



The Quarterly JOURNAL

The Newsletter Publication of Personal Freedom Outreach

VOL. 16, NO. 3

JULY-SEPTEMBER 1996

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Mark Bubeck and Spiritual Warfare

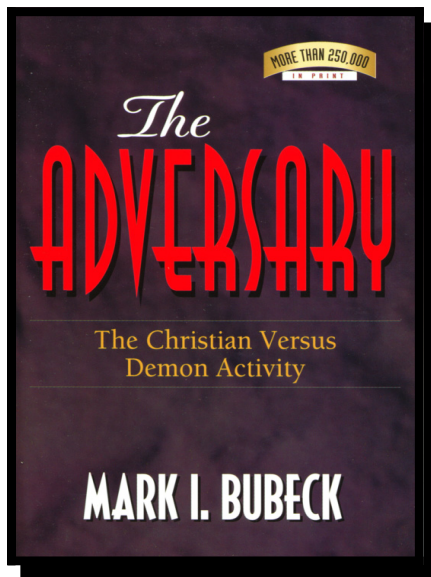
The Cloning of Jessie Penn-Lewis

by G. Richard Fisher

Spiritual warfare could become a "hot button" topic in the Church because of an aggressive and, in some cases, a sincere but naive group who believe demons must be directly cast out of Christians. Books promoting the teaching are enjoying brisk sales in Christian bookstores while critiques of it collect dust.

For some time the ideas of Mark Bubeck have been circulating via Moody Bible College and Moody Press. Bubeck has several works on the market, his most popular being the 1975 publication, *The Adversary*. A foundational principle to Bubeck's teaching is that demons can get into Christians. He does not call it "possession," but a direct infestation, indwelling and demonization.

Though we would not put Bubeck



into the category of fringe Charismatics or Rebecca Brown,¹ the end result of his teaching is the same:

that Christians can have indwelling and *ancestral* demons that must be expelled.

Books propagating the teaching of generational "familiar spirits" are gaining endorsements from not only Bubeck, but people such as Warren Wiersbe, Erwin Lutzer (Pastor of Moody Church) and Charles Stanley.² One wonders how such respected names in evangelical Christianity turned up on such a list.

Bubeck's teaching gets no support from Jesus, who cast demons out of the *unsaved* with a word and never resorted to exorcisms or long renunciation prayers. They find no evidence in the story of Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5), who were killed, not prayed over. Even if the new exorcists skew Jesus' metaphorical statement to Peter ("Get behind Me, Satan"—Matthew 16:23), there is no reported demon invasion, exorcism or prayer ritual which shows it was Peter's sin nature responding to confusion brought externally by Satan.

While it must be said that some of
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Editorials

THAT'S JUST HIS OPINION?

Mormon doctrine is often hard to grasp, not just intellectually but in trying to understand what is and isn't a legitimate tenet.

From its inception, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has been overrun with evolving revelations, scriptural alterations and theological contradictions. The late prophet and president of the sect, Ezra Taft Benson, sought to reduce the confusion by decreeing, "The Living Prophet is more vital to us than the standard works" (i.e., *The Book of Mormon*, *Doctrine and Covenants*, *The Pearl of Great Price*, and the Bible).

Anyone who discusses with an LDS missionary the theological edicts issued by their leadership eventually will hear the retort, "That's just his opinion!"

Gilbert Scharffs, in his 1986 book, *The Truth About "The God Makers,"* used this evasive technique when he wrote, "Church leaders are entitled to their own opinions like everyone else. Official doctrine in the LDS church is determined by canonization of scripture and official statements by the First Presidency or the prophet himself when he speaks for God" (pg. 243).

Yet, at times, even the "prophet himself," speaking for God, is not immune from this tactical diversion.

Take, for example, the overwhelming and irrefutable evidence that Brigham Young taught that the pre-mortal Adam of the Garden of Eden was none other than God the Father (Elohim). This teaching, denounced in 1978 by then-president and prophet Spencer W. Kimball, has become known as the "Adam-God" doctrine. While not directly stating Young's declarations were "just his opinion," a publication by Mormon apologist Van Hale purported to debunk this unscriptural belief by calling the doctrine a "theory."

Another example is the LDS teaching on the birth of Jesus Christ. While the Bible clearly teaches that Jesus' physical body was supernaturally conceived by the Holy Spirit (i.e., through a virgin apart from any human relations or agency) and born of the Virgin Mary (Matthew 1:18), Mormonism rejects this fundamental doctrine.

In the Mormon system, the first "spirit child" born to the Father (Elohim) and one of his goddess wives was Jehovah (Jesus). When the time came for Jesus to receive a mortal body, Elohim (who himself is a man exalted to godhood) came to Earth and took the Virgin Mary as his wife, had sexual relations with her, thereby personally begetting a physical body for his firstborn Son.

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RLDS NAMES NON-SMITH SUCCESSOR

The Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints broke a 135-year practice in April by naming a prophet-president who is not a descendant of Joseph Smith Jr. At the April conference, W. Grant McMurray was selected to lead the church.

The transition for prophet-president McMurray was eased by resigning leader Wallace B. Smith, who had expressed his preference for McMurray several months before. On April 15, McMurray was voted nearly unanimously into the RLDS church's top office.

Smith will stay on as president emeritus after spending 18 years as the church's leader. Under his administration, the church began ordaining women, built its second temple (located next to its headquarters in Independence, Mo.), and expanded membership into 36 countries, claiming 245,000 members.

RLDS conferees also discussed a possible change in the church's name and debated the issue of homosexuality.

No consensus was reached on the name change. Some delegates strongly endorsed fuller participation of homosexuals within their congregations stating that the church's position on homosexuality is "just out-of-date [and] old-fashioned." Others actively opposed it, suggesting that "the next step could result in sanctioning acts such as bestiality and pedophilia." A task force had been formed last fall at the request of the First Presidency to look into the homosexual issue. However, this task force does not have a time frame, nor is it obligated to report to the World Conference.

—AMG

MEXICANS BLOCK MORMON TEMPLE

Following opposition from local Roman Catholics and concern over urban development issues, city officials in Monterrey, Mexico, have blocked construction of a temple by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. According to a Religious News Service report, "thousands of Catholics gathered signatures and purchased advertisements in newspapers protesting the temple construction."

In spite of the public protest, Monterrey officials maintain that their decision was not based upon the community's outcry, but that the plans for the construction of the structure "did not comply with the city's urban development laws."

The initial plan for building of what was to be the country's second Mormon temple began in an effort to accommodate the growing LDS population in Mexico. The temple was to accommodate the 200,000 Latter-day Saints who make up 49 congregations in northern Mexico. However, because of strict requirements imposed by the Mormon church upon its adherents, only a small fraction can get permission to enter the temple after its dedication. The LDS church claims a total membership of 720,000 in the Latin American country.

L. Don LeFevre, LDS representative, said "the church would work toward reaching an agreement with the Monterrey officials and dispelling misconceptions [about church doctrine and practice] within the community," the Religious News Service reported.

The country's only LDS temple is in Mexico City and was completed in 1983.

—MKG

RESURRECTION BATTLE WITH EFCA ENDS

The Evangelical Free Church of America recently reaffirmed its stand on the belief in the physical, bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ and believers. The denomination's declaration, publicized in late January, has ended the serious concerns and criticisms of a number of evangelical scholars and a coalition of 155 apologetic and counter-cult ministries. Personal Freedom Outreach was part of the initial alliance of ministries that formed in October 1990.

The conflict arose from the writings of Professor Murray Harris of the EFCA's seminary, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School (now Trinity International University) in Deerfield, Ill. Harris contended in two works, *Raised Immortal* and *From Grave to Glory*, that the nature of Christ's resurrection was one of "imma-

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Jesus and the PHARISEES

A Jewish Perspective

The Jerusalem Talmud records a significant observation by a rabbi who flourished in the third century of our era. Reflecting on the history of his people, he said, "Israel went into exile only after it became divided into twenty-four sects."¹

Although we cannot be sure of the exact number, there can be no doubt that at the time of the destruction of the Temple in 70 A.D., the Jewish community comprised numerous parties, sects and brotherhoods. Recent scholarship has questioned and effectively destroyed the concept of a monolithic "Judaism" that existed during the Second Temple (516 B.C. - 70 A.D.). Furthermore, Josephus' famous listing of the standard divisions — Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes, and the "Fourth Philosophy" (the Zealots) — is simply not adequate in conveying the mosaic of Second Temple Judaism. The new source material (e.g. Dead Sea Scrolls) which has become available in recent years, as well as a reassessment of information from the known sources (e.g. the Pseudepigrapha) have indicated a number of "hidden streams" during the period prior to the fall of the Temple.

"The names of numerous groups and sects and trends within Ju-

by William C. Varner

daism are known from this age — Pharisees and Sadducees, high-priestly families and country folk, Samaritans and Dositheans, sophisticated Hellenized Jews of the great cities of the Diaspora, and ascetic, separatist sects like the Essenes, the number of types and varieties could probably be reckoned in dozens."²

A recent compendium produced by Jewish, Catholic, and Protestant scholars explores the familiar theme of the "Messianic idea" in what the authors call the various "Judaisms" that existed "at the turn of the Christian era."³ It is the thesis of this book that anything like a "normative Judaism" during this historical period is a figment of popular imagination that simply never existed. The diverse viewpoints surely shared certain "loci communes," but were so diverse as to be styled "Judaisms," not just "sects of Judaism," by these scholars.

During Jesus' ministry He undoubtedly encountered in one way or another many, if not most, of these groups. Sadducees, Zealots, and Herodians are all mentioned in the gospels, as well as numerous

references to what the rabbis called the *ame ha 'aretz* (the people of the land). These were the common folk, often untrained in the "schools" and unobservant in ceremonial details, who also provided so many of the followers of Jesus in those early days. (See further, John 7:49; Luke 18:9-14; Acts 4:13.)

The most famous group Jesus encountered, however, was the Pharisees.⁴ While their membership may not have totaled more than a few thousand in His day, their influence was felt far beyond their havurot ("brotherhoods"). They were often associated with the scribes, most probably professional scholars in the Torah, but sometimes were clearly distinguished from them.⁵ Some of the most stinging rebukes Jesus issued were directed toward the Pharisees. Probably the strongest diatribe is recorded in Matthew 23. At least seven times in that chapter, Jesus pronounced the following condemnation: "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!" He condemned and illustrated their rapaciousness, their selfishness, their inward spiritual emptiness, and their emphasis on "scruple" while neglecting the "weightier" matters of

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The Curse of

CURSE THEOLOGY

THE RETURN OF REBECCA BROWN, M.D.

Christian myths, legends and sanctified superstitions abound: Madalyn Murray O'Hair's petition to the FCC to ban Christian broadcasting; the hitchhiker who tells of Christ's imminent return, then vanishes; an entrance to hell in Siberia; and Procter and Gamble's sponsorship of occult activities.¹

Superstitions have existed for centuries² and have received a new treatment by Rebecca Brown, whose latest book offers a curse theology that is more mystical than biblical.

Breaking satanic and demonic curses has been a staple of the Charismatic fringe for some time, although few of its exponents agree on the extent of curses or how to break them. Personal Freedom Outreach dealt with the subject in an article in a previous *PFO Journal* editorial called "The Roots and Fruits of Deliverance"³ and concluded that neither its roots nor fruits were biblical.

Brown's book, co-written with her husband, Daniel Yoder, is titled *Unbroken Curses — Hidden Source of Trouble in the Christian's Life*. This, like her other books, is an unbiblical treatise on spiritual war-

by G. Richard Fisher
and M. Kurt Goedelman

fare full of factual and historical misinformation and embellishments. The book's only redeeming aspect is that it allows us to confront the errors of those who apparently want to live under a curse rather than the liberty of the sons of God.

Some Christians think that a silent contempt for teachings such as Brown's is the best response and that to answer her only validates the ideas while others argue that silence lets these teachers deceive the untaught without hindrance.

The Truth Behind the Cover

Longtime readers of *The Quarterly Journal* will recall that Rebecca Brown is really Ruth Bailey, a small-town physician who, after Indiana authorities revoked her license in 1984, traveled to California and began promoting her strange views of the occult and deliverance with the help of Christian tract and comic book publisher, Jack T. Chick. Police reports, medical documents, newspaper articles, and testimony of family and neighbors all verify her confused life and spurious claims.⁴

Brown also had during the first decade of her spiritual "career" an associate named Elaine who claimed to be the bride of Satan — complete with a honeymoon — who said she had been "Satan's representative" to the world who negotiated weapon sales with foreign heads of state.⁵ Previous books by Brown tell stories of the two teaming up to fight occultists in their small Indiana town and of Brown delivering nearly 1,000 people from hard-core Satanism in just over two years.⁶

Brown also wrote that in the mid-1980s, before she moved to California, she made a covenant with God that included the condition she "would eventually lay down [her] life out here for the Lord."⁷ Despite that covenant, Brown dissolved her partnerships with Elaine and Jack Chick and left California. On Dec. 10, 1989, she married Daniel Michael Yoder, who was living in Phoenix, Ariz., at the time.

Daniel's Story

Brown spins another yarn in the biographical sketch of her husband in *Unbroken Curses*.⁸ She writes that her husband was born into "a

very wealthy Jewish family of international bankers” and that when he was six years old, his parents sent him to Switzerland to study under Rabbinical and Cabalistic teachers in an “exclusive boarding school.” According to Brown, Yoder continued his schooling there until age 19 and later completed graduate studies in Switzerland.

Reminiscent of Elaine’s tall tales of ritualistic abuse, Yoder also speaks of descriptions of unrestrained torture and abuse by the Cabalists “through his years at school.” Upon his arrival at the boarding school, young Daniel was taken into the “subterranean levels” of the institution and “placed in a small windowless room” where he was kept as a prisoner. Following a failed escape attempt, Yoder found himself in a “small round room, just a few feet in diameter.” Here the evil rabbis “removed the lid from the top [of the chamber], and dumped thousands of spiders down on top of him, many of them poisonous.”

As the spiders began to crawl over and bite him, Yoder cried out in anguish. “Immediately, a brilliant shaft of light pierced down through that building, down into the cold little room where Daniel was cowering, shivering and crying on the floor,” Brown writes. Two arms reached forth from the light and cradled the child as he “slept in the arms of Jesus.” “When he awoke, all of his spider bites were healed,” Brown writes.

Brown’s account says that after completing his schooling, Yoder inherited a fortune, quickly rose to power in his grandfather’s business, then his family’s business, and finally formed corporations of his own. “Wealth became a play toy; power was his god,” Brown writes. At thirty years of age, Yoder’s parents ordered him into a “forced marriage” with a woman named Kai, claiming the wedlock would “further the family fortune.” Ac-

ording to Brown, Kai, too, had been “terribly abused because of being raised in Cabalism.”

Following their marriage, Kai “found Jesus Christ and gladly accepted Him as her Lord and Messiah.” Because of her conversion to Christianity, the couple’s families had “hired men to capture them and to force Kai to renounce Christ or kill her.” For three months they eluded capture, but “in God’s permissive will” they were finally abducted. Brown writes, “They were flown to Israel where Daniel was chained to a wall and forced to watch as Kai, his first and only love, was tortured to death!”

Yoder then allegedly “fled to the United States where he hid in a cabin in the mountains and studied Kai’s Bible for a whole year.” As a result, he accepted Jesus Christ and left his family and wealth. On Nov. 10, 1989, he met Brown and just a month later they were married. Shortly afterwards, they moved to Lake Park, in northwestern Iowa.

From Banker to Neurosurgeon

“From the very start, I knew something wasn’t just quite right with the couple,” Dickinson County Sheriff Greg Baloun told PFO. Baloun was the Lake Park Chief of Police in 1990 when Brown and Yoder arrived in Iowa. “He passed himself off, the first time I met him, as a [semiretired, well-to-do] neurosurgeon. He never passed himself off as a minister to me. He was always a doctor,” Baloun said. Baloun added that Yoder said “his father was a doctor,” not a very wealthy international banker.⁹

Baloun says Yoder told him how he had to expeditiously travel from California to Nevada to do a delicate medical operation. “He told me how he had this Chrysler Cordova that would do 200 miles an hour and that he ran from California into Nevada to do a special surgery in a mere amount of time,” Baloun

recalled. When asked why stops for gas didn’t impede his record pace, Yoder said, “I had a customized 40-gallon gas tank.”

“He had an answer for everything,” Baloun said. “He was a big talker, but you could catch him in lies all the time.”¹⁰

Lorraine Bush, a local real estate agent who handled the couple’s lease agreement on a two-story home in Lake Park, agreed with Baloun’s evaluation. “I was suspicious of him right away,” she told the local newspaper.¹¹

Following a six-month stay in Lake Park, Brown and Yoder moved to Estherville, a town 25 miles to the northeast. They remained there briefly, then moved to Spencer, where Yoder became associated with a nondenominational fellowship, the Wells of Living Grace Church.

Legal Woes Always Seem to Follow

Baloun’s suspicions eventually extended to other law enforcement departments. An investigation into Yoder began in November 1990 by several agencies, including the Emmet County (Iowa) Sheriff’s Office, the U.S. Office of the Inspector General and the Iowa State Patrol. The investigation ultimately revealed that Yoder also went by such names as William Joseph Stewart and Tony Michael Griffin and had used different Social Security numbers and birth dates.

As the investigation intensified, Yoder left Iowa and returned to Phoenix where, as a result of the persistent detective efforts of Iowa State Patrol Officer Marv Loebach, he was arrested on July 29, 1991. Yoder was charged with falsifying motor vehicle registrations and driver’s licenses, and falsifying Social Security records by allegedly using the Social Security number of a dead man.

On Sept. 6, 1991, he was extradited to Iowa. The next day, he was indicted on two counts of perjury. Authorities learned that he had a criminal record and had served time in Minnesota and Missouri and admitted to receiving “psychological evaluations, counseling, or hospitalizations.”¹²

Yoder was released on Sept. 9 after D&R Bonding Agency of Spirit Lake posted a bail bond of \$10,000.¹³ Six weeks later the charges were rephrased into three counts, the first being perjury and the second and third being designated as fraudulent practice in the third degree.¹⁴ On Nov. 12, Yoder entered a written arraignment and plea of not guilty to all three charges.¹⁵

Ambivalent Revelations

As the prosecution sought more information from Yoder, it received a stream of misstatements and conflicting information. In an Application and Order to Amend court document it was noted: “That Defendant’s charged name herein be amended from Daniel Michael Yoder to the Defendant’s true and correct name William Joseph Stewart.”¹⁶ Beyond his aliases, various other court documents revealed contradictory birth dates, occupations (such as pastor and bookstore manager) and Social Security numbers.¹⁷

However, one fact gathered by the prosecution from Yoder, that remained consistent throughout, was that he had only “completed seven years of school.”¹⁸

Negotiating a “Guilty” Plea

In spring 1992, following recommendations made by the Dickinson County Attorney, Yoder opted for a “bargained plea” and “voluntarily” entered a “plea of guilty.” The county attorney had recommended to the court the following sentence and disposition: “(1) Fine of \$2,000.00 plus a 30 percent sur-

charge. (2) Court costs to be taxed to the defendant. (3) Dismiss Counts I and III.”¹⁹

On April 29, 1992, Yoder entered a guilty plea on Count II of the indictments. The court document signed by Yoder stated in part: “I hereby enter my PLEA OF GUILTY TO Fraudulent Practice in the Third Degree, an aggravated misdemeanor, in violation of Section 321.97 and 714.11(3) of the Code of Iowa, which crime was committed by me on April 4, 1991, as charged in said information.”²⁰

Based on Yoder’s guilty plea, “the judgment of the Court” stated “that the Defendant be and he is sentenced to pay a fine of \$1,976.92, a surcharge of \$593.08 and court costs of \$60.00.”²¹ The fine, surcharge and court costs were ordered by the court to be paid within two days. Yoder complied and the case was closed.²²

The couple left Iowa and Brown resumed compiling her story of purported battles with the demonic. They currently live in Clinton, Ark., and have altered the name of their ministry from “Wells of Living Grace” to “Wells of Joy.”

Curses Are Everywhere

Brown’s premise is that most, if not all, of a Christian’s problems stem from unbroken demonic curses. She writes that most Christians are unaware that curses of poverty, calamity, temptation, misfortune and struggle are there because of curses placed on them (or their families) through inheritance, trespassing on the devil’s territory, breaking vows to God, or forgetting a sin and failing to confess it.

Brown’s contention is that we must know every type of curse. Any unrelieved problem is probably the result of ignorance of an unbroken curse. No doubt she has been reading the extreme views of C. Fred Dickason, Mark Bubeck, Frank Hammond, Neil Anderson, James

G. Friesen, C. Peter Wagner and others, but she fails to cite sources.

Brown writes that no one is exempt from these curses. She advises:

“Search your home. Do you have statues of demon gods in your house? Pray over everything. Be aware that many children’s toys are actually statues of demon gods.”²³

Or, consider this:

“If you have visited a mosque and removed your shoes, you have been guilty of giving honor to a demon god! This is an abomination in God’s eyes and will bring a curse on you.”²⁴

Brown writes that tattoos and hairstyles bring demonic curses²⁵ and the former should be covered with oil and curses are to be broken at our command.²⁶

Brown teaches that visiting King Tut’s tomb in Egypt or when the exhibition was brought to America must be repented of to break a demonic curse. Brown writes that more than 13 years of illnesses and demonic attacks in her own life were the result of such a visit.²⁷

Brown suggests:

“Are you experiencing unsolved problems in your life, your family, or your church? Perhaps the source of these problems is an unbroken curse. Pray and ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you any curses that may be in operation in your life.”²⁸

Conspicuously absent from Brown’s recommendation is any biblical reference or justification for such advice. As long as we are in a fallen world among sinners and our bodies are unredeemed and subject to decay and death, some problems may never go away. Christians must pray for God’s grace as commanded in 1 Corinthians 12.

Romans 8 reminds us that all these catastrophes are a part of life

and that they in no way diminish the love of God for us. Paul in that chapter does not direct us to break the curses. Rather, he says, trust in the love and sovereignty of God.

Back Under Moses

Brown clearly puts believers back under the Law with these words: "However, the spiritual principles laid down for the children of Israel in the Old Testament still hold true in our lives today."²⁹ She has found "spiritual principles" from the Old Testament that on closer reading are not even there; they are bizarre notions that she reads into the Old Testament text. Going back under the Law is bad. Going back to the Law and making up things is even worse.

Demons, Demons, Demons

Brown lists three types of curses: "Curses from God; Curses from Satan and/or his servants with the legal right to curse; Curses from Satan and/or his servants without the legal right to curse."³⁰ Again, no Scripture is cited but she loosely uses "deliverance" buzzwords and terminology such as "legal right."

She also teaches that, "Curses from Satan and/or his servants always involve demon spirits. When a curse is placed, demon spirits are sent to a specific person or family for a specific purpose."³¹

While Christians should believe in demonic influence (especially on the unsaved) and while Christians believe in the reality of temptation and that the Bible reveals much about Satan and demons (especially their limitations, defeat and doom) they should reject Brown's writings for what they are: sheer imagination and the regurgitation of others' false teachings.

Aunts, Uncles, Grandma and Sanctification

The idea of curses and breaking curses on a believer, especially the

perpetuation of family curses is clearly heresy in regard to the doctrine of sanctification. Another variation on the theme is the teaching of the need for deliverance from bondage. This bondage, either from past personal sins or ancestral sins, has to be broken with special prayers or rituals. While most teachers contradict each on the specifics, Brown appears to have picked up all the strands.

While this teaching puts the potential of the cross' work at the disposal of believers, the believer must work to keep free of demonic influence. Ephesians 6 is clear that means of sanctification are to be used and the unseen world will be taken care of by our Savior.³²

Inevitable or Changeable?

Curse theology consistently teaches that a pervasive or demonic power must be taken off the life (broken) after conversion by means of special prayers, rituals and words, and the process usually will involve a deliverer. The usual means of grace (prayer, Bible reading, fellowship, ordinances) are not considered sufficient.

Those of the deliverance school usually call demonic what can be explained using the biblical model of besetting sins, sinful habit patterns, sin's mastery and the put off/put on dynamic of the New Testament. There is a deceit and a bondage of sin that today would be called addiction. Change is difficult but there are biblical means and methods to deal with sin's bondage without lapsing into superstition.

Skewing the Old Testament

In Chapter 2 Brown uses the Joshua 7, Ai/Achan story in a classical "deliverance" misuse of Scripture. Using this story as a justification for curses and ritual incantation prayers of deliverance proves far too much. An understanding of this event actually defeats what Brown is

trying to establish.

Achan stole clothing, silver and gold from the battlefield, knowing that the loot was to have been destroyed. Disobedience, not demons, had to be dealt with.

We know that in Achan's situation, as well as in other cases of Israel's history, God used family or communal judgments with Israel. That was part of the Law system under Moses. It cannot be used as a principle for the Church with demons and curses introduced that are foreign to the text. It is silly to say that whole families, or a whole Church or the whole body of Christ would be judged, demon-plagued and killed because of the sin of one person. Again, Brown proves too much.

Grace is not the Law and the Law is not Grace. Israel is not the Church and the Church is not Israel. There are no demons mentioned in Joshua 7 and family excommunication (in this case death under the Law) was enacted as the answer, not ritualistic praying to break curses. Matthew 18 shows us that excommunication of the individual from fellowship (not death) is the way today to "rid sin from the camp." Why didn't Jesus tell us to break the curse in Matthew 18?

The elaborate prayer rituals and incantations Brown gives to her readers to take authority over demons are the product of an imagination gone riot³³ with no New Testament teaching to support them. In Matthew 6:7, Jesus tells us that the heathens use vain, repetitious prayers. Jesus removed demons (from the unsaved) with a word, not a ceremony.

The Hebrew word "curse" occurs in the Old Testament 82 times and has various meanings. Pagans thought they could use the power of cursing to deal with their enemies as in Numbers 5. Pagans also used ritualistic incantations to try break-

ing curses. Israel was warned against learning the ways of the heathen.

Looking for Biblical Sanity

The Hebrew word *qalal* (translated curse), can mean belittling or putting someone down as in Exodus 21:17. It can also be an oath to one's God as in 1 Samuel 17:43. In Job 24:18 it is simply used as nonblessing. To not be blessed was looked on as being cursed in a general sense.

Genesis 3:17 shows us that *arar* (another Hebrew word for curse) can be used of God's pronouncement of judgment on those who break covenant. The New Testament speaks to us of God's loving chastisement in Hebrews 12. Confession of sin and change of lifestyle is the obvious response to God's correction.

The words of British scholar W.E. Vine are helpful:

"God alone truly 'curses.' It is a revelation of His justice, in support of His claim to absolute obedience. Men may claim God's 'curses' by committing their grievances to God and trusting in His righteous judgment. ... The Septuagint translates *arar* by *epikatarasthai*, its compounds and derivatives, by which it comes into the New Testament. 'Curse' in the Old Testament is summed up in the statement, 'Cursed is the man that obeyeth not the words of this covenant...' (Jeremiah 11:3). The New Testament responds: 'Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree...' (Gal. 3:13)."³⁴

It is futile to argue for any kind of curse on a believer, including the curse of the Law from Exodus 20:5 (to the third and fourth generation), since Christ has redeemed us and set us free from the curse of the

Law. The greater Moses has set us free from the law of sin and death. Romans 5 elaborates on that deliverance. Judgment for sin comes to any generation that hates God (Exodus 20:5) and mercy comes to any generation that loves God (Exodus 20:6). There is no demonic osmosis taught in Scripture.

Vine further notes that the Greek word for curse, *anathema*, means "the disfavor of Jehovah." The Greek word *katara* is a put-down "uttered out of malevolence." Another Greek word *kakologeio* is simply to speak evil of someone. There are other noun and verb forms, but they offer no more than the above.³⁵

The Grace Release

Brown also cites examples of unjust suffering in the world.³⁶ It is true that at times the innocent suffer because of the overt sin or passive neglect of a parent. Sin has real and horrible social consequences that no one doubts. The nature of our response to the consequences is important.

Parents can pass down repetitive sin patterns taught to their offspring. However, God's grace and conversion can make all the difference. Peter reminds us in 1 Peter 1:18-19 that we are not stuck in our parents' traditions or patterns of living, but are redeemed and set free by the blood of Christ. We can learn from their mistakes and not repeat them.

Scripture Twisting

Brown makes much of the fact that the Jews in Nehemiah 9 confessed the sins of their forefathers.³⁷ Understanding Jewish cultural patterns and the Hebrew word confession helps clarify the issue and show Brown to be wrong.

The careful Bible student will first note that there's nothing about demons or demonic curses mentioned. Secondly, there is nothing about

ritual or exorcistic prayers to break curses. Thirdly the context is that the "confession" is an acknowledgment of the idolatry of the previously exiled Jews which produced caution in the new generation to avoid that sin in particular. Fourthly, according to verse 5, this was the activity of the priests and Levites as the mediators and not all the people were personally involved. In type, those priests stand for Christ and His work for us.

In their acknowledgment, the priests affirm God's right to have judged their forefathers by dispersing them to Babylon through the means of Assyrian and Babylonian invaders. God had not forsaken them (verse 31) however, and had allowed them to return to the land (verse 36). Now what they would do was not break some curse but simply commit themselves to God's covenant in a new way. It was the captivity that did the chastening and cleansing, not a curse-breaking ceremony.

The Hebrew word in Nehemiah 9:2 translated confess is *yadah*. It is a word that emphasizes the underlying sinfulness of all creation.³⁸ It is much like Paul saying "all have sinned." In saying that, Paul was not referring to curses that had to be broken but like Nehemiah's people acknowledging the sinfulness of humanity and the truth that only God is truly sinless and perfectly holy and pure.

Keith Brooks sees the experience in Nehemiah 9 in a more positive way than the curse breakers:

"When we are seeking to God for mercy and relief in time of distress, it is an encouragement to faith to look back upon our own and our father's experiences, noticing how all glory belongs to God and all shame to ourselves. When confessing our sins, it is good to reckon up God's many mercies that we may see how ungrateful we

have been."³⁹

Back Into the Dark Ages

Brown, along with others, lapses into medieval superstition with the curse mentality. The folklore of the late Middle Ages is the real tap root of the modern deliverance movement.

In the Bodleian Library in England there is a 15th century invocation used to break a curse. It is a representative of many such curses during a biblically illiterate and superstitious time:

"To relieve one who has been cursed. Say, in the name of God ye father, and his Son the Holy Ghost three persons one Trinity, is to comfort one of the ill-worked on my body, that has disturbed my body with evill payne [sic] from the wickedness. In the name of God. Amen."⁴⁰

Latin documents exist from the Middle Ages which give incantational prayers to get rid of demons.⁴¹

Demon "Immigration"

Brown maintains — again without Scriptural evidence — that demons and demon curses can come in by way of citizenship papers. This, according to Brown, was revealed to her and a co-worker through prayer:

"The Lord showed both of us at the same time. That certificate of citizenship was the legal doorway that allowed all the demons associated with her family line to have clear entrance into the United States! I had never thought of this idea before. As Ann burned the citizenship certificate of her ancestor, she not only commanded the demons out of her life, but also commanded all the demons associated with her family line to leave America forever. Then she asked the Lord to close that doorway so that they could not

return. How many families have migrated to the United States over the years? As each individual became a citizen, a legal door was opened for all of their family demons. I wonder what a difference it might make if every Christian in America severed all ungodly inheritance and kicked their family's ancestral demons out of the nation?"⁴²

Apart from having no biblical basis for her teaching, Brown ought to be concerned that she does not catch a lawsuit for advising people to burn legal documents or documents that may be needed in the future. Her self-appointed authority is evident in the statement: "I never thought of it before." Therefore, because she thought of it, it must be truth. Certainly no Bible writer ever thought of it.

Cursed Dirt and Cursed Buildings

Brown also teaches that Indian reservations are cursed ground. That would make a lot of soil in America cursed soil since at one time Indians wandered freely, worshiped, and buried all over. No one could be sure that they were not on cursed land. When the Jews took Canaanite land and built on it, no special exorcisms were required.

The Bible does not suggest cursed houses as Brown does.⁴³ *How* we live in our homes is the more important matter. What we say and do in our homes and how we model Christ in our homes is the urgent message of the New Testament. Ephesians 4-6 lays out the kinds of conduct God wishes in our homes. Cement and mortar, glass and shingles do not carry demons. People's activities and words either bless or "curse" and hinder the family members in that home.

To justify her view of demonic curses on a home Brown refers to Leviticus 14:33-45, which speaks of a "leprous plague" (which the He-

brew text indicates is persistent mold or fungus growing in the walls). The replastering or destruction of a house has nothing to do with breaking demonic curses.

Keil and Delitzsch shed light on the passage: "Vers. 54-57 contain the concluding formula to chap. xiii and xiv. The law of leprosy was given 'to teach in the day of the unclean and the clean,' i.e. to give directions for the time when they would have to do with the clean and the unclean."⁴⁴ So the mold and mildew in the home were used to teach an ideal and symbolic separation. Cleanliness in all aspects of life was used by God to portray His holiness and the holiness He required of His Old Testament people.

J.R. Dummelow, in his *Commentary on The Holy Bible* observes:

"This, like the leprosy of garments ... bears only an external resemblance to the leprosy of human beings. It is a fungus or discoloration making its appearance on the walls of houses."⁴⁵

Watching Out for Watchers

Brown has invented a classification of demons called "watchers":

"They are demon spirits placed at particular sites to maintain surveillance over the immediate area. These can be placed into objects, animals, or drawings. Animals are rarely used because they move about too much. In the last case, a person places a drawing of a watcher in a strategic spot and then returns later to communicate with the demon attached to the drawing to find out what went on in that area during his absence. The drawings may take different shapes, but they always contain eyes — or at least one eye."⁴⁶

The only "watchers" in the Bible are the Watchmen who guarded the gates and walls of ancient cities and

God's angels in Daniel 4:13.

Curse Theology a Failure

Curse theology is itself a curse to the Church. It is speculative and extrabiblical. It plays into Satan's hand by overstating his powers and misses the balance of systematic study of proper biblical demonology and Satanology. It sidetracks Christians and derails them from healthy growth. It fails to explain the origin of human trouble and dilemmas of life and offers a useless solution.


It minimizes the real power of the Cross in salvation and the power of grace and God's Spirit in sanctification. It obscures the biblical means of grace and warfare outlined in Ephesians 4-6, Hebrews 12 and Romans 12. Rebecca Brown's concepts are a failure biblically. They should be rejected and refuted.

Endnotes:

1. See further, *The Great Christian Rumors* by Rich Buhler.
2. See *The Encyclopedia of Jewish Religion*, pp. 136-137.
3. *The Quarterly Journal*, Vol. 8, No. 4, Oct-Dec., 1988, pp. 2, 10-11.
4. Bailey's medical suspension for malpractice and abuse (supposedly after her conversion) along with the whole bizarre and sordid story was investigated and chronicled by Personal Freedom Outreach in several *Journal* articles. These articles have been compiled and are available in booklet form, *Drugs, Demons And Delusions — A Christian Investigation of the Testimony and Claims of Rebecca Brown*,

M.D.

5. Rebecca Brown, M.D., *He Came to Set the Captives Free*, pg. 62.
6. Rebecca Brown, M.D., *Prepare for War*, pg. 224.
7. *Ibid.*, pg. 35.
8. Rebecca Brown, M.D. with Daniel M. Yoder, *Unbroken Curses*. See pp. 149-175 for the biographical sketch of Daniel from which the information in this section has been acquired.
9. Personal interview with Sheriff Greg Baloun by M. Kurt Goedelman, April 2, 1996.
10. *Ibid.*
11. *Lake Park (Iowa) News*, Aug. 8, 1991, "Former resident faces state, federal charges," pg. 1.
12. Department of Correctional Services, Third Judicial District, Pretrial Release form of Danie [sic] M. Yoder. Filed 91 Sep -9. Copy on file.
13. Bail Bond, Form 10-H-1, dated 91 Sep -9. Copy on file.
14. Information form, State of Iowa, Plaintiff, vs. William Joseph Stewart a/k/a Daniel Michael Yoder, Defendant. Filed 91 Oct 18. Copy on file.
15. Written Arraignment and Plea of Not Guilty, State of Iowa, Plaintiff, vs. Daniel Michael Yoder, Defendant. Filed 91 Nov 12. Copy on file.
16. Application and Order to Amend, State of Iowa, Plaintiff, vs. William Joseph Stewart a/k/a Daniel Michael Yoder, Defendant. Filed 91 Oct 18. Copy on file.
17. Pretrial Release form, op. cit.; Written Arraignment and Plea of Not Guilty, op. cit.; Plea of Guilty, Count II, State of Iowa, Plaintiff, vs. Daniel Michael Yoder, Defendant. Filed 92 Apr 29. Copy on file.
18. *Ibid.*
19. Plea of Guilty, op. cit.
20. *Ibid.*, (upper case in original).
21. Judgment Entry, State of Iowa, Plaintiff,

- vs. William Joseph Stewart A/K/A Daniel Michael Yoder, Defendant. Filed 92 Apr 29. Copy on file.
22. Final Disposition Report, William Joseph Stewart A/K/A Daniel Michael Yoder. Filed 5/5/92. Copy on file.
23. *Unbroken Curses*, op. cit., pg. 51.
24. *Ibid.*, pg. 60.
25. *Ibid.*, pg. 70.
26. *Ibid.*, pg. 72.
27. *Ibid.*, pp. 75-77.
28. *Ibid.*, pg. 13.
29. *Ibid.*, pg. 15.
30. *Ibid.*, pg. 17.
31. *Ibid.*
32. A saner, safer and more Scriptural view of the sanctification process (which is the historical orthodox view) can be found in the book *Sin and Temptation — The Challenge to Personal Godliness* by John Owen, abridged by James Houston and edited by Dr. J.I. Packer or *The Pursuit of Holiness* by Jerry Bridges.
33. *Unbroken Curses*, op. cit., pp. 24-25.
34. W.E. Vine, *Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words*, pg. 54.
35. *Ibid.*, pp. 141-142.
36. *Unbroken Curses*, op. cit., pp. 30-32.
37. *Ibid.*, pp. 33-34.
38. *Vine*, op. cit., pg. 45.
39. Keith L. Brooks, *The Books of the Bible Summarized*, pg. 92.
40. C.J.S. Thompson, *The Hand of Destiny — Folklore and Superstition for Everyday Life*, pg. 173.
41. See further, *The Quarterly Journal*, Vol. 8, No. 4, op. cit., pg. 11.
42. *Unbroken Curses*, op. cit., pp. 39-40.
43. *Ibid.*, pp. 86-87.
44. C.F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*, Vol. 1, pg. 391.
45. J.R. Dummelow, *Commentary on the Holy Bible*, pg. 94.
46. *Unbroken Curses*, op. cit., pg. 96. 

Jesus and the Pharisees

(continues from page 4)

justice, mercy, and faith.

These statements and their frequent citations have resulted, unfortunately, in the word "Pharisee" becoming a synonym in the English language for "hypocrite." Consider the following definition of "Pharisaic" in *Webster's Unabridged Dictionary*: "pretending to be highly moral or virtuous without being so; hypocritical."

These denunciations of Pharisaic practices have been highly criticized by some writers. They have charged that Jesus and the early church writers presented a false caricature of the Pharisees that is not consistent with what the Jewish sources say about them. Consider for example, the two following comments, one from an older scholar and one from a contemporary Jewish writer:

"If Pharisaism had been, in its true intent and real effect, anything like what he (Jesus) sup-

posed, then of course his denunciation would have been well deserved. But he only saw its outward appearance, he did not know it from within, nor apparently ever try to understand it. ... Pharisaism was no 'organized hypocrisy,' no dead corpse of a once living religion. It was very much alive, and is alive still."⁶

"Jews maintain that the Pharisees were unfairly maligned in the Gospels, which accuse them of rigid formalism, self-righteousness, hypocrisy, and exter-

nalism. In truth, the Pharisees ... stressed devotion of the heart, worship of God for its own sake, and the obligation to go beyond the letter of the law."⁷

One of the reasons why there may be such sensitivity in this area is that Jesus' condemnation was not limited to some antiquarian sect with no relevance for Jewish life today. Of all the various Jewish parties that flourished during the Second Temple, only the Pharisees (along with the quasi-Jewish Samaritans!) survived the devastation of 70 A.D. as an identifiable continuing entity. The reconstructed Judaism of the second and third centuries was, in essence, based on the Pharisaic beliefs and practices of pre-70 A.D. Without apology, modern scholars affirm that Talmudic Judaism and modern "Orthodox" Judaism are essentially Pharisaism.

"Pharisaic Judaism became normative Judaism. Its principal features — the synagogue, the rabbi, prayer, Torah study, and belief in the oral law — became the modes of religious expression guiding Jewish life ever since. All Jewish life today, therefore, stems from the Pharisaic tradition and derives its central religious characteristics from it."⁸

Did Jesus (or the early Church writers, as some critical scholars affirm) unjustly caricature the Pharisees in his denunciations? By examining what the Pharisees said about themselves in their own writings perhaps we can conclude whether Jesus treated them unfairly according to their own norms.

In addition to the New Testament, there exist various descriptions of the Pharisees both in Josephus and in the Babylonian and Jerusalem Talmuds. Flavius Josephus, who spent time among the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes before joining a Pharisaic *havura* gives the following distinguishing characteris-

tics of the group. (1) They were meticulous about observing the law, both in its written and oral forms; (2) They affirmed the immortality of the soul and the resurrection of the body; and (3) They had a greater influence on the common people than did the other sects.⁹ It was the Pharisaic emphasis on the oral law (*torah shb'al peh*), called the "tradition" in the Gospels, with which Jesus had the greatest conflict (cf. Matthew 15:1-9). It is written, "It is more culpable to teach against the ordinances of the scribes than against the Torah itself."¹⁰ In other words, if the traditional interpretation is binding, it is in fact the final authority, and not the written Torah.

There is a passage, appearing in slightly different forms in both the Babylonian and Jerusalem Talmuds, that sheds an abundance of light on the self-perception of the Pharisees.¹¹ This passage describes seven different types of Pharisees. A paraphrase of the difficult Talmudic language describes the following seven: (1) The "shoulder" Pharisee wore his good deeds on his shoulder so everyone could see them. (2) The "wait a little" Pharisee always found an excuse for putting off a good deed. (3) The "bruised" Pharisee shut his eyes to avoid seeing a woman and knocked into walls, bruising himself. (4) The "hump-backed" Pharisee always walked bent double, in false humility. (5) The "ever reckoning" Pharisees was always counting up the numbers of his good deeds. (6) The "fearful" Pharisee always quaked in fear of the wrath of God. (7) The "God-loving" Pharisee was a copy of Abraham who lived in faith and charity.¹²

From this passage, it is evident that later Pharisaic rabbis engaged in a healthy dose of self-criticism. While percentages cannot be dogmatically determined from the examples, it is striking that six of the seven "types" were something far short of the Pharisaic ideals. There-

fore, when Jesus castigated the Pharisees for hypocrisy and false piety, He was only pointing out what the Pharisees recognized about many of their own numbers!

One modern Jewish scholar has commented on a variation of this line of thought.

"Matthew's Gospel is particularly antagonistic to the Jewish establishment. But when Jesus refers to Pharisees as "hypocrites" (Matthew 23:13) and a "brood of vipers" (Matthew 23:33), he is berating fellow Jews. Jesus undoubtedly regards his violent language as following the tradition of the prophets when they castigated fellow Jews of their day. In other words, it is a *family quarrel*. Jesus looks upon himself as continuing the Jewish tradition of self-criticism."¹³

Thus, in the strong language He employed, Jesus followed in the footsteps of the prophetic example and also presaged the Pharisaic self-criticism of the Talmud.

Doubtless, there were godly Pharisees who lived up to their ideals. Representatives of the seventh group, the God-loving Pharisees, even appear in the New Testament. In Luke 13:31, we read, "The same day there came certain of the Pharisees, saying unto him, 'Get out and depart from here; for Herod will kill you.'" This passage shows that among the Pharisees were those who admired and respected Jesus. Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea, who become followers of Jesus, were most probably Pharisees, as well as Saul (John 3:1; 7:50; 19:38,39; Acts 22:3; Philippians 3:5).

"The sharp rebukes Jesus administered to the Pharisees and their frequent appearance as his antagonists have obscured the considerable area of agreement between them. He had many

friendly contacts with certain Pharisees (Luke 7:36ff; 11:37; 13:31-33; 14:1; Mark 12:28-34; Matt. 23:1,2). These verses, if nothing else, should have made unnecessary the lesson many Christians have had to learn from Jewish scholars, that 'Pharisee' was not synonymous with 'hypocrite'.¹⁴

Let it be understood, therefore, that Jesus' condemnation of the Pharisees was not universal, and that it was consistent with the Pharisees' own recognition that they often fell far short of their own goals and aspirations.

Another factor regarding the diversity that existed among the Second Temple Pharisees should be considered. In the generation prior to the public ministry of Jesus, there lived and taught two great Pharisees — Hillel and Shammai. These two constituted one of the series of "Pairs" (zugot) who led the Pharisees in the last two centuries before the turn of the era. Both Hillel and Shammai led great "schools" in Jerusalem. They and their disciples, called the Bet Hillel and the Bet Shammai in rabbinic literature, represented two distinct currents in the Jewish approach to halacha — the conservative and the progressive. Generally speaking, Shammai followed a more stringent and literal interpretation of the law, while Hillel expounded a more flexible application of its demands.

The Talmud records an incident that is characteristic of the differences between the two great scholars.¹⁵ A Gentile came to Shammai with the strange request that he be taught the entire Torah, but that it be done during the time he could stand on one foot! It is recounted that Shammai, a surveyor by trade, chased him away with a cubit stick. When this Gentile approached Hillel with the same request, instead of being scolded for such an impudent demand, he was told, "What is

hateful to you, do not do to your fellowman. This is the entire Torah. All the rest is commentary — now go and study." The parallels with Hillel's statement are readily recognized in Jesus' statement in Matthew 7:12 and Paul's "summary" in Galatians 5:14.

Other contrasting opinions illustrating the divergent approaches of Hillel and Shammai are:

1) Their disagreement over the length of the probationary period for entering the havurot of the Pharisees. Hillel said it should be thirty days, while Shammai insisted on a year.¹⁶

2) Concerning the Shema, the school of Shammai took the words "when you lie down and when you rise up" (Deuteronomy 6:7b) with extreme literalism, claiming the Shema must be recited in a reclining position in the evening and only while standing in the morning. Hillel's school taught that the passage referred to times of recitation rather than the posture.¹⁷

3) Shammai and Hillel differed on what constituted the grounds for the bill of divorcement in Deuteronomy 24:1. Hillel allowed divorce for any cause, whereas Shammai limited it to sexual immorality.¹⁸ This discussion in the "schools" forms the background of the Pharisees' question to Jesus in Matthew 19:3: "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any cause at all?"

4) Shammai also was known for strictness in applying the law to his own family. For example, he insisted on his minor son fasting on Yom Kippur "but they (Bet Hillel) ordered him to feed him with his own hand." He is also said to have broken away the plastering over his daughter-in-law's bed, so her child, just born on the first day of Sukkot, could have a sukkah covering over his head!¹⁹

As has been mentioned, the Judaism that survived the destruction of

the Temple was Pharisaic. It is also interesting to note that it was the Hillel approach to the halakah that was adopted in the academies at Yavneh and in Galilee during the second and third centuries. It was Hillel-type Pharisaism that became the "Judaism" of subsequent generations.

The question that needs to be considered is whether the stringent, hyperstrict Pharisaic scruples that received the strongest condemnation from Jesus might be those most often espoused by the Shammai school. Thus, Jesus' harshest words may have been directed, on certain occasions, more toward a segment of the Pharisees than toward all of them. Perhaps this offers a solution to the problem raised by R. Travers Herford that Jesus condemned a Pharisaic practice of avoiding the parental responsibilities of the fifth commandment in Mark 7:5ff. "The alleged practice of evading the fifth commandment is nowhere known in the Halakah."²⁰ Perhaps this practice and others condemned by Jesus were found in Bet Shammai and not in Bet Hillel, which became the "normative" interpretation for the rabbis in the Talmud, while the Shammai opinion was rejected.

This is not an attempt to eliminate the real differences between Jesus and the Pharisees. For example, Jesus' association with "sinners" illustrates a different conception of separation from the world than the Pharisees had (Mark 12:15-17; Luke 9:9-13; Luke 5:27-32). Jesus affirmed clearly that at times the oral law, championed by the Pharisees, contravened the written law (Matthew 15:1-20). Furthermore, Sabbath-keeping illustrated a different set of priorities to Jesus and the Pharisees (Mark 2:23; 3:6). Greater attention to the dynamics of Jewish diversity in the Second Temple Period, however, can keep Christians from a misguided idea of Pharisaism and also keep Jews from blaming

Jesus and the New Testament authors for falsely caricaturing their ancient forbears.

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Endnotes:

1. *Jerusalem Talmud*, "Sanhedrin," 29C.
2. Michael Stone, *Scriptures, Sects, and Visions*. Fortress Press, Philadelphia, 1980, pp. 57, 58.
3. *Judaisms and Their Messiahs at the Turn of the Christian Era*, eds: Jacob Neusner, William Green, Ernest Frerichs. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1987.
4. For a representative treatment of the Pharisees, see *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ*, Emil Schurer. T and T Clark, Edinburgh, 1979, Vol. II, pp. 381-403. For an older but sympathetic and thorough treatment, see *The Pharisees*, R. Travers Herford. Macmillan Company, New York, 1924.
5. For a treatment of the Pharisees that clearly distinguishes them from the scribes, see *Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus*, Joachim Jeremias. SCM Press LTD, London, 1969,

pp. 246-267.

6. Herford, pp. 210, 211.

7. Yehiel Eckstein, *What Christians Should Know About Jews and Judaism*. Word Books, Waco, Texas, 1984, pg. 255. See also the discussion in *The Jewish People and Jesus Christ*, Jacob Jocz, pp. 17-21.

8. Eckstein, op. cit., pg. 258.

9. *Antiquities of the Jews*, XVIII, 1.

10. *Mishnah Sanhedrin*, 11:3. Cited in Schurer, pg. 390.

11. *Jerusalem Talmud*, "Berachot," 14b; and *Babylonian Talmud*, "Sotah" 22b.

12. The passage from the English translation of the *Babylonian Talmud* is as follows: "AND THE PLAGUE OF PHARISEES etc. Our Rabbis have taught: There are seven types of Pharisees: the *shikmi* Pharisee, the *nikpi* Pharisee, the *kizai* Pharisee, the 'pestle' Pharisee, the Pharisee (who constantly exclaims) 'What is my duty that I may perform it?', the Pharisee from love (of God) and the Pharisee from fear. The *shikmi* Pharisee — he is one who performs the action of Shechem. The *nikpi* Pharisee — he is one who knocks his feet together. The *kizai* Pharisee — R. Nahman b. Isaac said: He is one who makes his blood flow against walls. The 'pestle' Pharisee — Rabbah b. Shila said: (His head) is bowed like (a pestle in) a mortar. The Pharisee (who constantly exclaims) 'What is my duty that I may perform it?' — but that is

a virtue! — Nay, what he says is, 'What further duty is for me that I may perform it?' The Pharisee from love and the Pharisee from fear — Abaye and Raba said to the tanna (who was reciting this passage), Do not mention 'the Pharisee from love and the Pharisee from fear'; for Rab Judah has said in the name of Rab: A man should always engage himself in Torah and the commandments even though it be not for their own sake, because from (engaging in them) not for their own sake, he will come (to engage in them) for their own sake. R. Nahman b. Isaac said: What is hidden is hidden, and what is revealed is revealed: the Great Tribunal will exact punishment from those who rub themselves against the walls" (*Sencino Edition*, Vol. VIII, pp. 112, 113).

13. Louis Feldman, "Is The New Testament Antisemitic?" *Moment*, December, 1990, pp. 32-35, 50-52.

14. Everett Ferguson, *Backgrounds of Early Christianity*. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1987, pg. 408.

15. See *Babylonian Talmud*, "Shabbat", 31a.

16. Tosephta *Demai*, II, 12, 48. Cited in Jeremias, pg. 251, n. 22.

17. Cited by David Rausch, *Building Bridges*. Moody Press, Chicago, 1988, pg. 100.

18. *Babylonian Talmud*, "Gittin," 9, 10.

19. *Mishnah Yoma* 4:2; *Sukkah* 2:8, cited in *Encyclopedia Judaica*, Vol. XIV, pg. 1292.

20. Herford, op. cit., pg. 206.

Mark Bubeck

(continues from page 1)

Bubeck's thoughts on the world and the flesh are helpful, his views on the demonic present problems. Anyone teaching that demons can occupy Christians opens up the strange world of "deliverance" doctrines.

In *The Adversary*, Bubeck speaks of Jessie Penn-Lewis' book, *War on the Saints*, as "a classic in the study of Satan's war against believers."³ It is obvious he has borrowed some of his extreme views from this woman who could be called "the Mother of all deliverance teachings."

Penn-Lewis was a Welsh mystic who wrote *War on the Saints* in 1904. Six years earlier she had suffered a breakdown and spent weeks in bed.⁴ The current version of her book is heavily edited and a bit more palatable.

Bible expositor Donald Grey Barnhouse sounded a warning about Penn-Lewis years ago:

"Satan ... can never be on the throne of God nor can he ever come inside the body or being of one who has been born again ... We put forth this statement categorically in spite of the works of the English group known as the Overcomers, whose bible is frequently Mrs. Penn-Lewis' book, *War on the Saints*."⁵

Penn-Lewis believed the Church was entering the tribulation period and coinciding with that was a great demonic attack on the Church and Christians. She actually believed that demons could reside in the head, eyes, jaws, tongue, muscles of the face or in the nerve tissues of the brain in believers. They could be spatially located even in the bowels of Christians.⁶ Bubeck, too,

purports to having discovered demons of nausea and colon,⁷ so some of Penn-Lewis' excesses are being played out in Bubeck's books.

Bubeck has cobbled together ideas from Penn-Lewis, Charismatics, "deliverance" teachers and his own interpretations of purported encounters with demons.

In this Bubeck shows himself to be an empiricist, not a biblicist. Thomas Ice and Robert Dean Jr. show the difference:

"The empiricist will gather all the information he can from those who claim to have had some experience with an angel or a demon, or those who have helped deliver people from demonic influence. He will find out what they learned from these encounters and which methods, in their opinion, proved successful in delivering a

person from demonic oppression. He will collect these case studies and then draw conclusions about what we are to do when we encounter a demon. Even when the Bible is consulted with this process no matter how high the empiricist's view of Scripture, in practice the Bible is treated as just another voice or witness to demonic activity. This always results in adjusting the biblical teaching on demons until it fits with the conclusions of various experiences."⁸

The idea of demons as an internal enemy in believers cannot be found in the works of Reformers, Puritans or the historic mainstream and does not square with the Scriptures. Bubeck and his ilk would have us think that the Reformers, the great past leaders of Church history and the inspired writers of the Bible missed something.

Bubeck has developed a paranoid and simplistic view of some areas of life. This perspective often lays the blame for certain emotions and sin patterns in a believer on the doorstep of demons who can enter and control the Christian's life. Bubeck rejects the idea that a believer can be "possessed"⁹ but says the enemy can gain ground in a believer and a direct control in internal areas (other than the spirit). This is what requires deliverance.¹⁰

Bubeck gives the following instructions when confronting a demon in the life of a worldly believer:

"Do demand that if the wicked power has divided into several parts, that he become a whole spirit. Do be prepared for the wicked power to try to hurt the person you are working with in some manner. Sudden body pains, a severe headache, a choking experience, and the like, are very often used. Command the power, naming the

symptom, to release this hold immediately in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ."¹¹

In a long list of problems that Bubeck says could be attributed to demons,¹² he fails to note that these also could be attributed to a medical etiology, to sleep loss or sleep deficit, to sins and habit patterns or a number of other things.

Bubeck's Information Source

For proof of demonic control of Christians and ancestral bondage, Bubeck refers to other "experts" in the field, teachers who agree with him. David Powlison, in one of the kindest treatments of this movement one will ever find, refers to the true source of the ancestral demons teaching:

"The notion of ancestral spirits is a bit of occult theology read *into* the Bible, not *out* of it."¹³

In his book, *The Rise of Fallen Angels*, Bubeck cites Moody Professor C. Fred Dickason,¹⁴ who says he got some of his information from demon contacts (in Christians) who told him the truth about their lies.¹⁵

Bubeck also appeals to C. Peter Wagner.¹⁶ Wagner is an extreme fringe Charismatic who has claimed he has the gift of "leg lengthening."¹⁷ Some years ago Wagner called together a conference at Fuller Seminary to bind the demon of homelessness, the demon of sickness (which apparently did not work), and the demon of the Bermuda Triangle.¹⁸ He also promotes the theories of Costa Rican occult psychologist Rita Cabezas, who promulgates the idea of territorial demons who rule geographical areas and must be discerned and prayed away.¹⁹

Another of Bubeck's experts is James Friesen,²⁰ who claims to have found demons lodged in people's necks and shoulders, something he got from "a flash of an idea."²¹ He also believes in ancestral demons.²²

This constant citing of experts creates, in Richard Ofshe's words, "a belief that relies not on evidence but on the constant quoting and referencing of others who hold the same belief."²³

Diminishing Christ's Work

D.L. Moody said:

"Someone has said there is always a devil at our right hand: though if we resist the devil he will flee from us. But it is different with the flesh; the flesh cleaves to us. **I believe that the flesh is the worst enemy we have.**"²⁴

David Wells explains how the kind of ideas and teachings such as Bubeck's, empty the cross of its accomplishment:

"Oscar Cullmann has noted the uncommonly large number of New Testament passages in which Christ is spoken of as being at God's 'right hand' ... These passages testify to the powerful rule that he is now exercising in heaven and on earth. Paul admonishes his readers about Satan's strategies in Ephesians 6:10-20 only after he has told them that by virtue of the cross and resurrection, Christ is already 'far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come' ... That is to say that the warfare with demonic powers is not still awaiting some ultimate resolution: it has been won already, and Christians have entered into the victory through their union with Christ. When Paul comes to deal with spiritual warfare in Ephesians 6:10-20, he counsels believers simply to 'withstand' and 'stand,' drawing on the weapons of Christian character, the Word, and prayer."²⁵

As one reads *The Adversary*,

Bubeck appears almost Shamanistic. In a renunciation prayer he suggests the following words advising that all Christians should pray it out loud not knowing what works of Satan have been passed on from our ancestry:

"I here and now renounce and repudiate all the sins of _____'s blood ancestors. ... I cancel out all demonic working that would want to be passed on to _____ from his blood ancestors."²⁶

This undercuts the whole doctrine of redemption from the past (1 Peter 1).

Ancestral Bondage

The notion that a Christian can suffer demonic influence because of the sins of an ancestor has circulated for a number of years and Bubeck has picked it up along with other errors. His explanation:

"The Word of God hints that when demonic powers get their hooks into a person's life, a problem of a transfer to succeeding generations is created. These fallen angels can control a human person only as long as that person lives. When he dies, the demonic powers continue to live. Seeking to continue their mission for Satan, they look to the most direct claim for their next work: this seems to be the deceased person's children, grandchildren, nieces and nephews. Thus demonization becomes a generational problem."²⁷

Thomas Ice addresses these errors after examining Exodus 20:5:

"It seems clear from the passage that the basis of God's judgment or blessings are based upon the choice of each successive generation's decision to follow after the sins of their ancestors. Thus, the mode of transmission of the sins is not because the children are under a curse from sin committed by the parent. In-

stead, the sin is conveyed through the child learning the sin patterns from his parents and choosing generation after generation to persist in them. A mystical or curse transmission is not taught or implied from the text! Ezekiel 18:2-20 says that God curses each Israelite individual for his own sins and not specifically because of something that their fathers have done ... In fact *there is not one example in the entire Bible of a saved person being under a satanic curse, which had to be 'broken' by Christian exorcism or distinct confession.*"²⁸

Possession vs. Invasion

In *The Adversary*, Bubeck posits that a believer cannot be possessed in the same sense as an unbeliever. This unbiblical nuance is also held by Dickason and others. However, the mind and emotions are subject to invasion and control. Bubeck and others would call it "giving ground." The control is real, pervasive and determinative, according to Bubeck and an exorcistic type of renunciation prayer is the only way out. He explains it this way:

"This is like opening the door of your life and letting in the thief who is going to rob and hurt you have a place in your life ... Satan's worker will try to get more helpers to move in, and they will begin to try to dictate to you in certain given areas how you will feel, think or act. They will even try to increase their areas of hold through more deceiving and more lessening of your own will to the substitution of theirs. ... They will be so clever as to make it almost impossible to separate your own mind, will and emotions from theirs."²⁹

Most commentators would see giving Satan ground as giving Satan an advantage. Ephesians 4:27 says, "give no place to the devil."

"Place" is recognized as a metaphor for opportunity as the context shows. When we speak lies and speak harshly to others, we give Satan a foothold by promoting his kingdom and agenda rather than God's. There is nothing in the context about indwelling demons.

Bubeck's ideas contradict such Bible verses as 1 John 1:9 and Psalm 51, which tell believers to confess and forsake our sin, not look for demon scapegoats. It circumvents the admonition of Hebrews 12 to struggle with and overcome besetting sins and continue to run with perseverance. Our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit. Demons cannot occupy God's temple.

While James 4:7 tells us to resist the devil, exorcisms and renunciation prayers are not mentioned. James says we are to humble ourselves under the hand of God, repent, change, stop befriending the world and acting like the unsaved. We are to resist, that is, stand for God. Bubeck's ideas destroy responsibility and the truth of lifelong struggle as found in the eighth chapter of Romans. Galatians commands us to put off the works of the flesh and put on the fruit of the Spirit.

Bubeck's "Findings"

Bubeck's writings give the picture of someone who knows more than the writers of Scripture, though he probably does not intend to convey that idea. In *The Adversary*, he discovered or uncovered a "snarling, cruel, crude, vulgar demon that had taken the same name as this young man's last name."³⁰ No biblical text or evidence is sighted.

In a long passage on communication (Ephesians 4:22-32) Paul deals with sins of speech. Vulgarity is to be stopped and we are to replace it with speech that builds others up. Perhaps all that is too easy or too normal. Paul nowhere hints of having conversations and confronta-

tions with “vulgar demons.”

Bubeck continues this tack with his interpretation of his 11-year-old daughter’s stomach and colon problems.³¹ His concern right away was demons. After repeated ritualistic prayers and in accordance with his expectations he discovered and bound the demons “Nausea,” “Colon,” “Destroyer” and “Deceiver” as well as “no-name” demons. After long nights and many renunciation prayers, protracted binding of various demons, his daughter was “cured.”

Most Christians would be troubled to learn that what Bubeck is proposing is akin to Unification Church doctrine. In *The Divine Principle*, the Rev. Sun Myung Moon teaches that believers are subject to Satan’s invasions.³²

Even the Assembly of God denomination issued a position paper in 1972 that would refute the extremes of modern day “bondage breakers.” They hold the biblical position that demons are never an *internal* foe for the saved.

There is a universe of difference in our approach to the Christian life when we begin to see demonic influence as internal and determinative as opposed to external and resistible. James 1 makes it clear that the *internal* foe is always our own sin nature. It also seems very clear that Satanic attack is always an *external* influence for the Christian. The onslaughts are real and difficult but external.

Christian Research Institute writers Brent Grimsley and Elliot Miller, saw this clearly showing that pastoral care hangs on this issue.³³

If interior lusts are what draw us away, then Satan can appeal externally to the foe within. That, we believe, is the biblical perspective. There is nothing in Scripture that would persuade us that demons can

come into the body and the interior realm of a Christian in any way. If our sin patterns are bound to our old nature all the hocus pocus of exorcistic rituals, renunciation prayers and acting out a script will not offset a continued lifelong struggle and prayerful watching. Bubeck’s view appeals to our quick fix, microwave generation.

Eric Sauer saw this truth clearly in the athletic figures of Scripture:

“The race looks *forward* to the heavenly goal ... Boxing points to our opposition to the enemy *in* us. ... I buffet *my body*, and bring it into bondage ... Wrestling refers to our fight with the powers of darkness *around* and *beneath* us. ... these three comparisons, in spite of their great similarity, nevertheless picture three different directions of our Christian warfare.”³⁴

Sauer is quick to point out that the powers of darkness are “around and beneath.” Satan and demons are clearly shown in the Bible as the infernal and external enemy while the flesh is the internal double agent.

As Thomas Ice wrote, all the shenanigans of binding demons, rebuking the devil, inherited curses are all a “false mysticism.”³⁵

The True Path from Bondage

The biblical route for the growing Christian is not an excursion into the realm of the demonic, or a misty ancestral history, but what the Puritans used to call “all-around godliness.” This simply meant the week-in and week-out continuance in all the means of grace: daily prayer, Bible reading, church attendance, regular confession of sin, resisting temptation, fellowship, persistent well-doing, cutting off temptation and obeying Scripture. These are the weapons of true Christian warfare (Ephesians 6, Hebrews 10-12).

Doing all the above will free us from having to rely on magical words and mystical phrases or demon busters and deliverance shamans. Spiritual warfare is fundamentally ethical, moral and behavioral warfare. That basically is the really deep but hard way.

The big question that Bubeck and those like him have to answer is this: If Scripture gives us doctrine and instruction in righteousness and all we need to be “complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work” (2 Timothy 3:16), why is it totally silent regarding the things the deliverance teachers say are so crucial. If it is not in the Word of God where is it coming from?

The devil is only a tempter. He is called that (Luke 4:2). The real origin of evil is our own hearts (James 1:14-16). All the combustible matter is already in us. Satan and demons can only appeal to that in the believer. Let’s not fight imaginary battles, that though sensational in the short run (and good for book sales), have no lasting benefit in the long run. Exorcisms are a detour from the real world of struggle and growth.

Bubeck’s new doctrines will only divide churches and confuse believers. In the end Satan will have won because discerning Christians remained quiet on this vital issue.

Bubeck’s approach as far as depravity, the sin nature, addictions and the mastery and depth of sin (even in a believer) is shallow and deficient. Far more biblical, sensible, and productive are two works from Gary Shogren and Edward Welch, *Addictive Behavior* and *Running in Circles — How to Find Freedom from Addictive Behavior*. The first volume is designed for pastors and counselors, while the second serves as a workbook for a the one being counseled. These are hard hitting, scriptural and practical works.


The words of Thomas Ice and Robert Dean are a fitting conclusion and warning in regard to the demons in Christians teaching:

“We are calling on the body of Christ to reject the proliferating superstitions in Christendom. These beliefs are the products of human thoughts and experiences, but cannot be verified from the Bible. Possibly the fact that so many people have recently been converted out of the occult explains why spiritual warfare in many circles is increasingly resembling a ‘tit-for-tat’ battle between two sorcerers. But the Bible says that our minds are to be renewed by *God’s Word itself*, and not by the Word of God as interpreted from a non-Christian framework, especially a framework which has much in common with the occult.”³⁶

Endnotes:

1. See the accompanying article, “The Curse

of Curse Theology — The Return of Rebecca Brown, M.D.,” found in this *Journal*.
2. See for example *Reclaiming Spiritual Ground* by Jim Logan, Moody Press.
3. Mark Bubeck, *The Adversary*, pg. 129.
4. *Good News Broadcaster*, Nov. 1983, pp. 26-28.
5. Donald Grey Barnhouse, *The Invisible War*, pg. 166.
6. See further, “The Diversion of Deliverance,” *PFO Newsletter*, Vol. 5, No. 3, July-Sept. 1985, pg. 2.
7. *The Adversary*, op. cit., pg. 121.
8. Thomas Ice and Robert Dean Jr., *A Holy Rebellion*, pg. 30. This book is now available under the title, *Overrun by Demons*.
9. *The Adversary*, op. cit., pg. 88.
10. *Ibid.*, pp. 90-92.
11. *Ibid.*, pg. 125.
12. *Ibid.*, pp. 144-146.
13. David Powlison, *Power Encounters*, pg. 46. Emphasis in original.
14. Mark Bubeck, *The Rise of Fallen Angels*, pg. 59.
15. C. Fred Dickason, *Demon Possession and the Christian*, pg. 210. For a critique of Dickason and his work, see *The Quarterly Journal*, Vol. 8, No. 2, April-June, 1988, pp. 2, 9-10.
16. *The Rise of Fallen Angels*, op. cit.
17. C. Peter Wagner, *How to Have a Healing Ministry in Any Church*, pg. 53-54.

18. Michael Horton, editor, *Power Religion*, pg. 64.
19. See further, Mike Taylor, *Do Demons Rule Your Town*, Chapter 9.
20. *The Rise of Fallen Angels*, op. cit., pg. 25.
21. James Friesen, *Uncovering the Mystery of MPD*, pg. 231.
22. *Ibid.*, pg. 257.
23. Richard Ofshe, *Making Monsters*, pp. 202-203.
24. W.H. Daniels, editor, *Moody: His Words, Work, and Workers*, pg. 389.
25. David Wells, *God in the Wasteland*, pp. 180-181.
26. *The Adversary*, op. cit., pg. 149.
27. *The Rise of Fallen Angels*, op. cit., pg. 45.
28. *Biblical Perspectives*, Vol. 5, No. 2, March-April 1992, “An Examination of False Spiritual Warfare Cliches,” pg. 5.
29. *The Adversary*, op. cit., pg. 89.
30. *Ibid.*, pg. 95.
31. *Ibid.*, pp. 117-122.
32. *The Divine Principle*, pg. 148.
33. Brent Grimsley and Elliot Miller, *Christian Research Journal*, Summer 1993, “Can a Christian Be Demonized?,” pp. 16-19, 37-38.
34. Eric Sauer, *In the Arena of Faith*, pp. 51-52.
35. *Biblical Perspectives*, op. cit., pg. 6.
36. *A Holy Rebellion*, op. cit., pg. 194. 

Editorials

(continues from page 2)

Mormon Apostle Bruce R. McConkie acknowledges this teaching in *Mormon Doctrine*. Under the heading, “Only Begotten Son,” he writes:

“Beloved Son, Christ, Son, Son of God, Christ is the *Only Begotten ... the Only Begotten Son ... the Only Begotten of the Father ...* These name-titles all signify that our Lord is the only Son of the Father in the flesh. Each of the words is to be understood literally. Only means *only*; Begotten means *begotten*; and Son means *son*. Christ was begotten by an Immortal Father in the same way that mortal men are begotten by mortal fathers” (pp. 546-547, italics in original).

Under the heading, “Son of God,” in the same book, he writes:

“God the Father is a perfected, glorified, holy Man, an immortal Personage. And Christ was born into the world as the literal Son of this Holy Being; he was born in the same personal, real, and literal sense that any mortal son is born to a mortal father. There is nothing figurative about his

paternity; he was begotten, conceived and born in the normal and natural course of events, for he is the Son of God, and that designation means what it says” (pg. 742).

When this writer has confronted Latter-day Saints with these statements, he repeatedly has been told, “That’s just his opinion!”

There seems to be little hesitation by Mormons to distance themselves from awkward areas of theology proclaimed by their church leaders. Yet one of the LDS church’s tactics to buttress its claim as the only true church is an appeal to the Bible.

A small cardstock handout used by Mormons is said to contain the “Seventeen Points of the True Church.” This circular says its author consulted the Bible to identify the characteristics of the first-century Christian Church, thereby allowing him to discover which is the one true Church upon the Earth today. The circular goes on to say that he found 17 distinctive characteristics of this true church, all of which the LDS church possesses. Some of them were: a restored church, a foundation of apostles and prophets, the teaching that God (the Father) and Jesus Christ (the Son) have bodies of flesh and bone, and the practice of baptism

for the dead.

Absent from the list is the principle that the first-century believers “continually devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching” (Acts 2:42). Adam Clarke, in his *Commentary on the Bible*, writes the Church’s response to the apostles’ doctrine: “They received it, retained it, and acted on its principles” (pg. 962).

Early believers subscribed to the apostles’ authority on the teaching of Scripture and accepted it as the very Word of God. In Christ’s true Church there is nothing optional about believing the apostles’ doctrine. We do not find any record of early Christians dismissing the apostles’ clear teaching with “That’s just Peter’s opinion!” or “That’s just Paul’s opinion!” Those who opposed it, such as Hymenaeus and Philetus (2 Timothy 2:18), were branded heretics.

Equally troublesome for Mormons is the extent to which one can apply the rationalization of “that’s just his opinion.” Does it apply to Joseph Smith Jr.’s claim that God and Jesus Christ told him that all the churches were wrong and an abomination? Can we apply it to Smith’s teaching that God himself was once as we are now and is an exalted man? Or can we apply it to Spencer W. Kimball’s 1978 proclamation that allowed black people to join the Mormon priesthood?

Utah Mission’s Robert McKay highlighted this error in Mormon logic recently:

“Do you see where this leads? If statements that a Mormon doesn’t want to accept can be brushed off as private opinions without authority, so can other statements. If declarations that make the church look bad are mere opinions, so are statements that make the church look good. If a General Authority said something that the Mormon doesn’t believe and it was just that man’s opinion, then the things that the Mormon does believe are also just someone’s opinion” (*The Evangel*, January/February 1996, pg. 8).

Christians need to be aware that in Christ’s Church, adherence to the apostle’s doctrine has never been an option. Their divinely inspired teachings were far more than “just someone’s opinion.”

—MKG

News Updates

(continues from page 3)

riality” and that He now possesses a “nonfleshly” body in heaven. Harris further asserted that the “believer’s resurrection body will come from heaven, not the grave.” (See further, *The Quarterly Journal*,

Vol. 11, No. 2, pp. 5-8 and Vol. 12, No. 3, pp. 2, 14-15.)

At the forefront of bringing resolution to the disagreement was Duane Magnani of Witness, Inc. Magnani, a former Jehovah’s Witness, had charged that Harris’ statements paralleled the heretical beliefs of the Watchtower Society. “If there was not a physical resurrection, there wasn’t a resurrection. The only kind of resurrection in the Bible is physical,” Magnani said.

In its statement of reaffirmation, the Evangelical Free Church said, “[its] leadership reaffirms unitedly and unequivocally the belief that the same body in which Jesus was crucified and was raised again, an immortal body, but nevertheless a physical body with flesh and bones; and that the dead bodies of believers will be raised immortal from the grave when Christ returns.”

A resolution letter dated Jan. 29, 1996, and jointly signed by Magnani, Dr. Paul A. Cedar, president of the EFCA, and renown Christian apologist Dr. Norman L. Geisler stated that the “disagreement has passed” and announced that “through much prayer and good discussion, we have seen that God is faithful to bring us together in brotherly reconciliation.”

—MKG

Book Reviews

(continues from page 20)

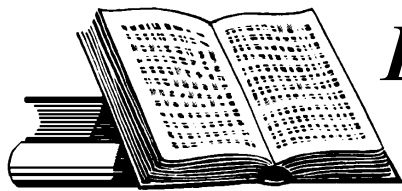
careful exegete who brings to his work years of experience as a biblical counselor. His logic is flawless and meticulous. His research is practical and valuable in helping readers understand how to wage war against the world, the flesh, and the devil.

His conclusion expresses his deep desire to help us reclaim true spiritual warfare:

“Reclaiming spiritual warfare means learning afresh how God pursues His glory in our lives. It means gaining an understanding of progressive sanctification in a Christian culture habituated to look for quick fixes. It means learning to see heroic dramas played out in tiny corners of life. It means becoming human, renewed in the image of Jesus Christ — the pioneer and perfecter of faith. It means learning how to become Christians.”

So-called “power encounters” may seem to have excitement and drama. But they are really a detour from Christ’s walk. This book could bring biblical sanity back to believers and help heal divisions caused by erroneous teachings.

—GRF



Books in Review

THE COMING EVANGELICAL CRISIS

John H. Armstrong, Editor
Moody Press, 268 pages, \$17.99

The irony of this book, which is filled with insights into the current problems in the evangelical Church, is that Moody Press, which has published a number of questionable books of late, is part of the problem.

The 14 contributors (including R.C. Sproul, John MacArthur, Michael Horton and Dave Powlison) skillfully and with documentation diagnose the state of the Church today. With Scripture and Church history they make their case showing the serious drift from doctrine and theology.

Not everyone who reads the book will agree with the strongly stated Calvinistic statements of some of the contributors. However, that should not deter one from getting great insights from the bulk of the book. Most readers will applaud the strong appeals to return to orthodox Christian theology and the sufficiency of Scripture.

In the second section of the book, R. Fowler White addresses the crisis of Divine Revelation and examines the subject, "Does God Speak Today Apart From the Bible?" It is a masterful critique of the fanciful ideas of Jack Deere, formerly with the Vineyard movement.

John Armstrong looks at the current trend of exorcisms, renunciation prayers and ancestral bondage (repeatedly promoted in Moody books). He denounces this type of sensationalistic practice. He titles his very helpful and practical chapter, "How Shall We Wage Our Warfare?"

Robert Strimple does an excellent job in showing us that Clark Pinnock's Process Theology and defective view of God is simply a revival of the ancient heresy of Socinianism.

Evangelicalism is in dire straits and is capitulating to culture and mass-marketing techniques and is rapidly drifting from the sufficiency of Scripture. Thank God that these men have addressed the current decline in a clear fashion.

—GRF

FROM FORGIVEN TO FORGIVING

by Jay Adams
Calvary Press, 175 pages, \$9.95

In apologetics, more important than knowing what's aberrant and heretical, is knowing what's scriptural and orthodox. From Rebecca Brown to a host of modern day psychologists, a "forgive and forget" attitude and granting forgiveness even when it hasn't been sought is promoted as the biblical norm. Not so, says nouthetic counselor, Dr. Jay Adams.

From Forgiven to Forgiving will provide the Christian with solid biblical answers and actions on the topic of forgiveness. Adams, with great biblical insight and wisdom, dispels today's all-too-common misuses and misconceptions about forgiveness.

As you learn to relate and communicate principles of forgiveness in your relationships, you will experience a new freedom in Christ. This outstanding book is a worthwhile topic for group learning.

This volume is a must read for every Christian. After being out-of-print for a few years, and difficult to obtain, the publication has been reissued by Calvary Press. While it has been re-typeset and includes a new cover, the contents are just as much needed today as when it was originally produced.

—AMG

POWER ENCOUNTERS

Reclaiming Spiritual Warfare

by David Powlison
Baker Book House, 160 pages, \$9.99

Believers in Christ agree that we belong to an "army" and who the enemy is. Where we often part ways is over *how* to fight Satan and his demons.

Amid fascination with the demonic spreading beyond fringe groups and the proliferation of "deliverance" ministries that capitalize on it, this book comes across as a welcome breath of fresh air.

Powlison's work is kind, considerate, careful and decidedly biblical. He names names and cuts through the sensationalism of deliverance teachings. Anyone seeking to escape the deliverance movement's drift toward mediumship and mysticism will find solid biblical ground on which to stand in this book. He is a

(continues on page 19)

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