.

This four-pound, 2097-page tome (with 7-inch by 10-inch pages), purports to be a history, cosmology and theology of the central and superuniverse, the local universe and the history of our own planet, which is properly named “Urantia.” The last — and most important for Christians — section of the book is a purported revelation of the true life and teachings of Jesus.

According to the Urantia Brotherhood, which is “a voluntary and fraternal association of believers in the teachings of **The Urantia Book**,” (letter from Urantia Brotherhood dated Sept., 1977), “The account of the life and teachings of Jesus in **The Urantia Book** is much more complete than that of the New Testament, but not contradictory.” (**Basic Concepts of the Urantia Book**, pg. 2)

An analysis of that section, however, shows not only contradiction of the New Testament, but a systematic denial of all the basic tenets of Orthodox Christianity. That Urantia doctrine and Christian doctrine are contradictory can best be demonstrated by analyzing the book’s origin and its claims about Christ and His teachings.

The Urantia Foundation filed as a tax-exempt common law educational foundation in 1950 in Cook County, Illinois. This group holds the copyright to **The Urantia Book** and is committed to “perpetually preserve inviolate the text of the Urantia Book and to disseminate the principles, teachings and doctrines of [that book].” (letter dated May, 1978) The book was first published in 1955. Its beginnings,

however, go back to the early 20th century.

Dr. William Samuel Sadler (1875-1969), psychiatrist, surgeon, theologian and author, appears to be the primary force behind the compilation and publication of what was then known as the Urantia Papers.

Sadler was baptized into the Seventh-Day Adventist Church in 1888. He rose to a position of prominence in that church and held various appointments in church hospitals and sanitariums. There is ample evidence that Sadler enjoyed a personal relationship with SDA prophetess Ellen G. White, and was called on to write articles for and speak to SDA groups.

As a result of the strong teachings of Adventism against Spiritualism, Sadler spent a great deal of time debunking spiritistic phenomena. He chronicled his findings in two books: **The Truth about Spiritualism** (1923) and the more comprehensive **The Mind at Mischief: Tricks of the Subconscious Mind** (1929).

In these two volumes, Sadler recounts his work with numerous psychics, mediums, trance talkers, and automatic writers. He concludes that with “...one or two exceptions ... all cases of psychic phenomena which have come under my observation have turned out to be those of auto-psychism” (i.e. tricks of the subconscious mind or outright fraud). (**The Mind at Mischief**, pg. 382) It is to one of these exceptions that our attention is drawn.

In the appendix of **The Mind at Mischief** Sadler recounts a story of one investigation into the psychic realm that he could not debunk. From the summer of 1911 until the time of his writing in 1929 he had a subject under observation who would go into a deep sleep out of which he could not be awakened. Sadler wrote: “This man is utterly unconscious, wholly oblivious to what takes place, and unless told about it subsequently, never knows

that he has been used as a sort of clearing house for the coming and going of alleged extra-planetary personalities” (**The Mind at Mischief**, pg. 383). Of the communications themselves “I can only say that I have found in these years of observation that all the information imparted through this source has proved to be consistent within itself. ... Its philosophy is consistent. It is essentially Christian and is, on the whole, entirely harmonious with the known scientific facts and truths of this age.” (**The Mind at Mischief**, pg. 384) Sadler wanted to say more on the subject, but the person under investigation would not give his permission to do so.

## Enter Harold Sherman

Harold Sherman, author, screenwriter, and psychic investigator, came into contact with Sadler and the original Urantia Forum in 1942. In his book **How to Know What to Believe**, Sherman gives an account of his years as a Forum member and recounts some details of the origin of the papers as told to him by Sadler. Sherman recalls that “It was an evening appointment, and we found the doctor to be in an unusually amiable, talkative mood, disposed to give us a more complete version of the origin of the papers than we had ever heard of before or since. As soon as the long session was over, Martha (Sherman’s wife) and I crossed the Street to our apartment in the Rutledge Hotel and worked into the early hours to make a detailed written record of the information that the doctor had imparted.” (**How to Know**, pg. 62) The details of Sherman’s account essentially fit within the framework established by Sadler’s account above and has the ring of authenticity.

After recounting the details of how Sadler and his wife came into contact with the “subject,” and after observing on several occasions the subject’s apparent desire to talk while in a trance, Sadler began asking him questions. It was then that they learned that the subject was being used by extra-terrestrial entities. (**How to Know**, pg. 64) Apparently, this question-and-answer format accelerated with the appearance of newer and higher entities. As these events were happening with the sleeping subject, the Sadlers began having a few friends over for Sunday afternoon tea to discuss topics of religion and other mutual interests.

The year was 1923 and the Forum was born.

The subject of Sadler's encounter with extra-terrestrial entities became the focus of the group meetings. Eventually, Forum members were called upon to submit questions for the intelligences to answer. In November 1923 the members put together a list of 4,000 questions. These questions were submitted to the "higher intelligences." After several weeks Sadler called to the home of the subject and there he found a manuscript of 472 handwritten pages. According to the wife of the subject, the entire manuscript had been written in one night. Sadler wrote: "I took a look at the manuscript and saw to my great astonishment that it was the answer to all of the questions that had been formulated by ourselves in our forum group!" (**How To Know**, pp. 65-67)

Of course these questions led to further questions and more papers came through. The first stage of the revelation came to a close late in 1934. It was several years later when the last group of papers were revealed. Sherman recalls Sadler's words: "It was finally decided by those controlling transmission of The New Revelation Book (**The Urantia Book**) to permit seventy-five papers giving a detailed and comprehensive account of Jesus' life on earth, from His birth to His death, to be added." (**How to Know**, pg. 68)

Sadler supposedly summed up by saying, "The book is eventually to be published without any human personalities to be identified with it in any way and no authorship to be ascribed to it. These higher beings have refused to use their own names and have only specified their type of being in the universe."

"There are only a few of us still living who were in touch with this phenomenon in the beginning, and when we die, the knowledge of it will die with us. Then the book will exist as a great mystery, and no human will know the manner in which it came about," Sadler said. (**How to Know**, pg. 68-69)

This position of trying to divorce the book from all human origin has been taken by the Urantia Foundation to this day. Any inquiry as to the origination of the Urantia Book brings a copyrighted form letter titled, **The Urantia Book: The Question of Origin**. While

the above accounts of the transmission of the book are alluded to, the main thrust of the form letter is: "Don't be concerned with the mechanics of how the revelation came to us, only judge the revelation on the basis of experiencing its internal truths."

"First of all, let us acknowledge that no human being knows many of the detailed and specifics regarding the origin of the Urantia Papers." (**The Urantia Book: The Question of Origin**, pg. 1)

"Only a first-hand experience of the superlative message of the book can confirm the spiritual source of its origin. In reality, information about its origin has nothing to do with the truth or spiritual quality of the book." (**The Urantia Book: The Question of Origin**, pg. 2)

Subtle psychological pressure is brought to bear to try to make the investigator guilty for even raising the question of origin. "Upon reflection, you will recognize the persistent questions about the unrevealed details concerning the origin of the book as a psychological parallel to the recurring demand put to Jesus: 'Show us a sign.'" (**The Urantia Book: The Question of Origin**, pg. 3)

Repeated attempts on my part to have the Foundation either confirm or deny Sherman's account of the Urantia Book's genesis have met with silence. In a letter to me from the Foundation I was essentially told the same thing that the Question of Origin paper advised, "...we hold the issue of the authenticity or validity of the teachings of the book to be a matter determined on the basis of personal faith and belief. Only the individual, by reading the book and contemplating its teachings can determine for him/herself whether the teachings are valuable. The wise person does not question, but they determine truth for themselves and do not ask an authority to validate truth for them." (letter from the Urantia Foundation to the author dated Dec. 11, 1980)

Despite the foundation's position, the question of origin is important. With so many purported divine revelations available, it is necessary to examine the origin of each.

The Bible is clear in stating that any "revelation" is to be examined in light of what has been already given in the Bible and the Person of Jesus Christ. (Acts 17:11) We are cautioned to test

supposed spirit communication. (1 John 4:1) If these communications do not square with the already established Good News, we are to have nothing to do with them, even if they come from angels. (Galatians 1:8)

By their desire to keep the origin of **The Urantia Book** a "mystery," the Foundation tries to make it more difficult to properly evaluate this revelation and surround the book with an aura of mystical spirituality. Once the facts are known about how the original papers came to be, however, we can see that their origin is really no different than any number of other communications from "extra-terrestrial" sources, (i.e., channelling information, while in a trance, from alleged extra-terrestrial beings who have possessed a subject). From Shirley MacLaine to L. Ron Hubbard, bookshelves are loaded with knowledge and wisdom from our supposed brothers from the stars, most of which is contradictory, confusing and often downright silly.

In all such communications this author has examined, **The Urantia Book** included, religion is brought up and Christianity is dismantled.

### **The Urantia Book on Jesus**

**The Urantia Book's** section on the life of Jesus and his religion is claimed to be much more complete than the New Testament but not contradictory to it. A brief examination of the book proves that claim to be false.

To say that **The Urantia Book** takes a dim view of the Bible is an understatement. On page 1767, **The Urantia Book** quotes Jesus as saying to Nathaniel: "Nathaniel, you have rightly judged; I do not regard the Scriptures as do the rabbis. ... These writings are the work of men, some of them holy men, others not so holy. ... The Scriptures are faulty and altogether human in origin, but mistake not, they do constitute the best collection of religious wisdom and spiritual truth to be found in all the world at this time."

There goes the authenticity of the Old Testament.

The New Testament is dismissed on page 2091 as "a discussion of Paul's religious experience and a portrayal of his personal religious convictions."

With the Jude-Christian Scriptures out of the way, the stage is set for denial of orthodox Christianity.

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Saying at one point that it was deliberate, at another that it was unintentional, **The Urantia Book** maintains that early Christianity was transformed from the religion of Jesus to a religion about Jesus. (**The Urantia Book**, pg. 2075) First, Jesus taught the “true” gospel of the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. This message was corrupted by the Apostles Paul and Peter (**The Urantia Book**, pg. 2091) and then further changed by other apostles. (**The Urantia Book**, pg. 1825) The Christian churches are the chief obstacles to the true teachings of Jesus (**The Urantia Book**, pg. 2085) and Christianity is an obstacle to the spiritual advancement of human civilization. (**The Urantia Book**, pg. 2084) The two greatest mistakes of Christianity are: 1) The organization of Christian teachings so completely around the person of Jesus and 2) “...to connect the gospel teaching directly onto Jewish theology, as illustrated by the Christian doctrine of the atonement.” (**The Urantia Book**, pg. 1670)

The blood atonement of Jesus Christ appears to be the doctrine most rigorously attacked by **The Urantia Book**. Paul and Greek philosopher Philo were the chief misinterpreters of the significance of the atonement, **The Urantia Book** says, and it was these two who blended in the pagan ideas of atonement with the religion of Jesus. (**The Urantia Book**, pg. 1339) **The Urantia Book** maintains that the very idea of blood atonement is barbarous, puerile, primitive, and pagan. “It is an affront to God to believe, hold, or teach that innocent blood must be shed in order to win his favor or to divert the fictitious divine wrath.” (**The Urantia Book**, pg. 60)

Despite clear biblical passages to the contrary, (Romans 5:8-9; Ephesians 1:7; Hebrews 9:22) **The Urantia Book** tells us that Jesus did not die to atone for man’s sin (for there is no real sin, pp. 984, 1739, 2093). **The Urantia Book** also says that man does not obtain salvation through Christ’s sacrifice. (**The Urantia Book**, pg. 2016) “All this concept of atonement and sacrificial salvation is rooted and grounded in selfishness ... Salvation should be taken for granted by those who believe in the fatherhood of God.” (**The Urantia Book**, pg. 2017)

The rejection of this key doctrine of blood atonement leads the authors of **The Urantia Book** to denials of other key doctrines. If there is no real sin (as noted above), then there is no need for any atonement. No atonement is needed because there was no fall of man. (**The Urantia Book**, pg. 846) Man is ever evolving to higher and higher planes. Also, since Christianity teaches blood atonement, then Christianity must be denied. (**The Urantia Book**, pg. 1011) If no real blood atonement (physical) was needed, then no physical resurrection was needed. (**The Urantia Book**, pp. 2020, 2021) And, if there was no need for the purity of the Messiah’s bloodline, then there was no need for the virgin birth of Jesus (**The Urantia Book**, pg. 1327)

How one can read the above and draw the conclusion that this does not contradict the New Testament defies both reason and logic. Moreover, how one can say that despite the systematic denials of **The Urantia Book** that this volume is “essentially Christian” stretches the imagination to the breaking point.

It is apparent that one can either accept the teachings of **The Urantia Book** or one can accept the Bible.

One can’t accept both. Their teachings are opposed.

On the one hand is the Bible, which has been substantiated as to its historicity, authenticity, and authority by internal bibliographical, archaeological and philological tests. On the other hand is **The Urantia Book**, which was given to us by trance channeling through an unknown subject supposedly possessed by extra-terrestrial spirits named Manovandek Melchizedek and Vorondadek Son.

One can choose the real Jesus Christ, the only manifestation of God in human flesh who was miraculously born of a virgin, who suffered the shedding of his blood to cleanse us all from real original sin, and who rose bodily, physically from the grave to give a sign to everyone that He was who He said He was — God Incarnate. Or you can choose the Jesus of **The Urantia Book**: Michael of Nebadon: a son of the Eternal Son of the Paradise Trinity, “grandson” of God the Father, one of over 700,000 creator Sons. This Jesus was born naturally into the world to show us that “We must earn every inch of progress by study and training under the guidance of angels and other competent teachers, and chiefly by service which we give to those following us.” (**Basic Concepts**, pg. 2)

It can either be justification by the grace of God through faith in the finished work of Jesus the Christ, or a constant striving to earn inches of progress by trying to pull oneself up by one’s spiritual bootstraps. It can either be the eternal rest in the grace as explained in the Bible or it can be the constant struggle of works righteousness enumerated in **The Urantia Book**.

It cannot be both; the time for choosing is now. ✱

was so bold as to state that flying and airplanes were evil. We can easily trace four defective areas in the pronouncements and writings of Gibran.

### HIS DEFECTIVE THEOLOGY

Gibran deserted his Maronite Christian roots. Maronites live in upper Galilee and Lebanon and are connected with the Roman Catholic

Church. In 1903, the Maronites excommunicated Gibran for his unorthodox views. His writings are an attempt to wed Hinduism and Christian terminology. Like the Rosicrucians, he is monistic, seeing God in all and God as all. (See PFO Newsletter, July/Sept. 1985, “Getting to the Crux of Rosicrucianism.”) He sees God as an essence, in everything, and not the personal God described in the Bible. This Eastern mystical view of God is heresy.

Barbara Young emphasizes this eastern view and boldly declares, “The oneness of man and nature, in rock, in cloud, in tree, in stream and waterfall — all these are constantly emphasized in his work with pencil and brush.” (ibid, pp. 24-25)

### HIS DEFECTIVE CHRISTOLOGY

Gibran wrote, “Socrates, Jesus, Jeanne d’Arc and Lincoln — the four most beautiful beings the world has ever known.” No thinking Christian

would lower the Savior and put Him on the level of any sinful human being. Jesus is unique, Jesus is the God-Man, Jesus is incomparable, according to John 1. Gibran gathered a circle of 12 poets around him in New York. This group had to remain at 12. One wonders what he was trying to say with his 12 "apostles." (ibid, pg. 34)

Gibran wrote his own book on Jesus titled, **Jesus, the Son of Man**. He claimed to have insights into the Aramaic language and so changed many of the sayings of Christ. In fact, he constructed his own Christ. (ibid, pg. 36) He claims that the English Bible departs from the original intention of the words of Jesus and he has now restored that original intention. William Norman Guthrie had such deep faith in Gibran that he called "Jesus, the Son of Man" the Gospel According to Gibran. Guthrie initiated vesper services in St. Mark's Church in New York where the people would chant Gibran's writings to organ music. (ibid, pg. 33)

Gibran held an almost fatalistic view

of life, an outlook he called "The continuity of life." This was his euphemism for reincarnation. "The continuity of life" included reincarnations every 1000 years. Even Gibran's Jesus needed a long continuity of lives to become as good as He was.

### HIS DEFECTIVE ANTHROPOLOGY

Kahlil Gibran saw man as capable of self-perfection. This could be attained through close attention to Gibran's writings or ultimately through reincarnation. He taught the salvation of all races and languages apart from Christianity and Christ. (ibid, pg. 41) He disavowed church organizations of any sort and said: "The church is within you. You yourself are your priest." (ibid, pg. 38) This nonsense can be demolished by a reading of Romans 1-3. If crude do-it-yourself religion is all we need, then Jesus died in vain. (Gal. 2:21)

In Gibran's view, men do not have hell to fear since fear of future flames is only ignorance.

### HIS DEFECTIVE DEMONOLOGY

In Barbara Young's description of a voice (not Gibran's) speaking through Gibran's mouth, one is reminded of mediums, seances and demon possession more than of inspiration. Gibran then tells Young, "I was Judas. Poor Judas." That was the "inspiration" for the book of Jesus. Gibran claims the bulk of the book was given as the Apostle James spoke through him. (ibid. pp. 99-103) The lights, the voices, the physical exhaustion described by Young could be identified by any ex-spiritist as the symptoms of someone who had just acted as a trance medium.

It appears that Gibran was involved in occult and spiritistic practices strongly condemned by Scripture. This strong demonic deception may be the reason why so many are mesmerized by the cultic teaching of Gibran. He is a defective "prophet." He teaches a defective theology, a defective Christology, a defective anthropology and was controlled by a defective demonology. ✱

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## EDITORIALS

(from page 2)

The incredible outlandish luxury is a matter of public record. Bakker lived more like a shah than a "servant." (See **New York Daily News**, May 18, 1987, story headlined "PTLuxuries.") In fact, Bakker's misuse of funds has triggered a criminal investigation.

Proverbs 22:1 tells us that "a good name is rather to be chosen than great riches and loving favour rather than silver and gold." Any reliable minister would move Heaven and Earth to clear his name when charged with mismanagement of money or greed. Bakker's response is not an admission that it may look like he ripped off his constituency, but rather to carp to a **Time** magazine reporter that he only has \$50,000.00 left. (**Time** magazine, June 8, 1987)

When Zaccheus became conscience-stricken in the presence of Christ, his genuine repentance led him to say — "Behold Lord, the half of my good I give to the poor; and if I have taken anything from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold." Bakker would do well to follow Zaccheus' example.

**There is a vast difference between forgiveness as a Christian and restoration to public ministry and leadership.** The two are distinct and based on different biblical criteria.

Paul demanded in I Timothy 3:2 that a minister be "blameless." Bakker, who has been charged with a number of sexual sins, has ignored his denominational leaders. He is hardly blameless. He has become a law to

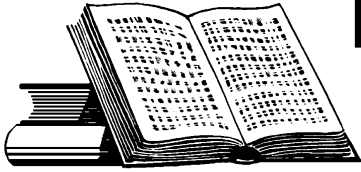
himself. His public cries of innocence sound hollow since he is avoiding the scriptural forum to present and prove his proclaimed innocence.

It is true that we can confess and be forgiven instantly in God's eyes. We can be restored in the sight of God instantaneously upon confession of our sins. No one would argue that. However, public trust and proven credibility are another question. Instant forgiveness does not mean that we instantly resume public office. Ministers are not to have a reputation of being "greedy of filthy lucre" (I Tim. 3:7). That is to say that there should be nothing that the world could legitimately point to as far as scandal. Unless and until Bakker clears his name before his denomination and the public, he is disqualified from the Gospel ministry. We must understand that restoration before God is a different matter altogether from the matter of being qualified for a public office such as the ordained ministry.

To the priestly leaders of the Old Testament, Isaiah thundered: "Be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the Lord." God's leaders had to be a cut above the rest. They had to be without blame and without scandal.

Bakker has no proven credibility and no willingness to respond to God's authority through his denominational leaders (Hebrews 13). He displays no effort to clear his name and then says, in effect, "believe me because I say so." For Bakker to start another "ministry" would not only be a monument to human gullibility but would have him running unseparated, unordained, unrecognized and unfit.

—GRF



# BOOKS IN REVIEW

## INNER HEALING: DELIVERANCE OR DECEPTION

by Don Matzat

Harvest House Publishers, 206 pages, \$6.95

This book is hard to put down! **Inner Healing** is one of the most interesting books to come along in some time. It is unique in that it is written by a charismatic to charismatics. It is a "peek" behind the scenes at a major controversy within the charismatic movement.

Matzat digs down into the roots of the "inner healing" or "visualization" movement and finds strands of secular psychology and occultism merging. The book is well-documented, balanced, and well-written. It is not a tirade but a book written out of genuine concern.

The "father" of visualization was psychologist Carl Jung, whose sanity could be seriously questioned. Biographers have shown Jung at one time to be dabbling into the occult, feeling tormented and suicidal.

Matzat's view is that charismatics have recognized the serious lack of holiness, spiritual growth and practical sanctification among its people. In an attempt to remedy the problem, some charismatic leaders have unwittingly accepted a method that is clearly not scriptural. Matzat points out that it is not a lack of sincerity that is the problem but rather the lack of biblical authority that is his main objection to the inner healing movement. The movement as well is based on concepts that are hotly debated even among secular educators.

In spite of the acceptance of these techniques by Episcopal priest Richard Bennett and his wife Rita, former Roman Catholic priest Francis MacNutt, Jamie Bucking-

ham, John and Paula Sanford, Agnes Sanford and others, the author states and shows that Dave Hunt had a right to blast the movement in his book **The Seduction of Christianity**.

This book should be read by every concerned Christian. It addresses a growing concern within charismatic circles that is spreading into other areas of the Christian community.

—GRF



## MIRACLES OR MAGIC?

by Andre Kole and Al Janssen

Harvest House Publishers, 190 pages, \$5.95

This book previously was published under the title **From Illusion to Reality**. Kole is best known for his work with Campus Crusade for Christ.

Kole addresses such issues as ESP, the Bermuda Triangle, UFOs, faith (or psychic) healing, prophets and prophecies and other "miracles." The section on the prophecies of Mormon church founder Joseph Smith seems out of place with the other contemporary issues examined. Much of the book deals with Kole's life story.

The book disappoints those interested in fully exposing magic's fakers. Kole's commitment to his fellow magicians evidently does not allow him to disclose how many of the legerdemain is achieved. One also is left with the impression that most all is trickery and little is left to demonic activity. While a magician or illusionist may be able to duplicate a "psychic miracle," it is not necessarily true that the psychic performed it in the same way without demonic assistance. While it is dangerous to see a demon behind every bush, it is equally dangerous to dismiss all as trickery or illusion.

**Miracles or Magic?** will suffice for the Christian just starting to investigate the occult, but will disappoint the more informed occult-watcher.

—MKG



PERSONAL  
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## NEWSLETTER

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