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EDITOR: KEITH A. MORSE

Good Morning, Holy Spirit?

Benny Hinn and Revelation Knowledge

by Stephen F. Cannon

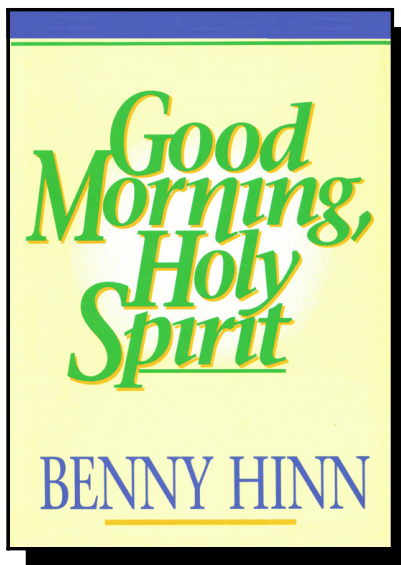
Extra-biblical "Revelation Knowledge" has catapulted yet another popular television preacher into controversy.

Benny Hinn, pastor of the Orlando, Fla., Christian Center and author of *Good Morning, Holy Spirit*,¹ a best-seller in Christian bookstores, has joined the ranks of so-called Gospel preachers propagating unorthodox teachings about the nature of God and believers.

Benny Hinn and the Supernatural

Born in Israel to Greek immigrant parents 39 years ago,² Benedictus Hinn's biography is replete with the same supernatural events described by most of the luminaries of the mystical Christian movement.³ While all of them have scriptural precedence, Hinn's claims are typical of those in the mystical Christian movement who want special attention: William Branham, Paul Cain, Bob Jones and Kenneth Hagin, for example. The experiences include:

- visitations by Jesus at an early age, in Hinn's case age 11;⁴
- dreams and visions with visitations



by angels;⁵

- protracted times of private worship and prayer;⁶
- one-on-one dialogues with the Holy Spirit;⁷
- out-of-body experiences with accompanying angelic warfare.⁸

Another ploy that teachers such as Hinn use is saying that they possess

much "revelation knowledge." Hinn says this lets him reveal things about God never known before.

"Well, let me tell ya — we're not here to tell ya things you've heard for the last fifty years."⁹

"...Please, please, please don't think OCC is here to repeat something you've heard for the last fifty years... If we quit giving you new revelations we're dead."¹⁰

"Here's the first shocker... I'm giving you a new revelation you hadn't heard before..."¹¹

Historically, we have seen this appeal to special spiritual insight used to produce doctrine contrary to the Word of God. This is true not only in the traditional cults but also in the mystical Christian movement.¹² It is also true of Hinn.

"Get ready for revelation knowledge."¹³

Hinn's revelations strike at the very core of Christianity. We shall see his defective view of the Triune Godhead, a defective Christology, and a defective view of man. Moreover, we will

(continues on page 10)

EDITORIALS

WHAT'S WRONG WITH DENOMINATIONS?

Christian denominations, or church bodies, are frequently publicly condemned and privately criticized. Christians, followers of cults and new religions and the general public picture denominations as self-serving monuments of disunity, divisiveness and spiritual weakness. Sometimes these charges are true.

However, denominations in their true and intended form are the opposite of this and testify to the unity and ministry practiced by many Christians. This becomes more clear when we understand why denominations are begun.

Individual Christians and congregations eventually meet a problem or see a need that is too large for them to meet alone. They ask questions such as "How can we send missionaries overseas, or find and train people who can translate the Bible into languages which have not yet been put into writing?" "How can we train workers and plant churches in new areas?" "How can we develop special ministries to meet the needs of the blind, gangs, cults, military, and so forth?" "How can we help countries which have been beaten by calamities?" "How can we help hurting churches, mainline orthodoxy or help assure that full-time workers are ministering correctly?"

Individual congregations usually find it difficult to muster the manpower, money and expertise needed to carry out these ministries well. This is especially true since most American churches have fewer than 150 members and are often in sparsely populated regions with low population (this was especially true prior to World War II when many of today's denominations were formed). Churches have met these challenges in part by pooling resources as denominations.

Therefore, the primary intent of denominations is unity, or coming together for a common purpose. This is reflected in denominational names, which frequently include words such as "united" and "association." The primary purpose is ministry, focusing on areas in which they are most effective when working together. As a result, churches exchange wisdom and encouragement, and Christians widen their concerns toward various kinds of ministry needs.

Church bodies tend to maintain tradition, which has come under increasing attack in recent years, and often rightly so. However, tradition in its good sense is simply God's track record of working in and through believers in

many countries in all centuries. We can and should learn from God's dealings with Christians in the past. "New" is not better in God's book, for we stand for "the faith once for all delivered to the saints" (Jude 3).

Denominations and attitudes. Denominations can assist unity and Christ's ministry, but become unhealthy when they develop attitudes of contentiousness, ungodly authoritarianism or self-absorption, or inhibit contact with other believers.

It is not necessary that all believers become part of one huge church body or that no church bodies exist at all. Many church bodies can become effective ministry agencies. A variety of church bodies can reflect a healthy diversity of styles of worship, ethnic groups, unique foci of ministries and other practices. This can help the task of evangelism by enabling new believers to join a fellowship which does not require them to conform to a church culture that is radically different from their own.

Cults and denominations. Cults and new religions typically condemn Christian denominations. Yet, they either become like denominations themselves, or come to desire some of the benefits denominations provide, such as contacts and unity with other fellowships, leader training, advice and so forth. They often feel they do not fit in with any group of evangelical Christians, and they shouldn't, for they lack the orthodox faith, the core elements of which have been common to believers across the centuries.

Denominations are simply a tool of unity and ministry. Not every believer must be part of one, and Christians can and do pool their resources for ministry without forming denominations (for example, this ministry and its newsletter). Denominations are as good or bad as the people in them cause them to be. We need not apologize that denominations and tradition exist nor condemn all forms of church bodies. Rather, let us refine them to reflect the unity and ministry of God's people to the greatest degree possible.

An important thing every Christian must remember is that God intends those in his church to gather regularly with other believers to worship Him. Hebrews 10:25 says: "Not forsaking our own assembling together, as in the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more, as you see the day drawing near." Whether that gathering is part of a Christian denomination or not is secondary to the fact that all Christians need fellowship.

—JPJ

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NEWS UPDATE

WITNESS ENDORSEMENT REVERSED

The back page of the August 1, 1990, **Watchtower** magazine featured a promotion for the Jehovah's Witnesses' 32-page brochure "Should You Believe in the Trinity?" The primary enticement of the advertisement was an endorsement of the booklet by a religion writer for a newspaper in Jamaica.

Ian Boyne, religious journalist and freelance writer for **The Sunday Gleaner**, published an article calling attention to the Watchtower's publication. He claimed in part that "The publication of 'Should You Believe in the Trinity?' is a masterstroke of the Witnesses and now no Trinitarian — or binatarian — is safe. The booklet piles quotation upon quotation from historical and theological sources to show that the Trinity doctrine was not derived from the Bible."

Following the release of the August 1, **Watchtower**, PFO contacted Boyne by phone. Boyne admitted, during the conversation, that "the scholarship of the Witnesses is very suspect." He was informed that PFO had published a Journal article and that CRI's Rob Bowman had written a 157-page book, both of which examined the faulty scholarship publicized by the Watchtower. Boyne stated that if PFO would forward him a copy of our article, he "might run a column on it."

The Oct. 21, 1990, edition of **The Sunday Gleaner** carried an article titled, "Trinitarians 'Knock Out' Jehovah's Witnesses." Boyne wrote in the article "The Witnesses have exploited people's ignorance to promote their theology." Citing evidence and commentary from both Bowman's book and the PFO Journal, he set the record straight concerning the Watchtower brochure, calling attention to its use of half-quotes, misquotations, misrepresentations and verbal sleight of hand.

While the Watchtower, in its futile search for respectability, is quick to cite those who give a glowing endorsement of its publications, will find it inconceivable to let their followers know that the favorable approval by Boyne no longer is valid.

—MKG

DR. SEUSS ON A MISSION?

A Latter-day Saint variation of the well-known Dr. Seuss publication for children, **Green Eggs and Ham**, has been briefly noticed in the city of Sandy, Utah. Yet this version, which replaced the story's original offering of "green eggs" with membership in the LDS Church, does not have Random House, the publisher of the Dr. Seuss work, smiling.

According to **The Salt Lake City Tribune**, a Random

House representative said there "appears to have been an infringement of copyright and attorneys have been contacted."

The "missionary version" of the children's classic was made available by Dawna Moore, who sold it along with the original Dr. Seuss book at the various boutiques she frequents. Moore since has retrieved all copies of the publication.

Moore claims to have received the LDS edition from her son's missionary friend. She told **The Salt Lake City Tribune** that her version "was never meant to be a tool for teaching the Mormon religion." Yet her variation concludes with the character announcing "I do so like the Mormon Church. Please, baptize me, Brother Lurch!"

LDS officials said that they were unfamiliar with Moore's publication and that they had not given consent for it to be marketed. "She is totally responsible and on her own," church spokesman Don LeFerve said.

—AMG

KRISHNA LEADER CONVICTED

Kirtanananda Swami Bhaktipada, founder of the New Vrindaban community of Hare Krishnas, outside Moundsville, W. Va., was convicted March 29 of six charges of mail fraud and of three counts of racketeering. The latter charges included Bhaktipada's involvement as part of a conspiracy to murder dissident member Charles St. Denis in 1983. The six-man, six-woman jury failed to reach a decision on a racketeering charge involving the May 1986 shooting death of Stephen Bryant in Los Angeles. Bryant was former Krishna commune member in New Vrindaban.

Following the convictions, Federal District Judge Robert Merhige turned down Bhaktipada's petition that he be allowed to remain free on bond. Held in the Eastern Regional Jail in Martinsburg, W. Va., Bhaktipada stated, "I kind of like it here. It's the perfect life for a monk." The swami is using his prison time to compose and write a new religious manuscript. "They take care of all your material needs and it gives me more time to chant 'Hare Krishna,' pray and write," he said.

Bhaktipada is allowed to remain in daily contact with his former commune through collect phone calls to the sect. His telephone communications are recorded and then played for followers during their evening services.

Bhaktipada was born Keith Ham, the son of a Baptist minister. The 4,000-acre Krishna community he founded in 1970 grew to about 700 followers in the early 1980s.

—MKG

The Adam God Teaching: A Theory or A Doctrine?

by John R. Farkas

Van Hale's booklet, **What About the Adam-God Theory?** (No. 3 in the Mormon Miscellaneous response series) purports to debunk claims that early Mormon leaders believed in the "Adam-God doctrine." This doctrine, or theory as some call it, was a teaching by Brigham Young, second president and prophet of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Young taught that the pre-mortal Adam of the Garden of Eden, was in the pre-existence, the Father of the spirit of Jesus Christ. He also is the Father of our spirits, and was the literal Father of the physical body of Jesus Christ. He is our God (i.e., God the Father). There is also evidence that the fourth and fifth presidents and prophets, Wilford Woodruff and Joseph F. Smith, supported this idea.

This doctrine is no longer taught by the Mormon church. Spencer W. Kimball, the 12th Mormon president and prophet, denounced it in 1976. Hale would have readers of his booklet believe the Mormon church never taught it. However, the evidence clearly shows that the Mormon church taught it, considered it important and punished people who rejected it.

Common Ground

While there is much to Hale's book that calls for criticism and correction, the following points will not be disputed:

1. That Brigham Young did teach the Adam-God doctrine or "theory."

On page 1 of his booklet, Hale writes:

"After examining the evidence, however, I soon became convinced that on at least two occasions Brigham Young had taught a concept which generally has not been accepted by Mormons — namely, that God the Father, the Father of our spirits and the Father of Jesus (of both his body and his spirit), came to this earth, took upon himself mortality, and was known as Adam, the progenitor of the human family. Simply stated, according to President Young, God the Father became Adam. (**Journal of Discourses** 1:50; **Deseret News** June 18, 1873). Later I found several other references in which President Young hinted at this belief. (**JD** 4:216-218, 271; 5:331; 6:274; 7:290; 11:41,42)."

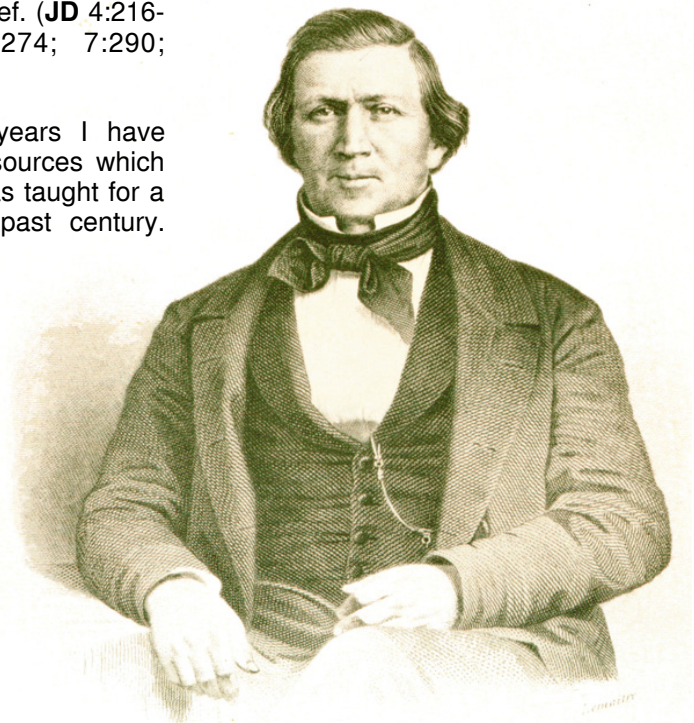
"Over the past 15 years I have found many additional sources which confirm that this idea was taught for a period of time in the past century. They include sermon reports, private diary entries, minutes of meetings, letters, articles, and statements. Many of these are unpublished and have only come to light in the last several years."

2. That the Adam-God doctrine never was formally made, via church membership vote, an official

part of Mormon canonized scripture during Young's tenure (1847-1877) as leader of the church. On pages 2-3 Hale writes:

"The Church has always had an official canon. During Brigham Young's lifetime it was the Bible, The Book of Mormon, and a somewhat smaller **Doctrine and Covenants**. President Young never attempted to incorporate any statement of the Adam-God theory into this canon..."

"The theory was never advocated in any official statement. In addition to the canon, official statements were occasionally issued by the First Pres-



idency and by the Quorum of the Twelve. The only one in which Brigham Young ever referred to the Adam-God theory was a statement issued in 1860 entitled 'Instructions to the Saints.'..."

3. That the Adam-God doctrine is not acceptable to orthodox Christians. On page 8, Hale writes:

"The primary argument of those who do not accept the Adam-God theory is that it is not scriptural. I concur with this. I do not believe that it can be supported from the Bible. To me the biblical message is that Adam's God is our God; his Father is our Father (Genesis, and Luke 3:38). This also seems to be the message of LDS scripture (Moses 2-5 and **D&C** 78:15-22)."

4. That Young routinely taught standard/normal Mormon doctrine in the same period he taught the Adam-God doctrine.

5. The following statement by Brigham Young, cited by Hale, also is agreeable to this writer:

"I have heard some make the broad assertion that every word within the lids of the Bible was the word of God... I believe that the Bible contains the word of God, and the words of good men and the words of bad men; the words of good angels and the words of bad angels and the words of the devil; and also the words uttered by the ass when he rebuked the prophet in his madness. I believe the words of the Bible are just what they are. (**JD** 13:175, 235)."

What Young said about the Bible can be applied to the four Mormon scriptures as a group. They "contain the word of God, and the words of good men, the words of bad men, and so on."

A Theory or a Doctrine?

Hale called his work "What About the Adam-God Theory?" It would have been better if he had said "...Adam-God Doctrine?" No key Mormon leader, including those from Young to Joseph F. Smith (circa 1850-1892) considered it a theory. To this writer's knowledge, the term "theory" never was used during

Young's time. It was called doctrine and taught as doctrine.

Young called it doctrine in the following documents: **Manuscript Addresses of Brigham Young**, Oct. 8, 1861; **Deseret News**, June 18, 1873; **Journal of Discourses** 5:331-332; **JD** 1:50-51; **Millennial Star**, Vol. 48, Cover.

In other documents, Young did not call it doctrine, but spoke as though it was: **Journal of Discourses** 7:290; 11:122,123; Brigham Young Papers Feb. 19, 1854; **Millennial Star**, Vol. 31:482,483; Vol. 34:530; Vol. 16:534.

Formal Vote Not Always Needed

Hale relies heavily on the fact that the Adam-God doctrine never was presented to the Mormon church membership for formal vote (see **Doctrine & Covenants** 26:2, 28:13, 104:21 for Mormon scripture on how "all things shall be done by common consent in the Church"). Hale believes that because there was no vote, the doctrine was just Young's opinion. But Hale may not be aware of the many examples of Mormon doctrine that never were voted on:

1. The practice of polygamy by Mormons from 1835-1880 never was approved by a membership vote. It was "written" in 1843, announced on August 29, 1852, but was not put into the "Scriptures" until 1876. This, along with 26 or 27 other "revelations" were not voted on until Oct. 11, 1880 (see **Ensign**, Dec. 1984, pp. 38-39).

2. There is no accepted revelation that there is a Mother in Heaven, the wife of Elohim (**Gospel Principles**, pg. 9; Mormon hymn #270: "O My Father," **LDS Hymns**, 1973 edition).

3. The teaching that Jesus Christ is "Jehovah" and "Elohim" is God the Father (**The Articles of Faith** by James E. Talmage, missionary edition, pp. 466, 467).

4. That Jesus Christ was the first spirit child of God the Father and his wife and was raised to maturity in the pre-existence (**Gospel Principles**, pg. 9).

5. That Jesus Christ and Lucifer are

spirit brothers (**Gospel Through the Ages**, Milton R. Hunter, pg. 15).

6. That God the Father was once a man and progressed to become God (**Melchizedek Priesthood Study Guide**, 1985 pp. 151-153).

7. The sacred Mormon Temple ceremonies are not in any Mormon scripture. The April 1990 changes in the temple ceremonies attest to the fact that these are not governed by "common consent."

8. Most Mormons when asked about the many references in The Book of Mormon that say there is only one God (see "The Testimony of Three Witnesses"; Alma 11:28,29,44; 3 Nephi 11:27,36; Mormon 7:7). When confronted with Mormon scripture, the typical response is: "That means 'one in purpose.'" There is no Mormon canonized scripture that says this.

It is difficult to prove something did not occur and it is possible that one or more of these teachings has been approved by a membership vote. Any corrections of errors or omissions would be welcomed, so long as documentation is given.

Brigham Young's Opinion of the Bible

On page 2 of his booklet, Hale tries to show Young's opinion of the Bible by using **Journal of Discourses** 13:175, 235. Hale then says: "Brigham Young did not claim inerrancy for his sermons. In fact the contrary is true, as will be seen." His **Journal of Discourses** reference does not support his position though. Even an orthodox Christian could agree with Young's statement. As previously stated above, Young's assessment of the Bible could be applied to the three other Mormon scriptures (except for his assessment of the words spoken by the ass). It is unlikely that Hale is saying the other Mormon scriptures are inerrant.

What Young Said About the Bible

What Hale did not do in his effort to discount Young's statements in **Journal of Discourses** 13:95, 264 (i.e. his sermons are scripture and "as good scripture as is couched in the

Bible.”) was to show what he really thought of the Bible. Young said the following about the Bible:

a. “...but aside from that I believe the doctrines concerning salvation contained in that book are correct,…” (JD 13:175).

b. “No Latter-day Saint, no man or woman, can say The Book of Mormon is true and at the same time say that the Bible is untrue. If one be true, both are; and if one be false, both are false” (JD 1:38).

c. “...that the Bible, as far as it is correctly translated, is the word of God. The Bible contains the word of God... of Jesus, of angels, of good men... and in the main is true, and every item of doctrine taught by the Latter-day Saints is to be found in this book” (JD 13:235). (For more on a similar thought, also see JD 1:237, 238, 242, 245; 10:320; 13:213, 214; 14:208; 15:41; **Discourses of Brigham Young** 126,129.)

d. “...there is the New Testament; you may leave out The Book of Mormon, and the book of **Doctrine & Covenants**, and follow that book faithfully, and I will warrant you to arrive at salvation” (JD 1:244).

Bruce R. McConkie in **Mormon Doctrine**, page 682, 1979 edition, said: “Any message whether written or spoken, that comes from God to man by the power of the Holy Ghost is scripture.” Young, in his use of the word “scripture” and his descriptions of the Bible and other Mormon scriptures, included this concept.

Is Belief in Adam-God Not Essential?

On pages 3-4 of **What About the Adam-God Theory?** Hale quotes several sources to try to show that Young considered belief in Adam-God “non-essential.” In the first item, dated Oct., 1854, this full discourse can be found, beginning on page 263, in **The Adam-God Maze**; and under that date in **Brigham Young Addresses**. Young did say: “...does not immediately concern yours and my welfare... I do not pretend to say that the items of doctrine and ideas I shall advance are necessary for the people to know.” Hale’s logic then is that

Adam-God was not “necessary for people to know.”

But Young also taught much more than Adam-God in this talk. He also talked about “duties and callings” in the church; a “...system of salvation to bring back the children of Adam and Eve into the presence of our Father and God...”; about God; about the need for authority “...to go forth and preach, and baptize...” It is hard to believe that these other subjects were non-essential to Mormons. Young also said: “It is true if you are faithful, and diligent they are things that will be fully made known to you in due time — at the proper time, according to the will of the Lord.”

What Else Did He Say?

The second reference is from a talk given on April 25, 1855. Hale cites comments that Young made but leaves out important context. What follows is Hale’s exact citation, followed by the statement’s context.

“...it is one that should not trouble us at all... I do not tell it because that I wish it to be established in the minds of others.”

“...When we can see that very character [Michael] and talk and live with him in our tabernacles, if we are so fortunate as to get there into his society, then we can say that to us there is but one living and true God, and he is the father of our Lord Jesus Christ and of our spirits. And when we get back to him and learn that he is actually our father, we shall not feel any anxiety to call upon anybody else for the blessings we are in need of. It is a subject I am aware that does not appear so close to our understandings at present as we could wish it or as it will be some day, and **it is one that should not trouble us at all**, all such things will become more clear to your minds by and by.”

“I tell you this as my belief about that personage who is called the Ancient of Days, the Prince and so on, but **I do not tell it because that I wish it established in the minds of others**; though to me this is as clear as the sun, it is as plain as my alphabet. I understand it as I do the path to go home. I did not understand so until my mind became enlightened

with the spirit and by revelations of God; neither will you understand until our Father in Heaven reveals all things unto you. To my mind and to my feelings those matters are all plain and easy to be understood” (**MABY**, April 25, 1855, emphasis added).

The third reference primarily uses **Journal of Discourses** 4:217:

“Whether Adam is the personage that we should consider our heavenly Father, or not, is considerable of a mystery to a good many. I do not care for one moment how that is: it is no matter whether we are to consider Him our God, or whether His Father, or His Grandfather, for in either case we are of one species” (JD 4:217; see also, JD 4:271; 7:238; 7:285; 11:43, 268).

First Principle Is To Know God

Hale did not include **Journal of Discourses** 4:215, the first page of this discourse, in his citations. In it Young said: “It is one of the first principles of the doctrine of salvation to become acquainted with our Father and our God.” Young then quotes from John 17:3 about knowing the “only” true God and Jesus whom he sent. He then says: “...this is as much to say that no man can enjoy or be prepared for eternal life without that knowledge.” LDS founder Joseph Smith also said “It is the first principle of the Gospel to know for a certainty the character of God and to know that we may converse with him...” (JD 6:3).

So let us examine more carefully what Young did say in **Journal of Discourses** 4:217. The thought behind the first part really needs study, i.e. “...whether we are to consider Him [Adam] our God, or whether His Father or His Grandfather.” It is not so clear who the “His” refers to. If the “His” refers to Adam, then we have “...consider Adam our God, or whether Adam’s father (i.e. Adam’s God) or Adam’s grandfather (i.e. Adam’s God’s God). If the “His” is “God” then we have a very similar meaning.

In light of the “first principle” statements by Young and Smith shown above, it then is clear that Young in **Journal of Discourses** 4:217 (Feb. 8,

1857) must have had in mind the ideas from his April 25, 1855, talk, i.e. "...all such things will become clear to your minds bye and bye" and "...neither will you understand until our Father in Heaven reveals all things unto you." Judging from the amount of attention Young gave the teaching, it is clear that he considered it important.

Young Fails Test of a Prophet

If we can understand Young to say in **Journal of Discourses** 4:217 that Adam is our God, and this God has a God and this God had a God, then there are at least three gods and it doesn't make any difference which one we worship, then Young is not a prophet.

A true prophet of God cannot hold a private view of God that breaks the First Commandment ("You shall have no other Gods before me," Exodus 20:3) and retain his authority. Young's position on this subject would strip him and anyone he ordained of prophetic authority.

Since Hale's use of incomplete quotes has been demonstrated, let's go back to a statement on page 1 of **What About Adam-God?** Hale writes: "First, in their zeal to refute Mormonism they have misstated, ignored, or distorted many points of Mormon history." No doubt this has happened, but Hale is guilty of the same thing with regard to Christianity.

Differences Between Bible Authors?

On pages 5-6 **What About Adam-God?** Hale tries to demonstrate that biblical prophets did not always agree, thus making it acceptable for Mormon prophets to change their views. Hale writes: "Several subjects on which the authors of the Bible diverge include: the nature of God, Jesus, and the Messiah; salvation, resurrection, the second coming and the observance of the law of Moses. Our opponents must be able to deny the differences demonstrated by Bible scholars on these several important points and show a perfect agreement among Bible authors before I could see any validity in their demanding perfect consistency among LDS prophets."

A response to Hale's attack on the Bible is beyond the scope of this article but it is interesting that Hale used non-Mormon, liberal theologians to demonstrate his points about Bible errors and doctrinal disagreements. Some examples of Mormon teaching about going outside the faith for authority follow.

Mormon Opinion of Christendom

From a booklet published by the Mormon Church, **Rays of Living Light**, by C.W. Penrose, First Counselor to President Heber J. Grant:

a: In "Divine Authority," page 2, about non-Mormons — "their power is only human, their decisions, their commissions and their creeds are equally valueless in the plan of salvation."

b: In "Apostasy" on pages 3-4: "Look at the condition of so-called Christendom today! There are no inspired apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers administering by divine authority and in the power and demonstration of the Holy Ghost. In their place there are contending priests and teachers guided by the wisdom of men... Not one of the clashing, jarring and discordant sects of the day proclaims the Gospel as it was preached by Peter on the day of Pentecost..."

The late Mormon Apostle Bruce R. McConkie, on page 55 of **A New Witness For the Articles of Faith** said: "The false gods of Christendom bear the same names as the true Gods of the Bible. Beyond this they have little resemblance. They are described in the creeds that the Lord told Joseph Smith were 'an abomination in his sight' (**JSH** 1:19)." (**JSH** stands for **Joseph Smith History** and is part of the **Pearl of Great Price**, a canonized scripture of the Mormon Church.) **JSH** 1:18-19 reads:

"I asked the Personages who stood above me in the light, which of all the sects was right (for at this time it had never entered into my heart that all were wrong) — and which I should join. I was answered that I must join none of them, for they were all wrong; and the Personage who addressed me said that all their creeds were an abomination in his sight; that those

professors were all corrupt; that: 'they draw near to me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me, they teach for doctrines the commandments of men, having a form of godliness, but they deny the power thereof.'"

The "Personages" in the above are the Mormon God the Father and Jesus Christ.

I Nephi 14:10 in The Book of Mormon says that there are only two churches, the Church of the Devil, and the Church of the Lamb of God. Most Mormons, after discussion, will agree that the Mormon church is "The Church of the Lamb of God." That leaves "Christendom" in the devil's camp.

Why Do Mormons Want To Be Called Christians?

Given the Mormon attitude toward Christendom, it is puzzling that Mormons want to be considered Christians. The Adam-God issue is a Mormon issue and the Bible is a canonized scripture of the Mormon church and one would expect Hale to use an official Mormon position on the Bible and prophet issues raised on page 5. He probably didn't because he could not find one that fit his need. The eighth item in the Mormon "Articles of Faith" says: "We believe the Bible to be the word of God as far as it is translated correctly..." The seventh and ninth items say that the receipt of new revelation from God is possible for Mormons and that history has borne out its occurrence.

The 1979 edition of the Mormon King James Bible for the first time included footnotes for short items and a separate section for longer items that showed where the "Joseph Smith Translation" of the Bible differed from the traditional King James. The changes that Smith, founder, first President and Prophet of the Mormon Church, made are in general minor and do not support the biblical problems Hale would like his readers to believe exist. Several items in **The Pearl of Great Price** give additional indications of the Mormon view on the quality of the Bible. They are: **The Book of Moses**, **The Book of Abraham**, verses 1:36-42 of **Joseph Smith History**, and Joseph Smith —

Matthew 1:1-55 (Matthew 23:39, chapter 24).

There is no other official Mormon document known to this writer that says the Bible's prophets and writers, except as noted above, differ when comparing earlier writings to later and when comparing author to author as Hale states on page 5 of **What About Adam-God?**. Hale's ideas are interesting, but his attempt to pull in non-Mormon theologians is not appropriate for a Mormon to do.

Adam-God Opposition Meant Disciplinary Action

Hale on page 4 says that it is false to say it was church practice to excommunicate those who did not accept it. This may be correct, but it is clear that discipline was held at high levels in the church. Two examples are:

1. Orson Pratt, an apostle, was almost excommunicated for opposing Adam-God doctrine: Minutes of Meeting of Council of the Twelve in Historian's Office; April 5, 1860, Brigham Young Papers, Church Historian's office.

2. In late 1890, 1891, 1892, Bishop Edward Bunker Jr. and his father, Edward Bunker Sr. of Bunkerville, Utah, and his counselor Myron Abbot were before church courts. The Bunkers denied Adam-God doctrine; Abbot accepted it. The final High Council Court was held June 11, 1892, and was attended by President Wilford Woodruff and his first counselor, George Q. Cannon. In summary, the Bunkers had their hands slapped for advancing false doctrine and "indulging in mysteries." Bunker Sr. was advised "to let these things alone." Abbot, who supported Adam-God doctrine, was cautioned to not become "puffed up in pride" over the victory. See **Adam-God Maze**, pp. 215-238 for the sources covering the above. Also **Unpublished Revelations**, pp. 168-175.

What General Authorities Thought

On page 4, item 5, Hale says: "the Adam-God theory was not considered Church doctrine by other General Authorities." "...Yet we have only sev-

eral brief comments on the subject by only one of them... Heber C. Kimball..." The two disciplinary cases given above refute this statement. Other examples are:

1. A letter from President Joseph F. Smith to Bishop Edward Bunker, Feb. 27, 1902; see page 263 of **Adam-God Maze**.

2. "...the period will come when the people will be willing to adopt Joseph Smith as their Prophet, Seer and Revelator and God! but not the Father of their spirits, for that was our Father Adam" (**Journal of Wilford Woodruff**, Dec. 11, 1869). Also see Dec. 16, 1867; Feb. 19, 1854.

3. For several others see pages 114, 115, 116 in the **Adam-God Maze**.

No Revelation on Adam-God?

On page 3, item 3, Hale says: "Nor does it appear that he (Young) ever claimed to have received a direct revelation on the subject." Young's statement published June 18, 1873, in the **Deseret News** is quoted and then discounted as being only limited to "namely that Adam is our father and God." If readers would read this discourse for themselves, they would see that Hale omitted the first part of this very sentence, which disagreed with his thesis. In column 4 of this article, Young said: "How much unbelief exists in the minds of the Latter-day Saints in regard to one particular doctrine which I revealed to them and which God revealed to me — namely that Adam is our Father and our God... Our Father Adam helped to make this earth, it was created expressly for him... He brought one of his wives with him, and she was called Eve..."

In column 5 of this article, Young continues: "Why was Adam called Adam? He was the first man on the earth, and its framer and maker. He, with the help of his brethren, brought it into existence. Then he said, 'I want my children who are in the spirit world to come and live here. I once dwelt upon an earth something like this, in a mortal state. I was faithful. I received my crown and exaltation. I have the privilege of extending my work, and to its increase there will be no end. I

want my children who were born to me in the spirit world to come here to take tabernacles of flesh, that their spirits may have a house, a tabernacle or a dwelling place as mine has and where is the mystery?"

This discourse is consistent with the Mormon doctrine that says only resurrected beings can procreate "spirit offspring" and that Adam had no blood when he came to earth — until after he ate of the fruit. Hale's conclusion is erroneous, but more light is shed on this subject in Young's April 25, 1855, talk shown above on page 4. A good description of Adam-God doctrine is given and it should be noted that Young said he was enlightened with the Spirit and by the revelation of God.

So it is clear that Young did teach the Adam-God doctrine, that he considered it important and that he and others called it "doctrine" and did not consider it a "theory" but a revelation from God. Mormon leaders who rejected the idea were disciplined.

Adam-God Doctrine is in Mormon Scripture

Finally, Young did not have to submit the Adam-God doctrine to Mormon Church membership vote because it was already in Mormon scriptures. Consider the following:

● From **Doctrines & Covenants** 27:11 (given by Joseph Smith Aug. 1830) we have: "And also with Michael or Adam, the father of all, the prince of all, the ancient of days."

● From **Doctrines & Covenants** 116 (given again by Joseph Smith, May 19, 1838) we have: "...Adam shall come to visit his people, the Ancient of Days shall sit, as spoken of by Daniel the prophet."

● These both are reinforced in **Doctrines & Covenants** 138:38, a newer revelation: "Among the great and mighty ones who were assembled in this vast congregation of the righteous were Father Adam, the Ancient of Days and father of all." (Oct. 3, 1918, by Joseph F. Smith).

From these we learn that:

1. Adam (or Michael) is the Ancient

of Days referred to by Daniel the prophet (see Daniel 7:9,13,22).

2. Adam is the father of all.

3. Adam is the prince of all.

4. Adam has the title Father — Father Adam (from the 1918 revelation). Daniel 7:9,13,14 and 22 say:

“I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire... I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him... And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed... Until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom.”

From these and the **Doctrines & Covenants** references (excluding 138:38) we now have:

1. Father Adam will (future) sit on his throne (not necessarily for the First time) (Daniel 7:9).

2. The “Son of Man,” a title for Jesus Christ, will come to, and will be brought before father Adam and father Adam will give Jesus Christ dominion, and glory, and a Kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him (Daniel 7:13-14). In addition, the 1979 edition of the Mormon King James Bible also supports this statement. See note 13a at the bottom of page 1112. It refers to “Rev. 11:15. T.G. [Topical Guide – notes in the back of the book] Jesus Christ, Second Coming of Jesus Christ, Son of Man.”

3. Father Adam came and gave or participated in giving judgment to the saints (Daniel 7:22).

4. **Doctrines & Covenants** 138:38 makes it clearer that Adam also has

the title “Father” even though this is evident in Daniel 7:13,14,22.

God, Father, Adam, Michael, Ancient of Days Teachings

These Mormon scripture verses clearly show why Young did not submit his teachings on Adam-God doctrine to a membership vote. Adam-God doctrine was already in canonized scripture (Daniel 7:9,13,14,22; **D&C** 27:11, 116:1 and then added to in 1918 with 138:38). In support of the above are the following:

On June 2, 1839, the Prophet Joseph Smith called Adam Michael the Archangel, “He, [Adam] is the Father of the human family, and presides over the spirits of all men,... the Son of Man stands before him, and there is given him glory and dominion. Adam delivers up his stewardship to Christ... I saw Adam in the valley of Adam-ondi-Ahman. He called to gather his children and blessed them with a patriarchal blessing. The Lord appeared in their midst, and he [Adam] blessed them all...” (**JD** 6:237, 238).

On Jan. 8, 1865, Young called the father of us all the Ancient of Days, our Heavenly Father, and one like the Son of Man (the Savior) came to the Ancient of days [sic] (**JD** 11:42). In **Journal of Discourses** 11:327, Young says: “...they will come up tribe, by tribe, and the Ancient of Days, He who led Abraham, and talked to Noah, Enoch, Isaac, and Jacob, that very Being will come and judge the twelve tribes of Israel.” (Also see **JD** 11:283, 326.)

In addition, Young’s oft-quoted, or misquoted April 9, 1852, discourse, **Journal of Discourses** 1:50 says in the heading on page 46:

“Adam, Our Father and Our God.”

Page 50 also says:

“When the Virgin Mary conceived the child Jesus, the Father had begotten him in his own likeness. He was not begotten by the Holy Ghost. And who is the Father? He is the first of the human family.”

Two other parts of this discourse on

page 51 are worth quoting:

“It is true that this earth was organized by three distinct characters, namely, Elohim, Yahovah, and Michael, these three forming a quorum ...perfectly represented in the Deity, as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.” — “Now, let all who may hear these doctrines, pause before they make light of them, or treat them with indifference, for they will prove their salvation or damnation.”

Only One True Father

There is only one “Father” and “father of all” who sits on a throne (Revelation 1:4; 7:15; 14:5, 22:1, Psalm 45:6; Matthew 23:23; Hebrews 1:8; 12:2) and can have the “Son of Man” come to and be brought before him to receive “dominion, and glory and a kingdom.” It can only be God the Father, the Father of Jesus Christ, the God of Genesis 1:1-26; the God of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph — the one true God of the Bible.

Orthodox Christians believe that the Ancient of Days spoken of in Daniel 7 is God the Father. This title does not address Adam or anyone else, but only God the Father. The Adam-God doctrine of Mormonism is not a Christian teaching, nor is there biblical support for it.

Author’s Note: *In writing this article I used material from the following:*

*Cully K. Christensen’s book **The Adam-God Maze; Adam is God?** by Chris A. Vlachos; **Unpublished Revelations, Vol. 1** by Fred C. Collier, pp. 165-179; **Brigham Young Addresses, 5 volumes**, by Eldon Jay Watson; **The Adam-God Doctrine**, by David John Buerger, in *Dialogue*, Vol 15, #1, Spring 1982.*

*See also **The Notes – or Selected References on the Fulness of the Gospel for Saints and Other Interested Students, Vol. I**, by Robert R. Openshaw, 1980 Bitterroot Publishing Company, (now) Box 1187, Hamilton, MT 59840, LCC 80-66650. This is a “fundamentalist” Mormon work. Among its 600 pages are 60 pages of annotated references on the Adam-God doctrine alone, plus photocopies of rare documents.*

see that contrary to the assertion that these revelations are something “you hadn’t heard before,” they are, for the most part, a rehash of the standard Word-Faith party line that was made popular by the writings of Essek W. Kenyon.¹⁴

Not only does Hinn put great confidence in his revelations, but he expects everyone else to do so. They are not mere opinions. They are the very words of God:

“...Revelation Knowledge, what is it? It leads you to eternal realities. We’re not talking about some idea or some philosophy. We’re talking about an eternal reality.”¹⁵

As do the mystical Christian teachers, Hinn wishes to make his eternal realities compatible with Scripture:

“If I say something that is not in the Bible — believe the Bible, don’t believe me. But if it’s in the book, pay attention to it!”

“I told you earlier, if I say something [and] the Bible says something else, you believe the Bible. Say ‘the Bible is always right.’”¹⁶

But, we shall see below that just as with those others, these statements are merely lip service to the accuracy of the Scripture. The doctrines examined here are not found in the Bible, yet Hinn’s followers accept them without question.

A Few Words on Methodology

Hinn is adept at crowd manipulation. He consistently urges his audience to be demonstrative by using the device of asking repeated questions and having them shout back the answers with increasing emotional intensity until they are ready to agree with almost anything he is saying:

“N-Now-he-are you really — do you really want truth? Hey! Do you want truth?” and the congregation shouts “Yes!” “Are you ready for some heavy stuff?” and the congregation shouts “Yes!”¹⁷

and:

“Now, lets get to something a little heavier — are you ready for something a little heavier?” and the congregation shouts “Yes!” “How many of you can handle a lot more?” and the congregation shouts “Yes!”¹⁸

Those who have studied crowd dynamics know that a group of people is more easily influenced by a dynamic speaker than are solitary individuals. Someone who is normally not very emotional can be worked to a fever pitch in a crowd. One who would be more analytical of what is being proposed by the speaker is intimidated by the emotional, positive response of those around him. The psychological pressure is to be accepted by the group, and so the individual tends to conform to the response of that group. Once a psychological commitment to what has been said has been made, it is difficult to later reverse that commitment.

One can also add to the above methodology that of spiritual intimidation. While most in the mystical Christian movement are content to cry “Touch not God’s anointed” when criticism of their doctrines surface, Hinn is more vigorous in his response.

On Trinity Broadcast Network’s “**Praise the Lord**” telecast on Nov. 9, 1990 (WCAX Orlando, Fla.), Hinn said:

“You wonderful people of God quit attacking men of God by name! Somebody’s attacking me because of something I’m teaching! Let me tell you something brother, ‘You watch it!’ ...I don’t mind if they attack Benny and the way he is and the way he walks, but don’t attack the anointing on my life... Don’t attack this man of God [speaking of Paul Crouch]. There is a group here in California that thinks they are the judgment seat of Christ! They judge everything that you do. Listen here fellah, let me tell you something, you’re not my judge. Jesus is my judge! You walk around with your stiff lip and collar on your neck — dear God in heaven I wish I could just — ooh! They call it a “ministry,” my foot! You know I’ve

looked for one verse in the Bible, I just can’t seem to find it, one verse that says “if you don’t like ‘em, kill ‘em. I really wish I could find it!... Ladies and gentlemen, don’t attack God’s servants! Don’t publicly attack them by name! ...don’t mention people’s names on your radio program and your TV program — thinking you’re doing God’s service — you’re not! You stink — frankly that’s the way I think about it!”

And later in the same telecast:

“Paul [Crouch], it angers me to no end — there’s no power but judgment; no life but death! Quit it! I’m sorry, I’m not exactly the normal kind of guy you know, I’m from Israel. Sometimes I wish God would give me a Holy Ghost Machine Gun — I blow your head off!”

It is appalling to note not only the harsh, unloving, intimidating tone of these statements, but also that the audience responded to these statements with laughter and applause. Also, while Hinn cautions his critics not to mention names on their broadcasts, he does not feel constrained to do the same:

“There’s a man called Harry — who has just said ‘This man is phony.’ Be careful Harry — I’m not a phony man. I’m God’s servant. Be careful — you don’t know what you’re playing with. Your first name is Harry — You’re Harry Albert, and your last name is Krey- K-R-E-Y, that’s your name. The Lord gave me your first, middle and last name to warn you... You’re shaken that I have your name — you’re right. You better be shaken ‘cause God’s presence is on my life and I know things by the spirit.”¹⁹

There is scriptural precedence for publicly naming those who publicly teach contrary to Scripture. The Apostle Paul gave us the names of those who were causing both himself and the church great problems through false doctrine:

“This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare; Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck: Of whom is Hymenaeus

and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme" (I Timothy 1:18-20).

"But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness. And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some" (II Timothy 2:16-18).

"Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil: the Lord reward him according to his works: Of whom be thou ware also; for he hath greatly withstood our words" (II Timothy 4:14-15).

So, putting all threats and intimidation aside, let us examine Hinn's teachings and apply the admonition of Paul in I Thessalonians 5:21: "Prove all things; hold fast to that which is good," and even the advice of Hinn himself, "If I say something that is not in the Bible — believe the Bible, don't believe me ..."

"Now are you ready for some real revelation knowledge?"²⁰

One need not listen long to Hinn's tapes before hearing his unorthodox teaching on the nature of the Triune God:

"...God the Father is a person and He is a triune being by Himself separate from the Son and the Holy Ghost... God the father is a person, God the Son is a person, God the Holy Spirit is a person, but each of them is a triune being by Himself. If I can shock you, and maybe I should, there are nine of them... God the Father is a person with His own personal spirit, with His own personal soul and His own personal spirit body."²¹

"God the Father is a person separate from the Holy Ghost — totally separate... Do you know the Holy Spirit has a soul and a body separate from that of Jesus and the Father?... God the Father then is a triune being within Himself. He's a person, He has His own Spirit, He has a soul... A soul is my intellect... God thinks... separate from the Son and separate from the Holy Ghost... God the Father is a

separate individual from the Son and the Holy Ghost, who is a triune being who walks in a spirit body and He has hair... has eyes."²²

Cult researcher Bill Alnor submitted copies of the above transcript to two professors at the Philadelphia College of the Bible in October 1990 and their opinions were the same: Hinn's view of God in the message is "heretical."

"For one thing his concept of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit each having a spiritual body was condemned at [the councils of] Chalcedon [A.D. 831], Constantinople and Nicea," said Gary Johnson, professor of Church History.

"He says the Trinity is nine persons and that's heresy," Johnson added. "What he's advocating is not a whole lot different than what is advocated by Kenneth Copeland as reported in the book **The Agony of Deceit**."

According to doctrine professor Dr. Glen Goss: "He [Hinn] doesn't understand theology. Yes, it's very clearly heretical. Each member of the Trinity is also Trinity? That's really far out and it's not orthodox in any way, shape or form. He has no theological basis for what he's saying."²³

Hinn has no theological basis for his view of God, nor does he have any biblical basis. His view that God the Father and God the Holy Spirit has a body with "eyes, hands, a mouth, etc." is more concurrent with Mormonism than it is with orthodox Christianity. The only way to produce a tri-triune Godhead is with the convoluted logic of Benny Hinn.

With regard to Hinn's view of the Godhead, please follow his advice: "I told you earlier, 'If I say something; the Bible says something else; you believe the Bible.' Say: 'the Bible is always right.'"

"So, don't question this teaching. Only the immature question it."

The above quotation comes from a sermon tape titled **Our Position in Christ**. The teaching that Hinn doesn't want questioned is what is commonly known in MCM as the spiritual death of Jesus (SDJ) teach-

ing. Popularized by Kenyon in his book **What Happened Between the Cross and the Throne**, it has been taken up by others and expanded. Hinn has jumped onto the bandwagon.

"...before He died, I should say, on that cross, something happened to Him which began the wheels of the New Creation moving that was this: He died spiritually!... Jesus Christ understood that spiritual death is union with the Satanic Nature... What is spiritual death? Separation from God."²⁴

"He who is the nature of God became the nature of Satan when He became sin."²⁵

"First, He died spiritually, and then He died physically, and He was carried for three days and three nights into the underworld as a prisoner."²⁶

"Jesus Christ knew the only way He would stop Satan is by becoming one in nature with him... He [Jesus] did not take my sin, He became my sin."²⁷

"Jesus Christ had to die spiritually to understand what it means to be dead spiritually. He could not have been a perfect Savior had he not experienced all you'll ever experience..."²⁸

According to Hinn, there were two deaths of the cross: a spiritual death, then a physical one. Jesus died first spiritually. At that point he literally took on the nature (became one with) Satan. Also at that point Jesus lost His deity and God the Father deserted Him. Then Jesus died physically and His spirit (which at that time was only the spirit of a man) was taken into Hell. "...When Jesus went down to the underworld... He did not face Satan in hell as God! For had He faced him as God the devil would have said, 'Not fair, not fair.'... If Jesus went to the underworld as the Son of God, He did not need the Holy Ghost then to raise Him from the dead; He would have raised Himself!"²⁹

At the end of His three days of torment, it was time for Jesus to be born again!

"He's [Jesus] in the underworld

now, God isn't there. The Holy Ghost isn't there, and the Bible says He was 'begotten.' You know what the word 'begotten' means? Means 'reborn.' ...do you want another shocker? Have you been begotten? [Congregation shouts "Yes!"] So was He. Don't let anyone deceive you. Jesus was reborn... Did the Father leave Him? C'mon, did the Father leave him? [Congregation shouts "Yes!"] That's death!... did the Holy Ghost come back on resurrection morning? [Congregation shouts "Yes!"] That's rebirth! He was reborn! He had to be reborn!... If He was not reborn, I could not be reborn!... Everything I've gone through He went there first. [Congregation cheers and applauds.] So don't question this teaching. Only the immature question it."³⁰

It is impossible to produce from the Bible, verses that detail any of the above "doctrine." It is only through Hinn's so-called "revelation knowledge" — rehashed Kenyon and a few misapplied biblical texts — that it can be done. Let us now turn our attention to a couple of these verses.

The first example is II Corinthians 5:21: "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." SDJ advocates say this proves that Jesus took on the sin nature, or Satan's nature.

The second is Matthew 27:46: "And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, 'Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?' that is, 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?'" Hinn and others claim that this verse demonstrates spiritual death and the turning away of the Father from the Son, causing Jesus to lose His deity.

If the above verses teach what Hinn and others say that they do, then we have at least two serious problems.

First, if Jesus had the satanic nature before His physical death, then the sacrificial sin offering was unholy. Yet the sacrifice as typified in the Old Testament and openly revealed in the New must have been Holy and sinless — without spot or blemish.

Secondly, if Jesus took on the

satanic nature, was forsaken by the Father and lost his deity, then there was a fundamental change in the Godhead. Yet both Testaments assert that God does not change and specifically singles out Jesus as being the same past, present and future.

The confusion generated by II Corinthians 5:21 most likely stems from an unclear translation of the Greek word for "sin," **hamartia**.

As it is in Hebrew, so it is in Greek that the word for sin and sin-offering is the same. It is the context of the passage that fixes the proper translation of the word (Hebrew: **chatta'ah**; Greek: **hamartia**).

In Leviticus, for example, the word **chatta'ah** is translated "sin" 20 times, but is translated "sin-offering" 63 times wherever the context demands it.

When the Old Testament was translated into Greek by the Alexandrian Jews in the third century B.C., the Hebrew word **chatta'ah** was rendered **hamartia** by the translators. Again the context would fix the proper translation.

The Apostle Paul, being schooled in both languages, no doubt followed the same rules of language of the Septuagint translators and used the single Greek word "hamartia" for both sin and sin-offering in II Corinthians 5:21.³¹

Therefore, we see that the verse could be translated: "For he hath made him to be a 'sin-offering' for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." This translation is consistent with the rest of scripture and with Old Testament typology concerning sacrifice for sin. It also clears up the aforementioned contradictions.³²

So, we see that this verse cannot be used to teach the spiritual death of Jesus. There is not one verse in the Bible that either states or implies that Jesus died spiritually or unified with the satanic nature on the cross or anywhere else.

What of the assertions that Jesus lost His deity when the Father forsook Him on the cross? Christian Research

Institute's Brian Onken points out:

"It is of great importance to note that this passage is not didactic but narrative; that is, this verse in Matthew is not a specific teaching about Christ's atoning work but is rather a record of what transpired before the eyes of witnesses. Caution is needed because, although we have a record of what Christ said, what He meant by these words is open to question."³³

As previously shown, Christ became the legal substitute for sinners, receiving in His own person the punishment that was due them. As the wrath and judgment of God were unleashed on the Son, the Father could not share the fellowship with Him that they had so long enjoyed. The Son was treated as if He were a sinner, because He was standing in our place. This, however, does not necessitate a change in His nature or that He was essentially severed from God.

T.J. Crawford explains:

"In order to give its just meaning to His language, we can hardly suppose less than that, amidst His other sufferings, the sensible joys and consolations of His Father's fellowship and countenance were withheld from Him. Nor is it any very difficult matter to conceive that even in the case of the beloved Son of God some such spiritual privation may have been endured. For it is not beyond the bounds of human experience that the favour and love of God should actually be possessed, while no felt support and encouragement are derived from them. Although it be an unquestionable truth that 'the Lord will never leave nor forsake His people,' and that 'nothing can ever separate them from His love,' yet there are times in the history of His most devoted servants, in which we find them bitterly deploring that the light of His gracious countenance is hidden from them, and that they derive no conscious satisfaction from the joys of His favour and the comforts of His fellowship. May we not say, then, that this was the main source of the Savior's lamentation on the cross? It certainly appears to be the kind of affliction which His words most naturally and obviously suggest."³⁴

It is also worthy to note "...that in New Testament times for one to cite the opening words of an Old Testament passage such as Psalms 22 was equivalent to citing the entire passage. We can be sure that these words of Jesus would have been understood by His disciples as equivalent to His saying, 'Remember the 22 Psalm.' Christ's enemies had just quoted another saying from this Psalm in taunting Him, 'He trusted in God; let Him deliver Him now if He will have Him, for He said, 'I am the Son of God' (Matthew 27:43, quoting Psalm 22:8). This fact would give weight to Jesus citing this Psalm."³⁵

Jesus did not die spiritually and there was no change in the nature of the Godhead. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever, says Hebrews 13:8. Even the Psalm cited by Jesus Himself proves the contrary. Psalms 22:24, "For he hath not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted; **neither hath he hid his face from him**; but when he cried unto him, he heard."

Hinn and other Word-Faith teachers would do well to heed the Word of God and repent of the foolish speculation that they erroneously label "revelation knowledge":

"But I say unto you, That [every idle word] that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment" (Matthew 12:36).

"So, I'm Benny Jehovah!"³⁶

The above quote leads us to the third theological error of Hinn's: that a born-again person actually becomes God on the earth. True to previous form, this doctrine follows closely Kenyon's "New Creation Realities" and elevates man to deity. It also reduces the position of Jesus Christ of being the unique incarnation of God on the earth by putting believers on the same level as Jesus.

According to Hinn, when a person becomes born again and the Holy Spirit comes to dwell in his spirit, then that person becomes deity, literally a God-man:

"His Spirit and our spirit man are one, united, there's no separation. Impossible, the new creation is creat-

ed after God in righteousness and true holiness. The new man is after God, like God, Godlike, complete in Christ Jesus... May I say it like this? You are a little god on earth running around."³⁷

Despite occasional denials that he is teaching that men literally become Gods, Hinn continues to use unambiguous words to teach that we do.

"Say after me: 'Within me is a God-Man.' Say it again. 'Within me is a God-Man.' [Congregation repeats]. Now, let's say even better than that. Let's say, 'I am a God-Man.' ...This spirit man within me is a God-Man... Say 'I'm born-of-heaven-God-Man. I'm a God-Man. I'm a sample of Jesus. I'm a super being.'"³⁸

"God came to earth and touched a piece of dust and turned it into a God... Are you a child of God? Then you're divine! Are you a child of God? Then you're not human!"³⁹

That is, Hinn says, a person's spirit is not human. The body is the only thing about the Christian that is human, and that will pass away. However, that part which is really real is the same on earth as Jesus Christ.

"When you say 'I am saved,' what are you saying? You are saying 'I am a Christian.' What does that word mean? It means 'I am anointed.' You know what the word anointed means? It means Christ. When you say 'I am a Christian,' you are saying 'I am Messiah' in the Hebrew. I am a little Messiah walking on earth in other words. That's a shocking revelation."⁴⁰

"Now ladies and gentlemen, you are on earth exactly what Jesus was on earth... As He is so am I, on earth... When you walk, Jesus is walking. When you talk, He's talking. When you move, He's moving."⁴¹

"When I stand in Christ — I am one with Him; united to Him; one spirit with Him. I am not, hear me, I am not part of Him, I am Him! The Word has become flesh in me!... When my hand touches someone, it's the hand of Jesus touching somebody!"⁴²

"I [Jesus] loved you enough to become one of ya! And I love you

enough to make you one of me!"⁴³

If equating believers with Christ is not bad enough, Hinn goes one step further. In one of the most bizarre examples of scripture misinterpretation ever, Hinn wants to give all believers the last name "Jehovah".

"This new man inside of you is just like Jesus — has God's last name. You people just missed what I said. The new man has God's last name. For the Bible says about him, in Isaiah. 'I have surnamed thee.' You all have the same last name — you know that don't you? You know what your last name is? Jehovah. So, I'm Benny Jehovah; Dick Jehovah; have the same Daddy."⁴⁴

The only place that the phrase "I have surnamed thee" occurs in the Bible is indeed Isaiah 45:4. However, the verse has nothing to do with Jehovah giving his children a last name. It has nothing to do with believers whatsoever.

Isaiah 45:4 announces: "For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name: I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me."

The antecedent to the word "thee" in the phrase "I have surnamed thee" is Cyrus, King of Persia. One has only to go back to Isaiah 45:1 to see that the subject of conversation is the anointing of Cyrus for the great task of letting the Israelites go back to Israel.

The Hebrew word for "surname" is **kanah** and is often translated "to give flattering titles" (see especially Job 32:21-22). So, for the sake of the descendants of Jacob, elect Israel, God set aside Cyrus for a purpose and gave him a flattering (honorable) title. Yet Hinn has this verse saying that Jehovah has given all believers the last name "Jehovah."

If Hinn will take such a clear-cut verse as this and twist it into such an outlandish interpretation, then it becomes necessary to carefully examine any scriptural assertion that he makes. This is exactly what Christians must do.

It is clear that Hinn's teachings are

a theological quagmire emanating from biblical misinterpretation and extra-biblical “revelation knowledge.” This has led him to a defective view of the Godhead, a flawed Christology, and a faulty anthropology.

Christians rightly criticize Mormons when they speak of men becoming gods, and when they talk about God the Father and the Holy Spirit having bodies. We throw up our hands in disgust when they use scriptures out of context to try and prove these things. Yet hundreds of thousands of Christians are accepting Hinn’s pronouncements without question.

There was a time that if believers were equated with being “God on the Earth,” or if they were elevated to being a manifestation of Christ on the earth, the cry of blasphemy would have been deafening. It is sad that the lack of biblical knowledge in the contemporary church has brought us to the point that such challenges to orthodoxy are accepted so readily.

It is also sad that a major Christian publisher will accept, publish, quietly re-edit and defend Hinn’s pronouncements.

The Curious Case of Thomas Nelson Publishers

When a publisher has a controversial best-seller, there are several directions it can take. It can ignore the critics and hope the controversy goes away. It can withdraw the book from publication, or it can make corrections to the controversial areas and try to put a positive spin on the whole affair. Thomas Nelson Publishers has chosen to do the latter.

In an article published in **Christian Retailing Magazine** titled, “Thomas Nelson clarifies Hinn’s Holy Spirit Book,” Nelson’s Bruce Barbour “called the changes ‘clarifications’ rather than ‘corrections’ because the term ‘corrections’ makes it look like something was wrong with the first editions.” Barbour said, “Thomas Nelson believes Hinn’s theology is correct, but that it should have been stated more clearly. We should have been more careful in the initial editing.” He also told the magazine that “12 to 15 clarifications had to be made because the book led some readers to think

that Hinn teaches there are three separate Gods.”⁴⁵

Barbour also said “it is not that unusual to make clarifications in a book after it has been published, and after the publisher receives feedback from readers. However, he said the intensity of the feedback — and the confusion — covering Hinn’s books makes this occurrence unusual.”⁴⁶

Lack of space prohibits a detailed examination of the changes in the book, but we will examine three substantive ones:

- Page 86, paragraph 5. *Old*: “I am told a little of what the Father looks like.” *New*: “I am told a little of how the Father reveals Himself.”
- Page 135, paragraph 4. *Old*: “And let me add this: Had the Holy Spirit not been with Jesus, He would have sinned.” *New*: “And let me add this: Had the Holy Spirit not been with Jesus, He may have likely sinned.”
- Page 146, paragraph 4. *Old*: “Do you know that every unbeliever is filled with a demon spirit?” *New*: “Do you know that every unbeliever is greatly influenced by demons?”

It is amazing that Nelson would put its imprimatur on this aberrational theology. By defending Hinn, Nelson is helping Hinn propagate his unorthodox teaching.

The statement in **Christian Retailer Magazine** that “12 to 15 clarifications had to be made” is troubling. This writer has copies of 17 pages from the book provided by Nelson’s senior editor, William D. Watkins. In his cover letter, Watkins writes “Enclosed you have a set of these corrections which contains two groups of material: one group displays the clarifications we made in pencil on the uncorrected book pages; the other group shows those corrections typeset.”

Even if there had been only one “clarification” per page, the 12 to 15 number would have been exceeded. However, there are multiple changes on most of the pages. There were at least 10 changes on page 87 alone.

While it may not be unusual to

make post-publication changes in a book, those revisions are usually noted. The title page or frontpiece will carry a notation that the book has been revised or updated. Beginning with the eighth printing of **Good Morning Holy Spirit**, many “clarifications” have been made but no revision notices have been included. On two different occasions, bookstore managers were shocked and troubled when this writer told them that the book had been revised and showed them the nature of the revisions. Christians need to be asking Nelson why these revisions were done so quietly.

Concerned Christians should also be asking Nelson if they really believe that Hinn’s theology is “correct” or are they trying to do some damage control on a best-selling book?

And lastly, Christians should not allow Nelson to turn the controversy into a charismatic vs. anti-charismatic argument. A recent article in **The Orlando Sentinel** stated that “[William] Watkins said the criticism rises from a difference between Christians who, like Hinn, are charismatic and those who are reformed.”⁴⁷

Many critics of Hinn’s theology have Charismatic backgrounds, this writer included. The issue is not spiritual gifts. The issue is extra-biblical “revelation knowledge” vs. the sufficiency of the Holy Scripture.

Perspective

Certainly Hinn is not unique in his approach to Scripture and the Gospel. He is just another powerful voice in the movement trying to push Christianity into a thoroughgoing mysticism.

Almost to a man those in the mystical Christian movement pay lip service to the accuracy and authority of the Bible, but cast serious doubt on its sufficiency by introducing new doctrines through extrabiblical “revelation knowledge.” Hinn and others raise the question: “Has God really told us enough, or do we need newer, more comprehensive revelations?” Scripture makes the claim that in His Word, God has told us everything we need to know pertaining to life and godliness (II Peter 1:3,4).

Hinn is already experiencing the fact that building a theology on revelation knowledge is building on a foundation of shifting sand. First there were the "clarifications" in the book. Now he is supposedly backing off on certain aspects of the SDJ doctrine:

"I no longer agree that Jesus was born again in Hell. That I did teach. I no longer agree that He went down to the underworld under the control of Satan, which at one time I did teach."

"Now when he teaches the spiritual death of Christ, he only means 'Jesus was separated from the Father.' He said he's dropping this teaching altogether for at least a year to give himself time to study it further."⁴⁸

If Hinn had only been teaching the SDJ as a doctrine that he believed was derived from scripture then the matter could more easily be forgiven. But he did not and it cannot.

Hinn taught the SDJ as "revelation knowledge." Statements from revelation knowledge are supposed to be "eternal realities". Discerning Christians must ask Hinn: "Which is untrue, that revelation knowledge is not opinion or philosophy but an eternal reality; or that you ever received revelation knowledge on the SDJ doctrine?" One wonders if Hinn will be withdrawing the tape series, "Our Position in Christ" since he says he no longer believes many aspects of the SDJ doctrine. (At the time of this writing, the tape series is still being offered.)

Christians must hold accountable anyone who names Christ as Savior and publicly teaches the Word of God. Any proclaimer of the Gospel, be he pastor of the smallest church, or the most renown Christian TV evangelist superstar, should be held subject to the Berean test (Acts 17:11).

The thought of Christians seeking titillation through demonstrations of supernatural power, rather than the truth of God's Word brings to mind the words of the Apostle Paul:

"I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but

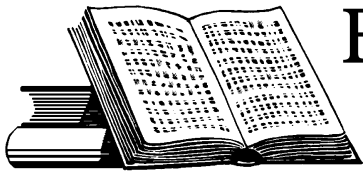
there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed." (Galatians 1:6-9)

Author's Note: *Special thanks to fellow cult-watcher and colleague Bud Press of East Palatka, Fla. for his invaluable contribution of research and assistance for this article.*

Endnotes:

1. Benny Hinn, **Good Morning, Holy Spirit**, Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, Fourth Printing, 1990.
2. *ibid.*, pp. 16,17.
3. The term "mystical Christian movement" could designate those in the contemporary church that hold to the Word-Faith, Manifest Sons of God, Kingdom Now, Dominionist, Latter Rain type of Charismaticism.
4. **Good Morning**, pg. 22.
5. *ibid.*, pg. 29.
6. *ibid.*, pp. 39,43.
7. *ibid.*, pg. 56.
8. Benny Hinn, **War In The Heavenlies**, Winter Park, Fla.: Benny Hinn Ministries, Inc., 1984, pp. 16-17.
9. Benny Hinn, Orlando Christian Center, audiotape of sermon, late 1988. Tape and transcript on file.
10. Benny Hinn, videotape of sermon broadcast 12/9/90, WCAX-TV, Orlando, Fla. Tape and transcript on file.
11. Benny Hinn, Orlando Christian Center, audiotape of sermon, 1988. Tape and transcript on file.
12. See PFO's **The Quarterly Journal**, Vol. 10, No. 4, "Old Wine in Old Wineskins" and Vol. 11, No. 1, "Kansas City Fellowship Revisited."
13. Benny Hinn, **Our Position In Christ**, six tape audiocassette series (A031190-1), Part 1. Tape on file.
14. See **PFO Newsletter** Vol. 6, No. 4, Oct.-Dec. 1986.
15. Benny Hinn, Orlando Christian Center, audiotape of sermon, 1988. Tape and transcript on file.
16. *ibid.*
17. **Our Position In Christ**, tape series.
18. *ibid.*
19. Taken from Hinn's daily television show, Oct. 25, 1990. Quoted in correspondence from Bud Press to Benny Hinn dated Nov. 12, 1990.

20. **Our Position In Christ**, tape series.
21. Benny Hinn, Sermon broadcast on Trinity Broadcasting Network on Oct. 13, 1990. Videotape and transcript on file.
22. *ibid.*
23. William Alnor, "Leading Charismatic Denies the Historical Doctrine of the Trinity on National Television." News release dated Oct. 15, 1990.
24. Benny Hinn, Orlando Christian Center, audiotape of sermon, late 1988.
25. Benny Hinn, videotape of sermon broadcast, 12/9/90, WCAX-TV, Orlando, Fla. Tape and transcript on file.
26. Benny Hinn, Orlando Christian Center, audiotape of sermon, late 1988.
27. Benny Hinn, Orlando Christian Center, audiotape of sermon, 12/9/90.
28. Benny Hinn, Orlando Christian Center, audiotape of sermon, late 1988.
29. **Our Position In Christ**, tape series.
30. *ibid.*
31. There are several modern English versions that either translate the second occurrence of **hamartia** as sin-offering or supply that rendering in the margin as an alternate translation. See especially: **The New International Version; The New Testament: A Translation in the Language of the People** (Charles B. Williams); and **The Revised Version, New Testament of 1881**.
32. See I Corinthians 1:30; Hebrews 7:26, 9:14; I Peter 1:18,19; etc.
33. Brian Onken, "The Atonement of Christ and the 'Faith' Message," Christian Research Institute Magazine **Forward**, Vol. 7, No.1, pg. 12.
34. *ibid.*, pg. 13.
35. James Oliver Buswell, Jr., **A Systematic Theology of the Christian Religion**, Grand Rapids, Mich., Zondervan Publishing House, 1977, Vol. 2, pg. 68.
36. Sermon given at the "Spiritual Warfare Seminar," Jubilee Christian Center, San Jose, Calif., May 2, 1990. Tape and transcript on file.
37. Benny Hinn, "**Praise the Lord**" program, Trinity Broadcasting Network, 12/6/90. Transcript on file.
38. *ibid.*
39. Benny Hinn, videotape of sermon broadcast on Trinity Broadcasting, 12/1/90. Tape and transcript on file.
40. "**Praise the Lord**" program, 12/6/90.
41. "Spiritual Warfare Seminar" sermon.
42. **Our Position In Christ**, tape series.
43. Hinn, sermon, 12/1/90.
44. "Spiritual Warfare Seminar" sermon.
45. **Christian Retailing Magazine**, March 15, 1991, page 6.
46. *ibid.*
47. Adelle M. Banks, "Pastor Sells His Books, But Not All Buy His Ideas," **The Orlando Sentinel**, March 2, 1991, pg. D-8.
48. **Charisma and Christian Life**, April 1991, pg. 28.



BOOKS IN REVIEW

CULT WATCH

What You Need to Know About Spiritual Deception

by John Ankerberg and John Weldon
Harvest House, 370 pages, \$11.95

Harvest House has taken "The Anker Series" — those compact booklets which examine the cults and occult — and combined them into one of today's most powerful cult information handbooks.

The publication provides its readers with extensive data and analysis of the history and beliefs of several of the more prominent religious movements challenging the Christian Church. Included are chapters on the Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons, Freemasons, New Age Movement, the Occult, aberrant teachings in the Church and other topics. Nearly 1100 endnotes provide the documentation for the research found in the pair's eight chapters and four appendices. The information in the book is presented in a "question and answer" format.

The authors also provide their readers with several pages of recommended reading for further study. The only item lacking in the publication is a thorough index even though the book's back cover says a "Complete index gives you ready access to the wealth of information contained in **Cult Watch**." While the index would have helped, this guidebook still is one of the more valuable resources available to the Christian today.

—MKG

A HOLY REBELLION

Strategy for Spiritual Warfare

by Thomas Ice and Robert Dean
Harvest House Publishers, 195 pages, \$7.95

Now, more than ever, the Church needs this book. Christian television and radio are replete with modern day "prophets" and their claims of revelations and extrabiblical knowledge. Christian bookstores are full of unbiblical and questionable guides for spiritual warfare and alleged episodes of deliverance of Christians from demons. These range from the outlandish Rebecca Brown's **He Came to Set the Captives Free** to the well-respected and highly regarded Charles Swindoll in **Stress Fractions**. Authors Thomas Ice and Robert Dean present a much-needed balanced and scriptural approach to these and other spiritual conflicts facing Christians today.

Ice and Dean have written a book you won't want to put down once you've picked it up. From the opening

chapter, which entices the reader with various scenarios based upon true incidents of spiritual warfare readily accepted by Christians today, to the final chapter's answer to these scenarios, the reader is presented with the "biblical" strategy to challenge the theology of C. Fred Dickason, Merrill Unger, John Wimber and C. Peter Wagner. The conclusions by the authors further confront other, unnamed, theologians and their unscriptural proclamations.

For example, Ice and Dean's comments regarding extrabiblical revelation is easily applied to the claims of Benny Hinn, Vineyard/Kansas City Fellowship and numerous other "prophets." The authors write: "This is still one of Satan's lures today — the idea that he has additional information which God is withholding from us, information that we need in order to deal with various situations not covered in the Bible. Such a pursuit for extra-biblical knowledge is really a criticism of God and His character" (page 53).

This publication is loaded with scripture references to validate the authors' theology and conclusions. **A Holy Rebellion** is the book we've been waiting for, to present scripturally clear and accurate responses for a "strategy for spiritual warfare."

—MKG

HOLY WAR FOR THE PROMISED LAND

by David Dolan

Thomas Nelson Publishers, 242 pages, \$9.95

March 1991, was a typical month in Israel. Seventeen Israelis were stabbed by Arabs. Six of the stabbing victims died. Israeli cars were ambushed in two separate shootings. The level of rage is escalating in the "Holy" Land. What is going on?

Dave Dolan knows. More importantly, he knows why. Dolan, a CBS radio journalist stationed in Israel since 1980, has produced the clearest, most lucid account of the Arab/Israeli struggle yet printed. Dolan, a Christian, addresses the issues biblically.

The last two chapters are worth the price of the book and contain information of which few people are aware. Dolan's insight brings the reader right up to date on a very complex issue. He shows clearly that the issues are not political or diplomatic, but theological.

The ideological and theological commitments of Jews and Arabs dictate what is happening. The conflict has its roots in the religion of the combatants. In the Mideast mix of dictators, deceit and division, there is nothing clearer in print. Buy it and read it!

—GRF

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