

# The Quarterly Journal



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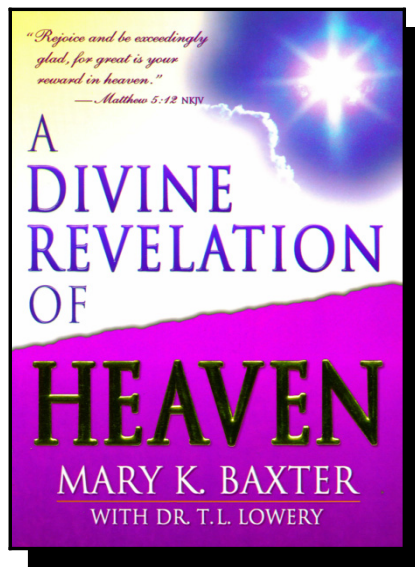
## The "Heavenly Hash" of Mary K. Baxter A Critical Look at Her Celestial Revelation

by G. Richard Fisher

The Apostle Paul instructed Timothy: "Teach no other doctrine, nor give heed to fables" (1 Timothy 1:3-4). Christians must realize that when we move away from the clear and precise teachings of Scripture we end up moving into a land of fable and human imagination.

Mary K. Baxter, like others before, claims to have gone to heaven and returned. Declarations of this nature have gained momentum and frequency in recent years and those claiming trips to the other side constantly contradict one another with their extraordinary and fantastic assertions.<sup>1</sup> Some self-proclaimed heaven-hoppers have been exposed as fakes, such as Betty Malz and her best-selling volume, *My Glimpse of Eternity*.<sup>2</sup>

In Baxter's new book, *A Divine Revelation of Heaven*, she recounts her celestial visitation, which came a number of years ago and followed her "divine revelation" into hell. (It should be noted that the thought of anyone going to hell and leaving is contrary to all of the Bible. Read Luke 16.)



She turned the former adventure into a perennial best-seller, with over one-half million copies in various

languages in print. In fact, according to Baxter's latest book, Jesus has told her that these tours through the nether region and paradise are the very purpose of her life:

"For this very purpose you were born, to write and tell what I have shown and told you, for these things are faithful and true. Your call is to let the world know that there is a heaven, that there is a hell, and that I, Jesus, was sent by the Father to save them from torment and to prepare them a place in heaven."<sup>3</sup>

Baxter's alleged proposition above says in no uncertain terms that Scripture is, at best, ineffective in its ability to "let the world know that there is a heaven, that there is a hell," and that Jesus was sent to save mankind from the latter.

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# Editorials

## DON'T CONFUSE ME WITH THE FACTS, EITHER

In the last issue of this publication, Personal Freedom Outreach co-director Steve Cannon described the challenging endeavor of presenting Latter-day Saints with the hard facts of historical revisions, contradictory theology, failed prophecies and erroneous revelations of the LDS church and its leaders (see *The Quarterly Journal*, Vol. 18, No. 4, "Don't Confuse Me With the Facts... I Have a Testimony," pg. 1). Cannon described how the near-standard response from Mormons is that, despite all the condemning factual information presented, the LDS church and "prophets" are true because of their testimony (i.e., feelings).

There is no doubt that an important spiritual aspect is at work here. Paul told the church at Corinth, "And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers so that they cannot see the gospel of the

glory of Christ who is the image of God" (2 Corinthians 4:4). What is crystal clear and readily understood by believers, is restrained from those perishing (1 Corinthians 2:14).

Yet as I read through Cannon's article, I was unsettled that the consistent pattern of "don't confuse me with the facts," is found not just within the kingdom of the cults (Mormons, Jehovah's Witnesses, etc.), but tragically among the hyper-charismatics and pentecostals who look to their "anointed" superstars.

Let me say from the onset that I am not questioning the salvation of these Christians. Nor am I implying that

anyone and everyone in some type of pentecostal and neo-pentecostal church has developed such a closed-minded attitude. But I will state, unapologetically, that the schemes and distractions of Satan are being effectively used upon these believers as well. And, it appears, the more outrageous and bizarre these "anointed" icons of the pentecostal world become, the more their devotees defend them to the hilt.

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### T.D. Jakes Article Correction

In *The Quarterly Journal* article evaluating the doctrine and practice of Bishop T.D. Jakes (Vol. 17, No. 2), PFO stated that Mr. Jakes was affiliated with the Church of God in Christ (COGIC) denomination (pg. 4). After a re-examination of our research files, we are unable to locate any source for our statement. Thus, we can only conclude that this statement is in error.

Mr. Jakes is part of the Higher Ground Always Abounding Assembly, a Pentecostal fellowship of more than 200 churches begun in the late 1980s.

Additionally, this clarification of Jakes affiliation gives much more credence to the charge of his Oneness roots as the COGIC is clearly Trinitarian in its belief. We regret and apologize for the confusion caused by our original statement.

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## **SNAKE-HANDLER SUCCUMBS TO BITE**

One of the prominent leaders of snake-handling churches in the Southeast died Oct. 3 after being bitten by a rattlesnake during a church service at the Rock House Holiness Church in rural northeastern Alabama. John Wayne "Punkin" Brown Jr., of Parrottsville, Tenn., was preaching with his own 3-foot-long timber rattler in hand when the reptile sank one fang into his finger.

According to a *Knoxville News-Sentinel* report, eyewitnesses from the congregation said that after being bitten, the 34-year-old evangelist "emerged from behind the pulpit, stepped down onto the church floor and toppled over." Church officials immediately phoned for a medical team, but Brown died just 10 minutes after being bitten. Some members of Brown's family have offered that his death may have been the result of a heart attack.

Brown, who began handling snakes in worship services at age 17, had been bitten 22 other times before the fatal bite. Three years ago, his wife, Melinda, died after being also bitten by a timber rattler during a church service at the Full Gospel Tabernacle in Jesus' Name Church in Middlesboro, Ky.

According to the *News-Sentinel* report, "It is a misdemeanor in Tennessee and Kentucky to endanger others with a deadly animal in a church service."

Those espousing the snake-handling religion base their belief on the often-disputed concluding verses of the 16th chapter of Mark's gospel.

—MKG

## **MARIAN APPARITIONS IN GEORGIA TO END**

The Virgin Mary was alive and well and living — or at least appearing — in the state of Georgia. That's what a group of 100,000 people believed. The crowd gathered in Conyers, a town about 30 miles east of Atlanta, in mid-October to receive a message from the Virgin Mary. The revelations are delivered through Nancy Fowler, a woman who claims to have had reoccurring visitations since 1990 from the mother of Jesus Christ.

Fowler alleges that Mary began appearing to her in October 1990 and gave her messages on the 13th of each month. The monthly apparitions lasted through May

1994, when Fowler announced the visitations would be reduced to an annual event each Oct. 13. In 1997, Fowler said that the October 1998 message would be the last public declaration from the Virgin Mary delivered through her. She did not specify as to why the visions were stopping.

Fowler, reading from handwritten notes, presented generic messages to her audience. "If you are worried about the future, put not your attention to those matters. The future holds no concern to those who truly seek God and love him and remain in his favor," she announced. Also during the 30-minute message she claimed that her final vision included a multitude of souls accompanying the Virgin Mary, which were supposedly released from purgatory into heaven in Mary's honor.

Roman Catholic officials from Fowler's area have not sanctioned the apparitions.

—MKG

## **CONVENTION MARKS 20TH ANNIVERSARY**

The Witnesses Now for Jesus Convention held its 20th gathering Oct. 23-25 at Blue Mountain Christian Retreat in the Pocono Mountains of Pennsylvania.

From humble beginnings in 1979, the convention has been a consistent source of counsel, support and encouragement for people whose lives have been torn apart by the Watchtower Society. During the past two decades, help to Jehovah's Witnesses who desire to break free from the organization and to families who have lost loved ones to the sect have been a primary focus of the meetings. The three-day conventions are filled with doctrinal teaching, examinations of Jehovah's Witness doctrine and practice, and testimonies by those who have made their exodus from the Watchtower and have found true salvation through Jesus Christ.

The convention was started by Bill and Joan Cetnar as a way for former Jehovah's Witnesses, family members of current Jehovah's Witnesses, and apologetic ministries to interact and network. Bill served on Personal Freedom Outreach's board of directors from 1984 until 1991 when he went home to be with the Lord. Since Bill's passing, Joan has served as a PFO director and continues to host the conventions.

The first convention was held in October 1979. Dr.  
(continues on page 22)

# Y NOT Z FREAK

## Is the Millennium Bug Really Just a Fly in the Ointment?

by **G. Richard Fisher**  
with **M. Kurt Goedelman**

Y2K — only two letters and a number, but it has some churches, ministries and individual Christians reeling with paranoia. This three-character abbreviation simply stands for the year A.D. 2000. However, the fear and trepidation arise not so much from the ushering of a new millennium, but from what some say will be a computer apocalypse on Jan. 1, 2000.

Due to enormous costs, at the advent of computers nearly 40 years ago, software programmers conserved on memory and data storage by using only two digits for the year-date code. For example, an entry for the year 1965 simply became 65. However, the number for the year 2000 will confound older computers as the 00 will be read as 1900, since these computers read dates as two-digit numbers. Other computers, equipped with fail-safe designs, will see 00 as an faulty input and simply terminate operations.

This, we are told, will confuse, cripple and shut down millions of computers and computer-driven mechanisms. According to alarmists, a monumental disaster is coming with massive computer shutdowns affecting every strata of society, including governments, financial institutions, utilities, hospitals, telecommunications, airline travel and on and on. As the final minutes of Dec. 31, 1999, tick away, millions of computers worldwide will be knocked out, sending business and the economy spinning and crashing into catastrophic global chaos.

### A FRIGHTENING PLOT LINE

Doomsday is just a few short months away, they say. This massive shutdown will throw the world into upheaval. Some have scenarios that include the president declaring martial law or even the notion that these failed computers will usher in Armageddon, setting the stage for the Antichrist and the end. Most of the doomsday prognosticators have a book or program for sale on how to get ready, stockpiling food, water, gold, and in some cases, guns and ammunition.

The scenarios of what will happen nationally and even worldwide, range dramatically from catastrophic doomsday predictions to total disregard. There are various scenarios in between.

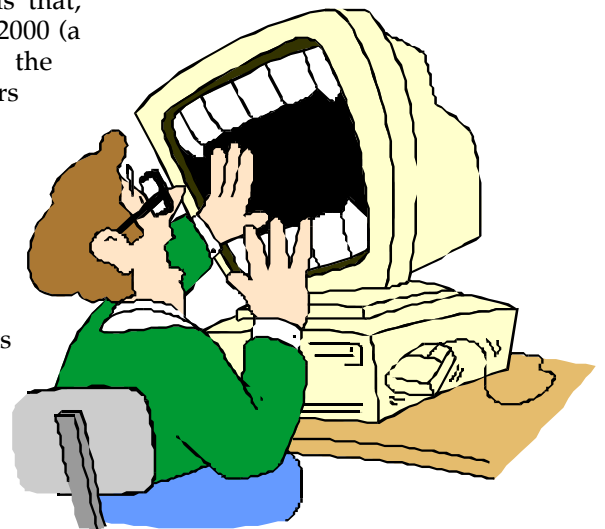
One extreme, worst-case scenario is presented by theonomist Gary North. North, on his web site, tells us that, "At 12 midnight on January 1, 2000 (a Saturday morning) most of the world's mainframe computers will either shut down or begin spewing out bad data."<sup>1</sup> It will create the greatest disaster since the great plagues of the 14th century. North claims that there is no standardized approach to fixing this problem. In fact, he asserts that computer programmers will vacate their jobs and head for "safer places": "Will they quit? I'm betting my life on it. The exodus of program-

mers will begin no later than 1999."<sup>2</sup> He also says that it is impossible to make computers compliant.

North has pressed his conspiracy theory ideas to the utmost degree. His web site contains hundreds of articles warning of the impending dangers. He has further put his reputation on the line:

"I have been writing for over a year on this with all the skill I have. I simply cannot get it across to all of you or even to most of you. I am never at a loss for words, but I am at a loss for persuasion. I have been unable to persuade the vast majority of my readers, after almost two years, that if the division of labor collapses, we will lose millions of lives. Joe Boivin, who was the Y2K director for Canada's Imperial Bank and Commerce until he quit, estimates that a billion people will die in 2000. He limits his discussion to the Third

(continues on page 14)



# The Other Gospel of John Hagee

## CHRISTIAN ZIONISM AND ETHNIC SALVATION

by G. Richard Fisher

“An astonishing and horrible thing has been committed in the land; The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests rule by their own power; And my people love to have it so. But what will you do in the end?” (Jeremiah 5:30-31).

“For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for *everyone* who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek” (Romans 1:16).

Most people who see and hear the Rev. John C. Hagee are impressed. He is rotund, strident, authoritative (and could well pass for Rush Limbaugh’s older and more serious brother). His delivery alone gives the impression of one who really knows what he is talking about. However, careful evaluation of the teachings of Hagee, pastor at the San Antonio-based Cornerstone Church, reveals false teaching and a defective view of a basic and essential issue regarding salvation and the Gospel. Hagee preaches another way of salvation for the Jew, which is in direct violation of Paul’s warnings in Galatians 1:6-9.

This theological concept, which has many forms, is primarily referred to as the “Two Covenant” or “Dual

Covenant” theory.

Hagee’s web site tells us that his “vision is for world evangelism. The burning passion of his heart is to win the lost to Jesus Christ in America and around the world.” That statement is not altogether true since he will not evangelize Jews and teaches salvation on another basis than the Gospel for the Jewish people.

Hagee has become extremely popular since the 1987 dedication of his Cornerstone Church (an event that featured an appearance and a blessing from W.A. Criswell, then pastor of First Baptist Church of Dallas) and because of the daily programs from Global Evangelism Television of which he is president. His best-selling books have also made him a celebrity. He associates with the likes of Benny Hinn and appears with him from time to time at crusades and other Charismatic congresses.

The Christian Research Institute panned Hagee’s 1996 book, *Beginning of the End*, not only for its premise that Yitzhak Rabin’s assassination triggered prophetic events and set the prophetic clock ticking somehow but because he falsely predicted that Shi-

mon Peres would succeed Rabin. The later elections brought Benyamin Netanyahu to power.

CRI introduced Hagee this way:

“Well-known to millions of Christians because of his television ministry, Rev. Hagee (the book lists him as Dr., but he does not have an earned doctorate) is the pastor of one of America’s largest Word-Faith churches. He has been granted several awards from Jewish organizations for his outspoken advocacy for the nation of Israel and Jewish rights.”<sup>1</sup>

There is no denying that Hagee sells books and lots of them. Should we be impressed that he has generated a number of best-sellers? Maybe not, because as Robert Boston reminds us:

“How a book sells is not an indication of its merit. The American public has a seemingly bottomless appetite for nonsense, as evidenced by the countless tomes about astrology, aliens from outer space, quack diets, and UFOs that have regularly graced best-seller lists over the years. Some books that sold millions have later been exposed as hoaxes. A slot on the best-seller list tells you exactly one thing

about a book: that a lot of people bought it."<sup>2</sup>

That there are moral and ethical concerns with Hagee and a serious question as to his being biblically qualified as a pastor and teacher are not the main issues of this article. However, one very important factor should be noted. *The Liberty Flame* reported in May 1994 that during the time when Hagee was serving the Charismatic congregation at Trinity Church (1976) in San Antonio, he divorced his wife, resigned and married a young woman in the congregation, Diana Castro. Custody of Hagee's two children by his ex-wife, Martha, went to her.

In a letter to the church, Hagee admitted immorality, which later became part of the court records in the custody battle. Martha later also remarried and started another family. Not surprisingly, there is a hiatus from 1976 to 1987 left out of Hagee's web site biography.

### WHO'LL GIVE ME ONE DOLLAR? WHO'LL GIVE ME TWO?

More recently, in March 1996, Hagee caused a furor when he created an uproar in the black community of Texas. Major newspapers of the area reported on his plan to conduct a "slave sale." The auction was an attempt to raise money for a seniors' class trip from his private Cornerstone High School. He announced to the congregation that "slavery in America was returning to Cornerstone"<sup>3</sup> and that each senior "would be auctioned off." The highest bidder could have a "slave" work at their house, so the congregation should make plans to "go home with a slave."

The fund-raising project was seen as insensitivity and a massive error in judgment. Reaction to the plan was fast and furious. Area newspapers further reported that after a weekend of criticism, Hagee issued an apology. He renamed the enterprise "a student auction."<sup>4</sup>

### PUTDOWN IN THE MARKETPLACE

While most of Hagee's prophetic

books become instant best-sellers, they do not always receive the best of reviews. As noted above, CRI faulted his *Beginning of the End* and the normally courteous *CBA Marketplace Magazine* gave a "thumbs down" to his book, *Final Dawn Over Jerusalem*, saying:

"In his long list of Jewish people who have blessed the world, Hagee makes no distinction between individuals who simply have a Jewish background and those who truly fear and seek God. He lists Goldie Hawn, Dustin Hoffman, and Barbara Streisand, among others, as Jews who have proven the Scripture 'in thee shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.' The contributions of these entertainers can hardly be seen as a fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham in Genesis. Hagee also goes as far as branding anti-Semitic those who don't agree with his enthusiastic support of Israel."<sup>5</sup>

Despite its criticisms, *CBA Marketplace Magazine* in June 1998 listed *Final Dawn Over Jerusalem* as the No. 1 clothbound nonfiction book.

Christian author and conspiracy debunker Gregory Camp also is critical of Hagee's writings:

"The Texas-based minister has recently published a book dealing with the end times in which he predicts the end of Israeli independence as a result of giving up the Golan Heights and then signing a treaty with the Antichrist. Titled *Beginning of the End*, this Thomas Nelson publication will doubtless sell by the hundreds of thousands. It rehashes old premillennial prophecy themes and like an increasing number of such ministries, throws conspiracy theory into the mix. The book unfortunately is just one more of a series of tired conspiracy-tainted prophecy monographs so common these days; there is scarcely an original idea to be found between its covers. The reader is 'treated' to sensationalistic pre-

dictions about the Israeli State and the nearness of Christ's return based on conspiracy and closet date-setting."<sup>6</sup>

### RUSHIN' WITH THE MONEY

Hagee is very liberal with his ministry's money when it comes to Israel. A Religious News Service report stated that Hagee raised over \$1 million to help Soviet Jews resettle in Israel.<sup>7</sup> The money was presented to the United Jewish Appeal in February 1998. Upon receiving the money, Irving Pozmantier talked of global peace. Most dispensationalists would be negatively impressed by such utopian talk.

Hagee believes that the resettlement of Soviet Jewry is a fulfillment of Bible prophecy. It must be pretty heady to think and project that you are one of the major instruments for the fulfillment of the prophetic Word. No wonder his followers are impressed and even mesmerized.

Hagee also seems to lurch from one newsworthy event to another. Recently he filed a suit against the U.S. Postal Service, "claiming it has 'delayed, held, and even censored' his ministry's mailings" and as well "denied use of the nonprofit standard mail rate and charged higher rates."<sup>8</sup> The Postal Service has countered by saying that with so much for sale via the mail, Hagee is hardly non-profit. After Israel, Hagee's attorneys probably got a goodly portion of the ministry's income.

### BORN WITH A YARMULKE OR BORN AGAIN?

If just the above were all that could be reported on John Hagee, some might say there should not be major concern and there probably would not be. So what that he is divorced, a promoter of word-faith teaching and its proponents, and a slick marketeer for religious goods and products? So what that he showed insensitivity to African-Americans? It can all be overlooked since he helps so many and sends so much money to Israel, not to mention his contesting the service and fees of the U.S. Postal Service.

Yet, of additional and more serious concern is that Hagee reported to the *Houston Chronicle* that he believes that Jews already have a covenant with God and a relationship to God and do not need to come to the cross. Hearing this is startling. Hagee told the newspaper:

“I believe that every Jewish person who lives in the light of the Torah, which is the word of God, has a relationship with God and will come to redemption.”<sup>9</sup>

This certainly is a shocking statement in the light of Jesus’ words that “no man comes to the Father but through me” (John 14:6). John further writes, in his first Epistle: “He who does not have the Son of God does not have life” (1 John 5:12).

The Apostle Paul, as well, would say the opposite of Hagee: “I do not set aside the grace of God: for if righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died in vain” (Galatians 2:21). Paul is affirming that nothing that the Old Testament offered could avail apart from the death of Jesus.

The *Houston Chronicle* article further reported:

“John Hagee, fundamentalist pastor from San Antonio and friend of Israel, is truly a strange fish. ... The man has a mission. He’s out to attack anti-Semitism. He also believes that Jews can come to God without going through Jesus Christ.”<sup>10</sup>

The Houston newspaper then quoted Hagee’s own shocking words: “I’m not trying to convert the Jewish people to the Christian faith.”

And further revealed:

“In fact, trying to convert Jews is a ‘waste of time,’ he said. ‘The Jewish person who has his roots in Judaism is not going to convert to Christianity. There is no form of Christian evangelism that has failed so miserably as evangelizing the Jewish people. They (already) have a faith structure.’ Everyone else, whether Buddhist or Baha’i, needs to believe in

Jesus, he says. But not Jews. Jews already have a covenant with God that has never been replaced by Christianity, he says.”<sup>11</sup>

Hagee went on to tell the Houston reporter that Paul abandoned the idea of Jews knowing Christ when he went to the Gentiles. Jewish evangelism, both presently and in antiquity, is not a failure as Hagee stated but a huge success as many missions and missionaries can report.

Christian Research Institute has also reported on this highly unorthodox view held by Hagee:

“Information about Hagee from other sources reveals he seriously differs with the vast majority of dispensational teachers because he believes that Jewish people do not need to be saved, since they are under a different covenant.”<sup>12</sup>

### THE MYSTERY DEEPENS AND THE PLOT THICKENS

In response to a direct inquiry by PFO director M. Kurt Goedelman to Hagee, Goedelman received a puzzling response. Hagee claimed in a carefully nuanced letter dated June 18, 1998, that the *Houston Chronicle* had distorted what he said and went on further to assert, “I have not or never have been dual covenant in my preaching.”

In this, Hagee is being less than honest and playing word games. As this article will demonstrate, Hagee’s true view is a muddled form of the “Two Covenant” or “Dual Covenant” theory, even though he would deny the label.

It should be noted that Hagee said in his reply only that he has not been dual covenant “in my preaching.” His statement did not address whether he believed or taught it, but only that it was not in his preaching. Perhaps in saying he never preached dual covenant he is right, and adds to the subterfuge by not labeling the belief with that exact title. In fact, though, his is a nuanced “Two Covenant” view as his own words will confirm. His response to Goedelman, therefore,

closely resembles that of a seasoned politician.

But Hagee has, in his own words, affirmed and elucidated his view of some Jews having salvation without Christ and, in fact, the *Houston Chronicle* presented a nearly correct version of his position. In a six-page letter to former CRI researcher Erwin M. de Castro, dated Oct. 18, 1994, Hagee elaborated on his view that chapters 9 through 11 of Romans applies exclusively to Jews and no one else. In the letter, Hagee said unabashedly:

“Here is my position on the Jewish people... Fact One: God has not cast away the Jewish people. Fact Two: According to Romans 11:5 there are Jewish people (‘a remnant’) who have a spiritual relationship with God ‘at this present time... according to ‘the election of grace.’”<sup>13</sup>

Hagee went on to explain that the blindness of Jews in Romans 11:7-8 is only a blindness to the identity of the Messiah, to which he adds, “Paul calls the Jewish people chosen by the election of grace and not broken off in judgment (Romans 11:17) holy.”<sup>14</sup>

Hagee then, once again, nuances his position:

“If some of the branches are broken off, that clearly means there are some of the branches not broken off. If they are not broken off, they remain yet on the tree which means they have relationship to God by the election of grace.”<sup>15</sup>

Here, no matter what he labels it, Hagee commits to a modified “Dual Covenant” view.

On page five of his letter, Hagee repeats his assertion that the blindness of Israel is only as to the identity of the Messiah, not spiritual blindness associated with lack of salvation. However, Paul confirms that the veil of blindness on Jewish eyes can only be taken away in Christ when regenerated by the Holy Spirit (2 Corinthians 3:14-18).

In his summation Hagee leaves no question at all as he states:

“There are Jewish people who have relationship with God right now according to the election of grace. (Romans 11:5) ... The Jewish people are judicially blinded to the identity of Messiah... **Question:** If God blinded the Jewish people to the identity of Jesus as Messiah, how could He send them to hell for not seeing what he had forbidden them to see? ... Inasmuch as God has blinded them to the identity of Messiah, *targeting the Jewish people for mass evangelism is fruitless.*”<sup>16</sup>

Hagee then concluded his response to de Castro and CRI with intimidation. If they did not represent his position properly, he threatened “an immediate lawsuit against CRI and all its principals.”<sup>17</sup> It is shocking and sad that the high-profile Christian celebrities project not the power of the Lord but the power of their lawyers! Why would Hagee threaten to sue Christian brothers when he did not sue the secular *Houston Chronicle* that he says misrepresented him? Perhaps it is because the newspaper had the essence of Hagee’s belief right and in his own words.

Even more recent are the remarks Hagee made during an interview at the Christian Booksellers Association convention in July 1998. David Becker of the *Religion & Politics Digest* asked Hagee to comment as to his position that Jews do not need to be converted to Christianity. Hagee responded that:

“In Romans 10, Romans 11, Paul opens with a question, Has God forsaken Israel? And emphatically he says, ‘No!’ He asks the same question again in 11:11, Has God forsaken Israel? He says, ‘No!’ But the fact is he says that God has a remnant chosen by the election of grace, meaning that there are a group of Jewish people that have a relationship with God because of sovereign election. And he explains sovereign election in Romans 11. Many people understand sovereign election. Many people do not understand sovereign election. ... So he said, I have chosen

some of the remnant of Abraham who have, quote, a relationship with God by the election of grace. Some of them have stumbled over Jesus Christ because I have, Romans 11, judicially blinded them to the identity of Jesus Christ. Here’s the Christian dilemma. That if God has judicially blinded the Jews to whom Jesus Christ is, why are Christians berating them for not seeing it?”<sup>18</sup>

In short, Hagee believes that some Jews are not saved by the cross of Christ but by prior election and their pedigree in Abraham. There is a way of salvation in Christ and an election of grace for the Jew apart from Christ. No matter how you nuance it or define it, this is “Two Covenant” theology. This can be classified technically as a modified “Dual Covenant” idea regardless of what Hagee wants to call it or not call it. Hagee believes that two covenants are in force: A covenant of election for the Jew and a covenant of grace for the Gentile. This is an attack on the very Gospel as presented by Jesus and Paul, as we’ll see. And then what about half Jews or Jewish converts? Where do they stand?

### CAN ZIONISM BE CHRISTIAN?

The idea that Jews do not need the Gospel or conversion is sometimes subsumed under the title, “Christian Zionism,” although the designation can simply mean Christians who support Israel. The term “Christian Zionism” ends up being like Silly Putty®. Each person makes what they wish out of it.

One must realize that the term Christian Zionist can cover a wide range of beliefs. Elwood McQuaid articulates the most benign and simplistic view this way:

“At its root, Zionism simply means a commitment to the inherent right of the Jewish people to have an internationally recognized homeland in the Middle East — the place referred to by Jews today as ‘Eretz Israel.’ Whether or not

people consciously utter the word about themselves, if they accept the concept of a biblically endorsed Jewish right to the land, they are Zionists.”<sup>19</sup>

But there was a so-called Christian Zionism (which said Jews do not need Jesus or the New Covenant), championed in the 1970s by Franklin Littell in his book, *The Crucifixion of the Jews*. Littell went so far as to classify any who do not see Israel as the suffering servant redeemed under the Old Covenant alone, guilty of “theological Antisemitism”<sup>20</sup> and “major sin.”<sup>21</sup> And he labels dissenters of his view as nothing more than “heretics and apostates” and “illegitimate rather than authentic expressions of Christian preaching and teaching.”<sup>22</sup> It is unfortunate that Littell was able to argue from the anti-semitic statements and ideas of Reformer Martin Luther.

Littell also summarized succinctly the core of this strain of Christian Zionism, reprinting the statement released by an ecumenical council in 1973. The pertinent sentences include:

“The singular grace of Jesus Christ does not abrogate the covenantal relationship of God with Israel (Romans 11:1-2). In Christ the Church shares in Israel’s election without superseding it.”<sup>23</sup>

In a very strange twist, the man most responsible for popularizing the “Two Covenant” view (in the 1920s and 1930s) was a Jewish thinker and author named Franz Rosenzweig. Much like Hagee does today, Rosenzweig attempted to create a rationale for not evangelizing Jews while leaving intact the viability, authenticity and acceptability of both Judaism and Christianity. Predating postmodernism but in postmodern fashion, Rosenzweig argued that Jews had their own subjective truth inside Judaism and Christians had their own subjective truth in Christ. Both were right, according to Rosenzweig.

As well, Rosenzweig taught that Jewish blood inherently gave all Jews shelter under the Old Covenant (the New Covenant being only for Gen-

tiles), but John 1:12-13 asserts that only receiving Christ gives salvation and linkage to the family of God and that the salvation given is given to those "who were not born of blood. ... but of God."

Rosenzweig's ideas were a master stroke of accommodation, tolerance and ecumenicity but simply are not true to the New Testament. Arguments like Rosenzweig's, we must remember, appeared at least in germ form in the second century with Trypho and were soundly refuted by Justin Martyr.<sup>24</sup> Church history shows that even the first inklings of a double way of salvation were never tolerated by the Church. Early Christians only affirmed what they knew the Bible taught.

Nearly everyone who champions this "Two Covenant" idea since Rosenzweig, knowingly or unknowingly, repeats his arguments. In 1949, Rosenzweig's "Two Covenant" view was seriously demolished by Jakob Jocz in his book, *The Jewish People and Jesus Christ*.<sup>25</sup>

Jocz was astute in pointing out that election under the Old Covenant was national, whereas under the New Covenant in the age of grace election is *individual*. This is the key to understanding the "Two Covenant" error. Individual Jews and individual Gentiles must accept God's offer of salvation in Christ.

Jocz further explains:

"The profound difference between Paul and the Synagogue ultimately turned round the question of the meaning of 'Jew'. To Paul, a Jew is not defined by race or tradition, but by the moral qualities which link him spiritually to Abraham ... Israel to Paul is not defined in terms of race or colour, but faith."<sup>26</sup>

George Foot Moore rightly observes, "For this national election Paul and the church substituted an individual election to eternal life, without regard to race or station."<sup>27</sup>

This idea of not evangelizing Jews may be gaining some popularity

lately in the American Church. More recently, an organization calling itself Bridges for Peace, led the way drafting a pledge to not proselytize Jews and got 50 local Christian churches and groups ranging from Catholic to various mainstream Protestant denominations to sign on. The document was given to Israeli legislators.<sup>28</sup>

### YAHWEH'S DIVORCE

Conservative Bible scholars would agree that the Prophets of the Old Testament prophesied that there would be a rupture of the bond and a suspension of the covenant between Yahweh and Israel which would be *restored* in the "latter days." A careful and serious reading of the books of Isaiah, Jeremiah and Hosea (taking special note of Hosea 3:4-5, Isaiah 62:1-7, 65:16-25, 66:7-24 and Jeremiah 3:8-25, 30:8-24) shows this to be true.<sup>29</sup>

Hagee grossly misinterprets Romans 11:25-26 (i.e., that all Israel *will* be saved) to mean, it seems, that *most* Jews are automatically saved. Historically (and most major commentaries will affirm this) these verses have been seen as a promise for a *future national restoration of the nation*. The words "will be" indicate future activity. The verse does not say "are saved" but "will be." This agrees with and is in keeping with the OT Prophets' visions and messages of a national interruption in the Covenant until the end times. When Jesus spoke of Israel's House being left desolate (Luke 13:35), He was addressing the period of interruption when Israel would be without a temple, without a sacrifice, without a priesthood and without a Covenant (Hosea 3:4-5).

Hagee has the Jewish people turning to the Messiah in a future day on pages 158-159 of his book, *Beginning of the End*. Given his views of an automatic salvation for some Jews under a Covenant of election, it is easy to see how he can teach that Jews come to an awareness of the Messiah rather than an acceptance, since they already have salvation. Hagee's view renders all evangelistic efforts to Jews as foolish and unnecessary.

Hagee must have missed the Book of Hebrews, which shows that all

Israel is to come under the New Covenant (Heb. 8:6-12) because the Old Covenant was obsolete and ready to vanish (Heb. 8:13). A reading of Paul's letter to the Galatians will quickly silence any ideas that salvation can be obtained by anyone on the basis of links to Law or Abraham. The first eleven chapters of Romans also establishes the same truth.

To further scripturally offset any idea that association or connection to Abraham automatically saves, Paul addresses his Jewish audience completely from that perspective and demolishes any thought that an Abrahamic link is all that is needed. In Acts 13:26 he rips the Abrahamic ground out from under them: "Men and brethren, *sons of the family of Abraham*, and those among you who fear God, to you the Word of this salvation has been sent." The "sons of Abraham" then reared up with anger and persecution, rejecting salvation (Acts 13:50-51).

The Puritans, taught on the basis of Romans 11, that the real *conversion* and *salvation* of the Jews (*en masse* as a nation) was prophesied and to be expected in relationship to the return of Jesus. They were clear and unequivocal in their teachings.<sup>30</sup>

Professor of biblical theology, Manfred Brauch, explains the prevailing view of Romans 11:25:

"Within this overarching content of the mystery which Paul proclaims is a more specific component. Namely, that the 'hardening which has come upon part of Israel' (Romans 11:25) is limited not only in extent, but also with regard to time: its rejection will last only 'until the fullness of the Gentiles comes.' This completion of God's purpose among the Gentiles leads then to the contemplation of that same redemptive purpose for Israel (Romans 11:12), in that 'all Israel will be saved' (Romans 11:26). Commentators are agreed that 'all Israel' means Israel 'as a whole,' as a historical people who have a unique and particular identity,

not necessarily including every individual Israelite. Support for this way of understanding the phrase 'all Israel' comes from a rabbinic tract (Sanhedrin X, 1), where the statement 'all Israelites have a share in the world to come' is immediately qualified by a list of exceptions, such as the Sadducees, heretics, magicians, and so on. The salvation of Israel is comprehensive, but not all-inclusive. In our text, just as 'the fullness of the Gentiles' does not mean that each individual Gentile will 'believe in his heart and confess with his lips' (Romans 10:10), so the 'fullness of Israel' cannot mean every individual Jew."<sup>31</sup>

Brauch continues:

"While in 11:25-26 the present 'part of Israel' which is hardened is contrasted with 'all Israel' which will be saved in the future, it is clear that 'all Israel' denotes both the already-saved remnant and yet-to-be-saved 'rest' (Romans 11:7). What is also clear from the whole thrust of the discussion in Romans 9-11 is that God's purposes for the salvation of Israel will be realized *in no other way and by no other means than through the preaching of the gospel and the response of faith. It is that preaching and that response which will lead to 'life from the dead'* (Romans 11:15), clearly a reference to the eschatological event of the resurrection which will be preceded by the 'completion of Israel' (Romans 11:26) as the last stage in the process initiated by the death and resurrection of Jesus."<sup>32</sup>

Others, like Dwight Pentecost, spell out this eschatological expectation:

"God is then dealing with the nation with whom He has not dealt since their rejection of their Messiah. It should be further noted that the final removal of blindness, that is the spiritual blindness to which they are yet heir, will not be accomplished

until the second advent of Christ (Romans 11:26-27). The removal of the judicial blindness permits Israel to hear the good news of the kingdom (Matt. 24:14) that is proclaimed in that day in order that they might be saved, both individually and nationally."<sup>33</sup>

John Phillips affirms:

"'All Israel,' of course, does not refer to all the Jews who have ever lived, but to all those alive at the end of the great tribulation. Paul sees in the return of Christ a Christological guarantee that God will restore Israel."<sup>34</sup>

The great Lutheran theologian, Anders Nygren, upheld this same view:

"God's promises to the fathers always stand fast. They will have a glorious fulfillment, when all Israel is again accepted."<sup>35</sup>

This future salvation and hope for the Jewish nation is expressed in Norman Harrison's, *His Salvation As Set Forth In The Book Of Romans*:

"It waits upon Israel's blindness being brought to an end. How is it to be? It ends with the coming of Israel's 'Deliverer'. His coming will mean 'all Israel saved' — the nation collectively, rather than the individual Jew as is now the case under the Gospel."<sup>36</sup>

The great English divine, W.H. Griffith Thomas, spoke of the restoration of Israel and Romans 11:25-26 this way:

"'All Israel' does not necessarily mean every individual Israelite, but the whole nation, a future national conversion, as distinct from the present conversion of individuals."<sup>37</sup>

Writing on Romans 11:25-26, F.F. Bruce offers this:

"When the full tale of believing Gentiles was achieved — a consummation which Paul's own apostleship was bringing nearer — then *all* Israel, not a faithful remnant but the nation as a

whole, would see the salvation of God. ... The new covenant will not be complete until it embraces the people of the old covenant. Temporarily alienated for the advantage of the Gentiles, they are eternally the objects of God's electing love because His promises, once made to the patriarchs, can never be revoked."<sup>38</sup>

## GOD — A RESPECTER OF PERSONS

Hagee's erroneous view — that Jews are saved just because they are connected to Abraham — is not new with him as has been clearly shown.

We must be careful to remember that even the Old Testament Jew was not saved on the basis of pedigree or keeping the Law (which he could not do fully anyway), or connection to Abraham but on the basis of the lamb, the sacrificial system, atonement, the mediating priesthood and faith. Jesus affirmed that it was not Abrahamic pedigree alone but faith in God's Messiah (John 8:39-59) that would bring salvation. Israel does not have a priesthood or even a sacrificial system to point to today but the Christian has all those things fully wrapped up in Christ as his Prophet, Priest and King, as the Book of Hebrews emphasizes.

Hagee in a sense separates Abrahamic pedigree and election from the Law, which he cannot do. All of Abraham's descendants were inextricably bound up in the Law. Being a descendant of Abraham and having a connection to the Law and the Old Covenant were all of one piece. Even an elementary student of the Bible would know that pedigree and the Law cannot save.

Gordon Fee and Douglas Stuart, in their work, *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth, A Guide to Understanding the Bible*, state:

"If one therefore were to set out to keep the spirit of the Old Testament law, he or she would surely fail eventually. No human being can please God consistently in light of such high, comprehensive standards (cf. Ro-

mans 8:1-11). ... *The Law shows us how impossible it is to please God on our own.* ... In terms of its ability to provide eternal life and true righteousness before God, the Law was quite inadequate. It was not designed for such purposes. Anyone who tried to gain salvation and acceptance by God exclusively through the Law was bound to fail, since the Law was ultimately unkeepable — at least one of its rules was bound to be broken sometime during one's life (Romans 2:17-27; 3:20). And breaking even one law makes one, by definition, a 'lawbreaker' (cf. James 2:10)."<sup>39</sup>

The belief that some can be saved without an acceptance of and relationship with Christ comes in various forms. The particular slant of Hagee is not only unfaithful to the New Testament but heretical. It abandons the Jew to never hearing the Gospel. It is a subtle but real form of anti-Semitism because it puts a gag order on any evangelist and robs the Jew of the Good News. It is Hagee who is in fact a closet anti-Semite.

### MIDNIGHT CALL WON'T CALL ISRAELIS

Hagee's view, with a slight twist, was promoted during the 1980s by Wim Malgo, editor of the magazine *The Midnight Call*. In a letter to *The Jerusalem Post*, Malgo assured the newspaper's readers:

"...we strongly reject any missionary work in Israel itself, since it is our belief that Israel is God's chosen people, and therefore in the hands of God. Our rejection of missionary work in Israel stems also from our belief that Israel is a nation which has had to endure so much, and should be shown love and understanding."<sup>40</sup>

It seems that Malgo's brand of the "Two Covenant" idea saw Jews in Israel as automatically saved.

This was confirmed in a Sept. 20, 1983, letter to this writer by *Midnight*

*Call* spokesman Arno Froese, which suggested that missionary activity to Jews ended with Paul and that the Great Commission was only for Gentiles. Froese then emphatically added: "To summarize, we, as Gentile Christians, have no Biblical basis to go to Israel and preach the Gospel there." We will see Froese's statement to be false.

Others confirmed that missionary work in Israel was out. The International Christian Embassy, Jerusalem, followed suit. It must be asked whether a group can really call itself Christian when it abandons the Gospel and refuses to preach it to any people for any reason.

### THE CHURCH THAT NEVER WAS

If the early Church had taken this view that Jews are saved just by being Jews there would have been no Christians in Jerusalem, Judea or Samaria. When Paul was converted, God would have violated His own plan. Under this view Jesus would not have had Apostles and there would not be a Church today. These logical results seem to escape the purveyors of this form of Christian Zionism, which is neither Christian or Zionist.

The term Zionism was coined by Nathan Birnbaum on April 1, 1890, and denoted the movement whose goal was the return of the Jewish people to the Land of Israel. With the establishment of the national-political Zionist party the term was extended to express a political orientation toward Israel rather than the prevailing 19th century philanthropic approach.<sup>41</sup>

In 1911, David Baron noted:

"Zionism is strictly national, but, for the greater part, holds itself just as aloof from the religious ceremonies of Judaism as do the liberal-thinking Jews."<sup>42</sup>

Early on, Zionism was not connected to orthodox Judaism or religion at all but to the secular politicking of Theodore Herzl. So-called religious Zionism exists in Israel today and is promoted by groups like Ateret

Cohanim, Hai Vekayam, the National Religious Party and other ultra orthodox societies.<sup>43</sup> It can really be asked whether anything Christian could or should be called Zionist in any sense.

Because the term Christian Zionism is so confusing and can mean anything from supporting tourism to Israel or general support for the State of Israel to the extremes of Hagee, those sympathetic to Israel should coin another term so as to not get linked with the quasi-universalistic views of Malgo, Hagee and others. So-called Christian Zionism represents a wide spectrum of divergent views and ideas as we have seen.

### CORRUPT ROOTS AND STRANGE BEDFELLOWS

Both Hagee and Malgo might be shocked to know the company they are keeping. "An early American Christian Zionist" was none other than Charles Taze Russell, founder of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society!<sup>44</sup>

Russell may have very well gotten some of his ideas from the anti-Trinitarian founder of the Christadelphian cult, John Thomas, as well as the Adventists and Mormons.

John Thomas originally from England settled in Brooklyn, N.Y., (1830) and published a colossal tome in 1849 titled, *Elpis Israel*, advocating ideas similar to those of Russell.<sup>45</sup>

Those familiar with the seeds of Russell's cultic beliefs know that he taught that 1874 marked the return or "Second Presence" of Jesus Christ. However, he also argued that 1878 was "a decisive year in Jewish history"<sup>46</sup> and that a period of automatic mercy and a return of grace began for the orthodox Jews. He maintained that the Abrahamic Covenant automatically provided redemption for them. The orthodox Jews would enjoy millennial favors before all others.<sup>47</sup>

Amazingly Russell addressed Jewish gatherings in the United States and abroad to tell his audiences of the prophecies of the Jewish return to

Palestine and of the future Jewish government and State.<sup>48</sup> His strong and oft-repeated anti-missionary stance opened the doors to Jewish audiences in other countries as well.

Russell was simply an astute observer of the trends of the time. There were strong outpourings of favor out of Britain during this period, both from the government and in popular writings vigorously advocating Jewish return to Palestine and even Jewish statehood.

Many premillennial Christian writers, such as Chicago businessman W.E. Blackstone, author of the 1878 best-seller, *Jesus Is Coming*, were conveying the same theme of Christ's return though never suggesting Jews should not be evangelized. Surely Russell knew of Oliphant, Hechler and Herzl, who were at center stage of his world. Russell, as evident from his Adventist roots, was a borrower of current ideas, not a prophet.

The Adventists in the 1800s were supporting Zionist ideas as well as Jewish immigration and settlements, coupled with evangelism. Adventist Clorinda Minor developed a settlement outside of Jaffa in 1849, calling it Mount Hope and detailed the events in her book, *Meshullam*.<sup>49</sup> Mormons as well were supporting these ideas as early as 1841.<sup>50</sup>

The basic idea of Jewish return and statehood was not new when Russell began promoting it, just the twist on the 1878 "redemption" date. So, in fact, Hagee's ideas in various forms, have been floating around for over a century and have been attached to major heretical cults. There really is nothing new under the sun.

Russell's views of automatic Jewish redemption and a Jewish homeland were abandoned by his successor, Joseph Rutherford, in 1932 and the present day Jehovah's Witnesses are in effect anti-Israel, seeing themselves as a replacement and the real heirs to Israel's promises.<sup>51</sup> The replacement idea prevailed in the Middle Ages and was a seedbed for Jewish antag-

onism and persecution by the Roman Catholic Church.

It is extremely interesting that Malgo's group, as well as the International Christian Embassy, refers to Isaiah 40:1-2, ("Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people; speak comfortably to Jerusalem") and use it to say that we are to only speak a message of comfort to Israel. These are the very verses and the very rationale of Russell.<sup>52</sup> Russell's own writings affirm the words of David Horowitz and show Russell's usage of Isaiah 40:1-2.<sup>53</sup>

All in all, Russell's ideas would become somewhat dormant until re-fashioned and presented from a slightly different perspective and with a different twist by Franz Rosenzweig.

### THE MESSAGE OF ROMANS

In Romans 10:1 Paul could not have been more clear or more emphatic when he stated: "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel, is that they might be saved." Paul was consistent with the Great Commission, knowing that *every creature* needed to hear the preaching of the Gospel *until the end of the age* (Matthew 28:18-20). There is no hint in the Bible that we would only need to preach to some until 1878 as Russell alleged. Gospel preaching is to *all, until the end of the age*.

Paul established that everyone universally was under the condemnation of sin and in need of a Savior. Listen to Paul's clear words: "For there is no difference, for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:22-23).

Paul affirmed that everyone needed salvation through faith in Jesus Christ simply because everyone was guilty and lost in sin: "Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and the world may become guilty before God" (Romans 3:19).

Paul affirms that both Jew and Gentile equally need faith in Christ to

be saved: "Or is He the God of the Jews only? Is He not also the God of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also. Since there is one God who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith" (Romans 3:29-30).

To create one way of salvation for Gentiles and another way for others is a gross distortion and misunderstanding of the Gospel and a terrible ignorance of the teachings of Romans on salvation.

Again Paul's teaching is clear: "For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich to all who call upon Him. For whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they (Jew and Greek) call on Him whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?" (Romans 10:12-14).

How can Hagee state and justify that Romans 9, 10 and 11, "exclusively concerns the Jews"?<sup>54</sup>

Commenting on the universal need for mercy (and Romans 11:32), Dr. Harry Ironside says: "Israel will obtain mercy when they turn back in faith to God. Whether Jew or Gentile, all alike are saved on the same principle."<sup>55</sup>

Harold Severer, in his article titled, "Christian Zionism's Candy-Coated Gospel," reminds us:

"We as believers are not called to wait for God to fulfill His great eschatological program of redemption. We are called to be participants in that program. We are called to be actively involved in evangelism, in bringing the Gospel, the Good News of salvation, to Jew and Gentile alike. We are commissioned and empowered by a risen Lord to speak the truth in love."<sup>56</sup>

Christian organizations and ministries like Friends of Israel, Chosen People, Jews for Jesus and others show us that we can love Jews, love

Israel and be sympathetic to the Jewish State and still bring the Good News of Christ to the Jewish people. Sharing the Gospel after all is the greatest way to love anyone.

The Christian Zionism and ethnic salvation of Hagee and others must be soundly refuted and rejected. It is an old heresy, a kind of select quasi-universalism. It is a insidious form of anti-Semitism which refuses to offer others, God's best in Christ, and leaves them to a futile and vain effort to establish their own righteousness and thus miss the righteousness of Jesus Christ offered to them in the Gospel (Romans 10:1-3). It is a denial of Christ's last and Great Commission to take the Gospel to *everyone* until the end of the age. It is a blatantly false gospel of salvation by race, not by grace; salvation by blood not by belief; salvation by the fortune of birth, not faith in the only Redeemer.

Jacob Jocz offers this fitting conclusion:

"God is no respecter of persons. Before Him, the Holy One, men stand not as *Jews* and Gentiles but as sinners who are in need of grace. Jesus the prophet may be speaking to the Gentiles; but Jesus the Son of God speaks to mankind. Jesus the martyr may be *appealing* to some and not to others; but Jesus the Lamb of God challenges the whole human race. God's word is *one* word, and God's way is *one* if it is the way of God."<sup>57</sup>

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World. I think we could lose half a billion in the urban West."<sup>3</sup>

Chuck Missler, in his "Supplemental Notes" booklet, *"The Millennium Bomb"* Y2K, provides "Your Personal Action Plan" and under his "Family Logistics" gives the following: "Power, Water, Food (Ammo?); Barter Items: food, medical, et al. Location: depart urban areas; seek rural areas, smaller towns, self-reliant neighbors, etc."<sup>4</sup>

Hal Lindsey and Cliff Ford co-hosted what was labeled as an "International Intelligence Briefing" television program: "Y2K Special Report: Facing Millennial Midnight." In it the pair laid out their own worst-case scenario calling the Y2K effect "the millennial bug" and "millennial bomb" and said that it could "unravel civilization." Although Trinity Broadcasting Network sponsored and aired the program (and has never been known for its discernment or a hesitancy to promote the bizarre or sensational), it was quick to issue an opening disclaimer that the views of Lindsey and Ford did not necessarily represent the views of TBN.

Toward the end of the program there is a hedging and some "maybes" and "perhaps," as well as asking people to use discernment. However, the overall impression from the bulk of the show will no doubt create paranoia and depression for some. And then there's the blazing commercial at the program's conclusion for Lindsey's latest volume, *Planet Earth: The Final Chapter*. "This is the very best insight the Lord has ever given me on prophecy. And it shows how, in chronological order, things are coming together rapidly, to show that the return of Christ is very near," Lindsey boasts. He has been making the same declaration for over 25 years.

Yet, Christians do not find themselves alone on the doomsday bandwagon. As expected, the supermarket tabloids are jumping on the sensational aspects and at least one is reporting in bold headlines; "WORLD

COLLAPSE IN THE YEAR 2000. COMPUTER CHAOS: Bank records and transactions are lost! Defense systems fail! Social Security is wiped out! Nuclear power plants melt down! Power grids fail - throwing the world into total darkness! COMPUTERS WILL CRASH WORLDWIDE!"<sup>5</sup> As with Orson Welles' *War of the Worlds* broadcast in the 1930s, these people seem to care little about the fear and confusion they are generating.

### SOME R NOT 2 SURE

On the other extreme stands Nicholas Zvegintzov, a well-known computer expert and co-founder of Software Maintenance News. In his now famous article, "The Year 2000 as Racket and Ruse," Zvegintzov asserts:

"Dealing with the Year 2000 problem is a simple software task. ... Solving the Year 2000 problem is an exercise for the software novice."<sup>6</sup>

Dr. Quentin Schultze, professor of communications at Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Mich., says:

"Ambiguity produces a broad range of opinions, and Y2K is an ambiguous phenomenon. You can predict the weather reasonably well, but not perfectly, because there are too many factors involved. The same is true of the Y2K problem: There are too many factors involved. There's no one who can tell you precisely what's going to be affected. The sense I have is we are going to be moderately inconvenienced for a fairly short period of time. Society is not going to grind to a halt."<sup>7</sup>

Scott Pinzon, president of Pinpoint Marketing Communications, writes in a recent issue of the Christian Booksellers' Association magazine:

"We can probably rule out a perfect transition to the year 2000 — after all, the U.S. government has to update Internal Revenue Service and Social Securities computers, and when did they ever bring a project in on time? But we probably also can rule out extreme 'meltdown' scenarios

where the blackout lasts so long money loses it meaning. (So far, the shrillest doomsayers admittedly aren't computer experts.) ... The truth is, no one knows what will happen. This event is unprecedented; there's no 'last time' to compare it with."<sup>8</sup>

Dr. James Dobson had a panel of "experts" on the subject on the Oct. 21, 1998, edition of his *Focus on the Family* radio broadcast. It was a cross-section with both extremes and the middle ground between the extremes. Dobson's own telling statement was, "No one knows." While it is true that no one really knows for sure, there are some things we can know for certain.

So, is it the end of civilization as we know it or is it nothing to be concerned about? Is it doomsday or distraction?

### APOCALYPSE R POPPYCOCK?

On the television program *Dragnet*, Sgt. Joe Friday used to say: "The facts ma'am, just the facts." *Only facts, hard facts*, will help us here. Speculation, wild claims, doomsday scenarios, the marketing of books, dried food, and even guns is not the answer, *just facts*. We need to have informed opinions and make informed choices.

Even if the worst-case scenario were around the corner, should a Christian change anything he or she is doing? And wouldn't it be a time of unprecedented opportunity to witness and reach out, not retreat and hole up somewhere? Our Savior's marching orders in Matthew 28:18-20 do not change just because the going gets rough. Paul and the other Apostles faced misery and hardship and even death but made no extraordinary provisions as they plodded on preaching and teaching.

The Church has faced annihilation and death in past generations but stood its ground. In the face of the massacres of Nero, Peter and Paul did not advise the Church to go out and stockpile swords. What we do know for sure is that even if our country faces loss, it does not change what the Church ought to be doing. Psalm 46

still stands. God is our refuge and strength even if the Earth is removed. In fact, the worse it gets, the more opportunities for the Church of Jesus Christ.

But what do the *facts* show? Many banking institutions already have begun communicating with their customers. This writer's bank has informed its customers that it and all its branches have been working since 1997 to make its computers compliant and will be fully compliant by the end of 1998. So I know that this bank and all its branches are not planning to fail. They, as well, are monitoring and assisting all of their service providers, companies and correspondent institutions, including legal and public utilities.<sup>9</sup>

Preparations for those who buy into the doomsday schemes are also underway. For example, "The Federal Reserve plans to have an extra \$50 billion on hand in case worried Americans decide they would rather have more cash in their pockets than in their bank accounts."<sup>10</sup>

On a local level, in a personal conversation with Charles W. Jarvis, executive director and chief operating officer of the Meridian Health System, I was assured that Meridian has been aggressively addressing and solving its Y2K problems, and will have full compliance long before 2000. Meridian directly affects me because it is an organization of four major hospitals in the four cities around me including the city in which I live. Jarvis says the whole health care industry is on the case.

In a personal conversation with a computer troubleshooter for Bristol-Meyer-Squibb, PFO was assured that the problem is being addressed and solved by that organization.

It makes sense just from the standpoint of human self-interest that corporations — either major or supporting — in the United States and even worldwide, would not just sit on their hands waiting for their computers to crash and the end to come.

Computer expert after computer expert all confirm that any computer made and purchased in the last two

years is already compliant and cannot fail in terms of Y2K. The government is fast correcting the problem as well. The recently passed national budget included large amounts of funds for Y2K compliance.

Apple Computer executives have released information that Macintoshes have been compliant since their release and will be unaffected by any date change. In the letter from my bank mentioned above, the following is offered: "Apple Computers assures that their Macintoshes are immune to the Millennium Bug."<sup>11</sup>

In the area of air transportation, the problem is being dealt with from start to finish. Aircraft manufacturer Boeing has been working and continues to work to bring itself into Year 2000 compliance. Since dates do not affect airplanes in flight, only the scheduling of arrivals and departures, the Air Transport Association (ATA) is addressing the ground problems of fuel, lights, ground transport and travel agencies. The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) claims to be doing well in regard to the Y2K problem and are stating that air traffic safety will not be affected.

The Social Security Administration (SSA) has been working on its computers *since 1989* and assures that payments will continue uninterrupted.<sup>12</sup> And even though Medicare is not as far along as the SSA, a spokesman for the Health Care Financing Administration (HCFA) gives complete assurance that "care will not be denied Medicare beneficiaries because of Y2K."<sup>13</sup>

In 1997, the Federal Reserve's Board of Governors told the House Committee on Banking and Financial Services that compliance was crucial. So it appears that the problem is being addressed there as well.<sup>14</sup> Additionally, gas and electric company spokesmen nationally attest to the fact that they have been addressing the computer glitch and are working on compliance.

### WHO STANDS 2 GAIN FROM THE SCARE?

Is the creation of fear and the offer of a product to alleviate that fear a

new marketing technique? Is this not dishonest if the fear is really not based on reality and hard facts or even omitted facts? The AARP fears that scams may be the worst obstacle which will "feed the greed and dishonesty of scam artists who are always on the lookout for new ways to pry money out of the unsuspecting."<sup>15</sup>

The AARP's concern is right on the mark. With the doom and gloom scenarios being projected — both in Christian and secular forums — it opens a rich harvest for the unscrupulous. Con artists will have a field day preying on the elderly and uninformed. The climate is right for swindlers to bilk the unsuspecting out of money, credit card information, bank account data and other important financial elements, all under the auspices of being able to ensure personal Y2K readiness. The claims of assistance and remedy by the dishonest may well be the real millennium disaster.

### FACTS 2 CONSIDER

Keep in mind that hundreds and hundreds of banks and financial institutions have failed in the last two decades and yet there was no major disaster that occurred. Three hundred failings alone occurred in 1988 and 1989. If the Y2K changeover disrupted a few hundred smaller banks it would not cause a ripple. We have been assured that the financial services industry has been working on the problem.<sup>16</sup> Remember also that the financial stability of some major countries has collapsed or faced near-ruin in recent years. And the effects of these foreign crises has not caused personal or national catastrophes in the United States.

So the facts show that many agencies including Social Security, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC), the Veterans Administration (VA), Internal Revenue Service (IRS), and banking institutions, *have taken seriously the Y2K ramifications and are vigorously addressing the Y2K issues.*

Even The John Birch Society, not one to shy away from conspiracy theories, takes a more or less benign

view of the “millennium bug” doomsday predictions. Its Internet article is fact-filled, well-documented and balanced, which is a real surprise.<sup>17</sup> We must give credit where credit is due.

## 9 POINTS 2 PONDER

C.S. Lewis once suggested that truth can often be found between two extremes. His wisdom applies here although on a scale from 1 to 10 with 10 being doomsday, the facts indicate that we may hit 1 or 2 with small local inconveniences and not much more. What the facts show is this:

1. *There is a problem.* Everyone who needs to be aware of the problem seems to be aware. The problem is being addressed and solved at a rapid pace.

2. Any analysis of the problem *must* be based on *hard facts* and evidence. The problem should not be overstated but discussed realistically.

3. Many of the extreme doomsday views are based on incomplete facts, flawed information or missing data. North says that the solution is impossible, which flies in the face of all the facts and all the hard work to achieve compliance. The computer programmers are still working hard and diligently to correct the problem. They haven't headed for safer ground as North asserts. The doomsday reports and reporters are only as good as the information they have *or give*. Selling solutions and a vested interest should make us wary. If they were really interested in helping us, why not just give away the answer?

4. The problem has been and is being vigorously addressed and dealt with to such a degree that we can be assured that there is no major disaster or catastrophic collapse looming.

5. Some smaller businesses and banks could have short disruptions, which is unlikely, but even a small national recession is out of the question.

6. There may be a few bumps in the road and maybe even some minor disruptions but not a “Chicken Little” scenario.

7. In case there should be a few minor computer glitches locally, be ready for a long New Year's weekend by having on hand a few extra dollars in cash and a few extra of your prescription drugs. Tests have shown though that the glitches can be cleared in hours, if not minutes.

8. For your own peace of mind, ask people who provide your services, such as banks, druggists, utilities companies, hospitals, doctors, and so on, what they are doing to become compliant — that is “Y2K ready.” You will find that the problem is being addressed, if not already solved.

9. Regardless of the inconveniences, the Church of Jesus Christ should still be going about its business of winning others and making disciples, even using negative events to press home the claims of eternity (read the entire epistle of 1 Peter). There can be some great evangelistic opportunities here, so we should not even think of retreat.

The discernment periodical, *Calvary Contender*, warns: “We are told the Internet is a-buzz with scare-narios, and, indeed we as Christians should be concerned as the time approaches, but not panic. Extreme fear itself could become a greater problem than Y2K. ... Stockpile if you wish ... but let's trust our God, use common sense, and not help dire predictions become self-fulfilling prophecies.”<sup>18</sup>

We need patience and perseverance, not paranoia. Let's remember the word of the prophet Habakkuk who faced a real catastrophe and holocaust:

“Though the fig tree should not blossom, And there be no fruit on the vines, Though the yield of the olive should fail, And the fields produce no food, Though the flock should be cut off from the fold, And there be no cattle in the stalls, Yet I will exult in the Lord, I will rejoice in the God of my salvation. The Lord God is my strength, And He has made my feet like hinds' feet, And makes me walk on my high places” (Habakkuk 3:17-19, NAS).

We cannot get preoccupied or sidetracked with doomsday prognostications or predictions of disaster. We must be about our Father's business. No doubt the “millennium bug” clatter will come and go like so many other fads (the Belgium Beast, backward masking, Bible codes, the predictions of Edgar Weisanant and Harold Camping, to name only a few). One can only wonder if the propagators of paranoia are deceived or are just deceivers.

## Endnotes:

1. Gary North, “Gary North's Y2K Links and Forums, The Year 2000 Problem: The Year the Earth Stands Still.” Available on North's web site: <http://www.garynorth.com>. See also his article, “Awake Now! Blind Man's Bluff in Y2K,” *The Midnight Herald*, Summer 1998, pp. 4-5.
2. Ibid.
3. David Becker, Religion & Politics Digest web site, “A Billion Lives Lost, If Things Go Fairly Well,” RPD 3396, 10/3/1998.
4. Chuck Missler, “The Millennium Bomb” Y2K, Supplemental Notes booklet, published by Koinonia House, pg. 22.
5. *Weekly World News*, October 13, 1998, pg. 24.
6. Nicholas Zvegintzov, “The Year 2000 as Racket and Ruse,” *American Programmer* magazine, February 1996, pg. 3.
7. Pat Shellenbarger, “Y2K,” *The Grand Rapids Press*, Oct. 25, 1988, pg. J2.
8. Scott Pinzon, “Millennium Bomb of Y2K,” *CBA Marketplace*, November 1998, pg. 40.
9. Ocean Federal bank newsletter, August 1998, pg. 3.
10. Pat Shellenbarger, “Power added to mash Y2K bug,” *The Grand Rapids Press*, Oct. 25, 1998, pg. A18.
11. Ocean Federal newsletter, op. cit., pg. 4.
12. Robert Lewis, “Beating the Bug,” *AARP Bulletin*, October 1998, pp. 22.
13. Ibid., pg. 20.
14. Ibid., pg. 22.
15. Ibid.
16. David Wessel, “Year 2000 Is Costly, But Not Catastrophic,” *The Wall Street Journal*, May 4, 1998, pg. A1.
17. Dennis J. Behreandt, “An Inquiry Into The Veracity of ‘Millennium Bug’ Doomsday Predictions,” May 29, 1998. Available on The John Birch Society's web site, <http://www.jbs.org/y2k.htm>. See also Behreandt's article, “Millennium Mayhem,” available at: <http://www.jbs.org/tna/1998/vol14no19.htm>.
18. “The Y2K Scare,” *Calvary Contender*, Oct. 1, 1998, cited in *The Christian News*, Oct. 5, 1998, pg. 2.

All we need to know about heaven and all that God wants us to know about heaven is contained in the Scriptures. If we needed any more, certainly God would have given us a larger Bible. God’s divine revelation ended with the Book of Revelation (Revelation 22:18-19).

Contrary to the title and Baxter’s claim of a “divine revelation,” this book is more human imagination than anything else. Perhaps, as well, more information on heaven may not be understandable by us. We don’t try to teach calculus to first-graders, either. God knows how much we can comprehend.

*The New Geneva Study Bible* explains:

“We can form an idea of the perfect life of heaven from what we know imperfectly now. ...it is destined to be realized in a way beyond imagination.”<sup>4</sup>

If all the so-called divine revelations of cult groups and spiritually abusive manipulators were true, we could only conclude that God is confused and contradicting Himself. The Apostle Paul, in 2 Corinthians 12:4, taught that heaven’s glories are inexpressible. Baxter would have us believe otherwise. To think that Baxter’s book can give us more than God already has, is a not-so-subtle denigration of the Scriptures. God has been holding out on us — at least until the coming of Mary Baxter.

Baxter’s book can be classified as science fiction splattered with Bible verses to prop it up and give it some credibility. Like her earlier volume, *A Divine Revelation of Hell*, this new book is filled with biblical inaccuracies, imagination, and myth.<sup>5</sup>

Baxter is simply following in the train of the 18th century occultist and mystic heretic Emanuel Swedenborg. Swedenborg’s work, *Heaven and Its Wonders and Hell*, tells us not only of his finding secret meanings in every word of Scripture (called Arcana) but also of his purported trips to both

heaven and hell. Amazingly, though Swedenborg predated the oneness Pentecostals by 150 years, he aggressively taught oneness doctrine.<sup>6</sup>

### BETTER SOURCES

For the Christian, there are volumes on heaven that are more accurate, trustworthy, edifying and biblical for the student of Scripture. One classic volume is Wilbur Smith’s *The Biblical Doctrine of Heaven*.<sup>7</sup> Smith has an expansive bibliography which may well be the most extensive in any volume. The 13-page bibliography lists over 140 books just on heaven.

Another fine and more recent study on heaven is renowned pastor and author John MacArthur’s book, *The Glory of Heaven*.<sup>8</sup> MacArthur is biblical and warns against the current wave of Gnosticism by debunking some by name. He also reproduces sermons on heaven from stalwarts like Richard Baxter, Thomas Boston, J.C. Ryle and Charles Spurgeon.

In a previous *Quarterly Journal* article,<sup>9</sup> we introduced Mary K. Baxter from her promotional material as “an ordinary housewife until through a series of revelations and dreams, she was taken to the very body of hell.” We also noted that “she was ordained at the Full Gospel Church in Taylor Michigan in 1983.” Baxter is a minister with the National Church of God in Washington, D.C. In that 1995 piece we noted that Baxter’s ideas of heaven (given as a teaser in her first book), included a special planet for aborted and stillborn babies as well as animals. She presumes to speak where the Scriptures are silent (Deuteronomy 29:29). She also maintains that there is a file room where angels bring accounts of people’s lives for God to scrutinize, but cites no Scripture. This is akin to the progressive salvation and the “investigative judgment” of Ellen G. White and the Adventists.

Whitaker House, responsible for publishing the paranoid delusions of Dr. Rebecca Brown, is also responsible for publishing both of Baxter’s books. As more people abandon the Bible for experience and mythology (2 Timothy

4:3-4), this book already is being touted as a best-seller. People turning from the truth to fables is the only explanation for this book being the fifth-best-selling trade paperback<sup>10</sup>

### STRAIGHT FROM THE BOOK

One of the ground rules of discussing heaven should always be that the interaction will be based on biblical material alone. Otherwise we are on a heaving sea of speculation, guesswork, and perhaps even human or demonic delusion or deception. Even the passages about heaven that seem materialistic (in the best sense), like streets of gold, and so forth, if taken literally, must not be pushed beyond the Bible’s statements with wild elaborations, additions or embellishments. Where Scripture is silent, we dare not tread. Where the Bible stops, we dare not go further.

As the late apologist Walter Martin suggested many years ago, on some subjects there should be a “reverent agnosticism.” Even if some take a more literal approach to the New Jerusalem, it does not justify creating an imaginary heaven in the likeness of Las Vegas or Atlantic City.

What can we absolutely know about heaven? We can know much if we stick solely to Scripture. The Holy Spirit will make that material precious to us (John 14:26, 16:13-15).

The most frequently used word for heaven in the Old Testament is the Hebrew word *samayin*. In the New Testament, the Greek word *ouranos* is used. The Hebrew word means “heights” and the New Testament word means “sky” or “air above the Earth.”<sup>11</sup> It is a wonderful choice of words because anywhere we are on Earth, there is sky above.

In short, heaven is a place. It is the home and throne of God. Christ ascended there and believers go there at death. It is the abode of angels. It is called Paradise and the third heaven and its size is inconceivable. It is a place of joy, pleasure and unending bliss. There, sickness, pain and death are absent. It is the believer’s hope and inheritance.<sup>12</sup> We could meditate long and hard and study deeper and

deeper on any one of those things mentioned.

It is problematic enough that Baxter gives so much fanciful extra-biblical information but a far greater problem is that her ideas contradict Scripture in no uncertain terms.

### STRAIGHT FROM THE TOP?

There is no doubt that Baxter puts herself on a lofty plain. As noted above, she says her call in life was to write these books. She further asserts:

“God, in His infinite mercy, has seen fit to choose me and show me visions from Himself. I praise God for this. When I am in prayer and meditation, seeking God on certain matters, I am allowed to see into mysteries by the Spirit. He reveals certain things to me. My calling in God is to receive dreams, visions, and revelations and to relate them to others. As the Lord’s anointed handmaiden, I am simply describing the things that He has shown to me. I believe this is my biblical role.”<sup>13</sup>

So there we have it. This book is nothing less than the absolute Word of God from God. It, like the Bible itself, has the inerrant revelation of God.

What makes this book really dangerous is the blatant and overt message that the Bible is not quite enough. Perhaps the Bible is lackluster and incomplete but now there is the real word, the final word. There is now something better, more exciting, more revealing, more wonderful and a bit fuller than God’s Word. Of course, it’s about \$10 per volume and published by Whitaker House. If the above unspoken supposition were not true (that God’s Word is not quite enough) the book would not have been written. The Bible would have been enough — period. We must not forget that all cults have their extra-biblical revelations and their divine and anointed seers.

### HAIL MARY AND HER X-RAY VISION

There is no escaping the exalting of

self in this book. Baxter repeatedly places herself on par with the Apostles and Scripture writers. She extols: “I saw the same scene that John saw in his vision that he described in Revelation.”<sup>14</sup> In fact, she appears to be greater than John in seeing things he never saw.

Baxter sees many other things as well: “As the minister prayed for people who were sick or afflicted with diseases, it seemed that the Lord allowed me to see a dark spot in a lung, a leg, a heart, or wherever the affliction was.”<sup>15</sup>

And Baxter’s “visions” are not even stifled by geographic boundaries: “Now, I need to tell you that the things I was seeing in my spirit were not always happening in the church where I was ministering at the time. I would see things in my spirit that could be occurring miles away.”<sup>16</sup> For a discerning Church, these assertions would have been condemned as clairvoyance or demonic visions and no Christian publisher would have fostered such occultic delusions. Truly, the Church has lost its will to discern.

Baxter’s ramblings even compare to the hallucinations of fellow Whitaker House author Rebecca Brown. She informs her gullible readers:

“Around and outside of my home was a great assemblage of angels. Some were sitting, talking among themselves. Another group had a very authoritative look and seemed to be watching. The angels in the third group around the house were standing wingtip to wingtip with their backs toward my home. This last group was composed of the largest angels who all looked like warriors! Each had a large sword at his side. If even a dark shadow tried to creep toward my home, they would pull out their swords and defend my family.”<sup>17</sup>

Christian Research Institute’s Hank Hanegraaff clues us in on the many things that mark the counterfeit revival of our time. One prominent characteristic is the claim of the end-time restoration of prophetic and

healing gifts seen in people who are even greater than the Bible’s prophets and apostles. They make the grandiose claim of being super apostles in one way or another.<sup>18</sup> Like it or not, Baxter fills the bill.

### A GOOD START GOES BAD

Baxter starts out with standard fare reminding us that heaven is “a prepared place,” “a perfect place” and “a permanent place.”<sup>19</sup> However, it certainly is questionable that nationality will continue as a distinction in heaven.<sup>20</sup> This seems to be the assertion of Baxter.

There is no Scripture to prove that diamonds as big “as blocks of concrete” are used for soul winners’ mansions.<sup>21</sup> This is pure speculation and imagination. But it gets worse with extrabiblical ideas.

Heaven is not “the land of dreams come true” as stated by Baxter.<sup>22</sup> People have “dreams” about all sorts of things, true and untrue, good and bad. Some “dream” about hitting it big in the lottery or they “dream” about their team winning the series. Heaven is what Scripture says it is — no more and no less. It is not based on human dreams or imagination.

### ALL BOTTLED UP

Some of the above might be classified as “junk food doctrine.” Many would admit it is not really spiritually nourishing but say maybe it is not all that harmful. Some may feel that way in regard to Baxter’s teaching about the “bottle room.” However, the more one wanders away from Scripture, the more possibility of serious error and heresy and Baxter proves that very point. Error does beget error. We will get to some of the serious errors, but first the “bottle room” teaching.

Baxter reports seeing a room with bottles filled with human tears.<sup>23</sup> The tears, she says, are brought in by angels by the bowlful and poured into individual bottles marked with people’s names. Baxter refers to Psalm 56:8 (“You number my wanderings; Put my tears into your bottle; Are they not in your book?”) to justify the numerous bottles.

Baxter misses it here and shows how loosely and inaccurately she handles Scripture. With Baxter's tortured eisegesis we could just as well conclude that somehow there are leather bound containers called books that hold tears or some form of "tear book" for every person. Her hermeneutics get downright silly.

Heaven is a place of "no tears" and an absence of "former things" (Revelation 21:4, Isaiah 65:16).

Psalm 56:8 is teaching us through the use of Hebrew imagery and figures of speech that God gives personal attention to our needs, struggles, concerns and sorrows. The context also assures that God will take care of the opposition (vv. 7, 9). It says our tears go into *His* bottle and into *His* book. God's personal attention to our sorrows and His vindication in terms of the enemy is a wonderful and comforting concept, while Baxter's view leaves us cold. Psalm 56:8 does not add up to what she teaches. Keil and Delitzsch capture the essence of Psalm 56:8 and share how memorial terms are used there.<sup>24</sup>

*The New Geneva Study Bible* informs us on Psalm 56:8 that: "The Psalmist is calling on God to hear and remember his prayer."<sup>25</sup> A crass literal wresting of this verse distorts its meaning and robs God's people of its comforts.

Adam Clarke instructs us about verse 8: "Thou hast taken an exact account of all the tears I have shed in relation to this business; and thou wilt call my enemies to account for *every* tear."<sup>26</sup>

Baxter gives away her Charismatic inclination by claiming that there is in heaven a hall of platinum with rooms full of unclaimed blessings. Miracles and healings are unclaimed blessings.<sup>27</sup> We can only conclude that if we do not get healings and blessings, it is all our fault for leaving them unclaimed. All we have to do is "believe."<sup>28</sup> This runs into the massive wall of "Thy will be done" and "Not my will but thine" but Baxter never mentions that issue. Ignoring pertinent parts of Scripture will not make them go away.

Again, there might be those who say, "So what's the big deal? If it helps people, maybe even makes people think about heaven, so what that there's a few aberrations or a few liberties taken at the expense of Scripture?"

Lest we forget: All of this is implied as coming right from God! There are not supposed to be errors, mistakes, contradictions, aberrations or liberties taken. God is perfect and cannot lie. Romans 3:4 insists: "Let God be true and every man a liar." If the people that we allegedly help now, later find the errors and false teaching, the backlash will be that they may go into total skepticism and rejection, saying the whole message of Christ and the Gospel is false.

### TO MAKE MATTERS WORSE

Baxter moves into even more serious errors as the book progresses. She seems to make angels omniscient (all knowing), in that the angels are able to understand and discern the thoughts and intents of people's hearts and minds.<sup>29</sup> There is no Scripture for these assertions. Created beings know only what God wants them to know. Omniscience is an incommunicable attribute of God alone. This means that God does not share this ability with others. To have God's attribute is to be God. Angels are not "gods." To assign divine attributes to a creature is the essence of idolatry.

When it comes to salvation, Baxter sends a very confused and garbled message. In some parts of her book, salvation through Christ is clearly mentioned, as well as the place of preaching the message. But in Chapter 3, the reader is introduced to a strange and bizarre speculation. Rather than having the Word of God and His Spirit as the seen and unseen agents of conversion, Baxter links the inner work of salvation to an "angel (who) was pouring what looked like fire" on the head of the preacher.<sup>30</sup> She also has angels touch the heart of the unsaved and set him free.<sup>31</sup>

John 6:63 tells us that "The Spirit gives life." The Holy Spirit is the agent of the new birth. He, as well,

seals us (Ephesians 1:13) and baptizes us into the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:13). It is Jesus Christ who delivers us through the power of the Holy Spirit, not angels (Colossians 1:14, 1 Peter 1:18-23, Revelation 1:5). In Baxter's account, angels are given prerogatives that only belong to the Godhead. This is where we move from "junk food doctrine" to serious and dangerous error. Colossians 1:18-19 warns against attributing too much to angels and insists that we keep Christ in His proper place of preeminence. Hebrews 1 punctuates the vast difference between Christ and angels and His superiority over them.

To further build on this angelic cleansing idea, Baxter employs angels expunging our sins (not Christ), by using blood-stained cloths on the history books.<sup>32</sup> Where is she going with this and why? Scripture is crystal clear that God is the one who forgives sins and cleanses us from all unrighteousness (1 John 1:9). Isaiah 43:25 assures us that it is God who blots out our transgressions and does not remember them against us. Angels are given far too much power and authority and intrude on the prerogatives of God in Baxter's fantasy world. Though she contradicts herself and says, "God truly forgives our sins. ... Hallelujah, God wipes the slate clean for each of us!"<sup>33</sup> she has the angels washing the pages.

This is not only a confusing book, it is a bad one.

This angelic conversion or angelic deliverance idea is totally unbiblical and misleading. It is a not-so-subtle shift away from Christ and ought to be jettisoned without hesitation. It strikes at the very heart of the Gospel and sets up a gnostic orientation. Even though she may later talk of the man receiving Christ and the Gospel being preached to him,<sup>34</sup> the earlier angel message muddies and muddles the true salvation experience. After all, Baxter claims that the angel said: "I am going to reveal to you what happens when a person's born again,"<sup>35</sup> just before the angel cleansing story. So if this is what really

happens, why was it not ever revealed to the writers of Scripture?

Along the way, Baxter sees white horses bowing to God in worship,<sup>36</sup> as a fulfillment of Philippians 2:10 ("every knee should bow"). She does not try to deal with verse 11, "that every tongue should confess" which shows clearly the context to be human worshipers. While this is a minor flub on her part, it is not the first time she ignores context.

### JUST LIKE THE PICTURES

In the book, Baxter also describes a bearded Jesus in a robe.<sup>37</sup> Maybe the artists of the middle ages were right.

In her section titled, "Order in Heaven," Baxter has angels flying in all the time with reports<sup>38</sup> and we have to wonder again what ever happened to the omniscience of God? There is implicit in Baxter's view (and perhaps she is unaware) a move toward process theology. This heretical view teaches, in short, that God is advancing, God is learning, God is limited, God is growing.<sup>39</sup>

That God is perfect and knows all things from beginning to end is a central focus of the Bible. He is in every place keeping watch upon the evil and the good (Proverbs 15:3). His omnipresence assures His omniscience (see Jeremiah 23:23-25, Psalm 139, Isaiah 46:10).<sup>40</sup> God assures us in Malachi 3:6: "For I am the Lord, I do not change." God does not need angelic reports. This is the God of Jehovah's Witnesses and other heretical cults.<sup>41</sup>

Baxter claims to have seen the top of God's head which "looked like wool."<sup>42</sup> This is more nonsense and a failure to understand symbolic language where it is used in Scripture. John 4:24 tells us that "God is a Spirit." We can be absolutely certain God does not look like a sheep. John 1 assures us that as far as the pure essence of God, "No one has seen God at any time" (v. 18). The closest that the Apostles got was Jesus. Baxter's God is more at home in Mormonism than biblical Christianity.

Troublesome also is Baxter's conditional salvation. There is a definite works/righteousness stated in her book. She writes concerning infants who have died that: "If parents of these children will live righteously in Christ Jesus, when they come to heaven, they will be reunited and will know their precious loved ones."<sup>43</sup> No one's righteousness will get them to heaven. Heaven is a free gift given to all who have the imputed righteousness of Jesus (Romans 4:5-6).

### HEAVEN'S FITTING ROOM

Baxter claims 10 visits to heaven<sup>44</sup> and while there she discovered people had to be fitted for their crowns.<sup>45</sup> I guess this is another unforeseen detail God has to work out on the spot. Also we find that heaven has Victorian furniture,<sup>46</sup> which will please antique buffs. Perhaps her claim of "some other style of furniture with elaborate designs on the pieces"<sup>47</sup> will just have to suffice.

### SO WHAT DO WE HAVE?

So what do we have in the end? What we have is a hodgepodge, a conglomeration. We have mongrelization and admixture. *A Divine Revelation of Heaven* is not a divine revelation at all. It is a melange of untested claims, fiction, imagination, out-of-context Bible verses, error and even heresy. The undiscerning will think it is great, never realizing that it tears away at the Gospel and the person of God. It is a modern metaphysical gnostic text. There are just enough "God" words and enough smattering of Bible references to convince the unassuming that it is a "religious" book. However, the bottom line is that it's not even good fiction.

In the end when people see through the hype, it may lead to a loss of all hope or perhaps by the grace of God, they will be driven to seek the only true hope, Jesus and the Word of God.

The well-spoken words of apologist Craig Branch, in regard to New Age counterfeits, also apply to Mary Baxter and her book:

"How does one test the validity of a claim of divine communica-


tion, and, if necessary, expose its deception? The Christian has the clear advantage because the Bible is the point of reference and discernment. The process of testing involves: (1) understanding the actual message or content of the claims; (2) comparing the source and the message with biblical truth; (3) demonstrating the internal contradictions or irrationality of the message; (4) if necessary, examining the history or reputation of the messenger or medium."<sup>48</sup>

Branch goes on:

"And finally, the Christian must not neglect to consider what are the implications for individual Christians, and for the Body of Christ. Christians should ask what is going wrong in the culture when there is rampant interest in, and gullibility toward, occult and metaphysical teaching and phenomena."<sup>49</sup>

### Endnotes:

1. See William Alnor, *Heaven Can't Wait - A Survey of Alleged Trips to the Other Side*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Book House, 1996.
2. *Ibid.*, pp. 20-21; 45-46.
3. Mary K. Baxter with Dr. T.L. Lowery, *A Divine Revelation of Heaven*. New Kensington, Pa.: Whitaker House, 1998, pg. 13.
4. *The New Geneva Study Bible*, pg. 2032.
5. For a critical review of Baxter's earlier volume, *A Divine Revelation of Hell*, see this author's article in *The Quarterly Journal*, Vol. 15, No. 4, pg. 1.
6. Emanuel Swedenborg, *Heaven and Its Wonders and Hell*. New York: The Citadel Press, 1965, pp. 5-8.
7. Wilbur Smith, *The Biblical Doctrine of Heaven*. Chicago: Moody Press, 1968.
8. John MacArthur, *The Glory of Heaven — The Truth About Heaven, Angels and Eternal*. Wheaton, Ill.: Crossways Books, 1996.
9. *The Quarterly Journal*, Vol. 15, No. 4, op. cit.
10. See the best-seller list in *CBA Marketplace*, October 1998.
11. See further, *Baker's Dictionary of Theology*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Book House, 1973, pg. 263.
12. See further, William Evans, *The Great Doctrines of the Bible*. Chicago: Moody Press, 1974, pp. 270-272; and *The Zondervan Encyclopedia of the Bible*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan Publishing, 1975, Vol. 3, pp. 60-65.

13. *A Divine Revelation of Heaven*, op. cit., pp. 161-162.
14. *Ibid.*, pg. 49.
15. *Ibid.*, pg. 168.
16. *Ibid.*, pp. 171-172.
17. *Ibid.*, pp. 176-177.
18. Hank Hanegraaff, *Counterfeit Revival*. Dallas: Word Publishing, 1997, pp. 155-162.
19. *A Divine Revelation of Heaven*, op. cit., pp. 21, 24.
20. *Ibid.*, pg. 25.
21. *Ibid.*, pp. 26-27.
22. *Ibid.*, pg. 30.
23. *Ibid.*, pp. 33-36.
24. C.F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, *Commentary on The Old Testament*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1984, Vol. 5, Psalms, pg. 170.
25. *The New Geneva Study Bible*, pg. 814.
26. Adam Clarke, *Adam Clarke's Commentary on the Old Testament*. New York: Abingdon Press, no date, Vol. 3, pg. 398.
27. *A Divine Revelation of Heaven*, op. cit., pp. 54-57.
28. *Ibid.*, pg. 56.
29. *Ibid.*, pg. 62.
30. *Ibid.*, pg. 63.
31. *Ibid.*, pp. 64-65.
32. *Ibid.*, pp. 148-149.
33. *Ibid.*, pg. 149.
34. *Ibid.*, pg. 70.
35. *Ibid.*, pp. 60-61.
36. *Ibid.*, pp. 83-84.
37. *Ibid.*, pg. 84.
38. *Ibid.*, pg. 94.
39. See further, Robert E. Morey, *The Battle of the Gods* (Southbridge, Mass.: Crown Publications, 1989) for an in depth historical view and complete refutation of process theology.
40. See further, Henry Thiessen, *Lectures in Systematic Theology*, pp. 124-125.
41. For an examination of the limited God of Jehovah's Witnesses who relies upon angelic reports, see Duane Magnani, *The Heavenly Weather Man*, published by Witness, Inc., P.O. Box 597, Clayton, CA 94517.
42. *A Divine Revelation of Heaven*, op. cit., pg. 113.
43. *Ibid.*, pg. 118.
44. *Ibid.*, pg. 143.
45. *Ibid.*, pg. 145.
46. *Ibid.*
47. *Ibid.*, pp. 145-146.
48. Craig Branch, "Conversions with the Counterfeit." *The Watchman Expositor*, Vol. 15, No. 3, 1998, pp. 15-16.
49. *Ibid.*, pg. 16. 

## EDITORIALS

(continued from page 2)

Recently I took a call from a man in New York state who had lost his wife to the Watchtower organization. (Actually she had grown up a Jehovah's Witness and they were now divorced.) I conveyed to him some helpful suggestions as to the "do's" and "don'ts" of sharing Christ with his wife in relation to her Jehovah's Witness background and status. Early in the conversation I was aware of this man's mystical frame of mind as he informed me that "God told me that I am going to get my wife back" and that "God has given me a Scripture which will get the Jehovah's Witnesses saved — Isaiah 43:11." To the latter, I responded that while we must use the Word of God in our witnessing efforts, no one single verse will repeatedly prevail against the "veiled and blinded minds" of the unbelieving. I wish it were just that simple to bring a Jehovah's Witness to Christ but anyone who has witnessed to them knows that it is not.

Our conversation came to an abrupt conclusion when he mentioned, in passing, his devotion to Benny Hinn. I suggested to him that he needs to be very guarded to such a reverence for the controversial faith healer. "Hinn's repertoire is comparable to those of Watchtower leaders: false prophecies, necromancy, and aberrant and heretical teaching," I said. When I offered details to validate my statement, the man came unhinged. "Benny Hinn is anointed of God. I know where the spirit who is speaking through you is coming from and I will not listen to it and rebuke it in the name of Jesus Christ!" he shrieked.

When I again asked him to allow me a few moments to present the facts for him to consider, he became even more agitated. "Touch not my anointed and do my prophets no harm. No, I'm not going to listen to you!" he

thundered. I told him that his reaction to what I had said is really no different than the reaction his wife will exhibit when she is told that Watchtower leaders are false prophets who teach unbiblical doctrines. I've had more Jehovah's Witnesses than I care to number tell me, "No, I'm not going to listen to you. These men [i.e., their leaders] are anointed of God and speak for Jehovah."

"No, that's entirely different," the caller from New York said as he hung up on me.

He has now begun to write to another PFO director, Joan Cetnar, and repeatedly offered to her the revelation that I have "brought the judgement [sic] of Almighty God" on myself. He asked her to sit me down and "restore" me "to an accurate knowledge of not judging." Cetnar responded that we are allowed and even biblically instructed to judge or discern the words of men and their alleged divine declarations. She again offered him further documentation as to the false statements of Hinn. And in a second letter to her, he responded that he doesn't "want to be fellowshiping with anyone who condemns anyone because I got enough of judgement [sic] from the Jehovah's Witnesses."

In other words, "Don't confuse me with the facts..." Sadly, he wants his wife to consider the facts, but he himself will not. Additionally, this brother is willing to ignore the scriptural warnings to "test" and "discern," because he has bought into Hinn's well-crafted and orchestrated exhibitions. Or at least he is willing to forego such application to Hinn, but readily apply them to me.

Cannon further noted in his essay that for Latter-day Saints, "feelings" take precedence over "facts." Regrettably, this same mindset is apparent among those who defend the charismatic superstars. One reader recently took issue with our evaluation of the doctrine and practice of word-faith teacher Joyce Meyer (*The Quarterly Journal*, Vol. 16, No. 1, pg. 4). He wrote and informed us

that while he is “not a follower or supporter of Joyce,” “Jesus is coming back soon for his bride, hopefully soon but if not, I do hope there are teachers like Joyce Meyer still teaching the Word, even some of her life experiences, *because in my spirit, I really sense that she is called of God...*” (emphasis added).

Here, too, this brother has — whether knowingly or unknowingly — weakened the Word of God in his life. He is on mystical and dangerous ground when he wrote that “in my spirit, I sense that she is called of God.” He has allowed his senses and emotions to do something that the Word of God is to do. The Bible is the *only standard* by which we are to measure all teachers and their teachings, not our senses or emotions.

So then what’s an apologist to do? Well, the answer is obvious: Just keep on presenting the facts and remembering that unchecked doctrine can and does affect the lives of those following such teachers. And by God’s grace some will listen and consider the facts.

A lady from Ohio proves this beyond question. She first wrote to PFO to protest against our reports on Benny Hinn. She accused us of “jealousy” and labeled our writing as “disgusting.” We were told by her that we need to “get born-again.” I responded to her, reiterated the information in our articles, and asked her to please consider the Scriptural instruction and response for false teachers and false prophets (such as Romans 16:17-18; 1 Thessalonians 5:21; 2 Timothy 4:3-4; Titus 1:9 and Jude 3).

This she did, and her harsh rebukes were immediately replaced by a kindhearted and positive attitude. “I must ask you to forgive me, I’m sorry, there are things I wrote that I shouldn’t have,” she said in a subsequent letter. And later wrote that, “After corresponding with you, I have been watching him [Benny Hinn] closer and as hard as it is for me to say, I don’t like some of the things I see.” She then acknowledged that she no longer sees PFO as “intent on getting at Benny Hinn, but honestly ... trying to protect the ‘body of Christ.’”

In one of her letters (which arrived just before this editorial was written), she asked me to “Please pray for me that I will grow in wisdom, knowledge and discernment.” What a humbling petition from a sister in Christ! Her prayer requests are some of the noblest for which a Christian can petition God. In an arena where the devotees of televangelists are prompted to seek from God more money, better jobs, bigger homes, newer cars and other grandiose “blessings,” it’s exhilarating to hear someone search for the things that matter. I know God will honor her requests as she considers her conduct, character and spiritual growth more important than materialism.

Her prayer, too, is much more in line with the instruction of God’s Word: “The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up

against the knowledge of God and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ” (2 Corinthians 10:4-5).

Despite the accusations that we are “jealous,” “envious” or “just plain old stupid” by some, my colleagues and I will continue to hold fast and defend the faith. We will continue to evaluate and speak out against those who promote aberrant and heretical teachings. And by God’s grace there will be those who will be open to, ascertain, and become unconfused by the facts.

—MKG

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## NEWS UPDATES

(continued from page 3)

Julius R. Mantey, Dr. Robert Morey and Dr. Jerry Bergman were among the featured speakers. During the final years of his life, Dr. Mantey, a noted authority and professor of New Testament Greek, became a renowned and outspoken critic of the Jehovah’s Witnesses and their translation of the New Testament. The Watchtower had misrepresented Dr. Mantey’s writings on Greek grammar in its effort to undermine the deity of Christ.

During the recently held convention, a plaque commemorating the milestone event was presented to Joan on behalf of fellow directors of PFO and the numerous lives that have been impacted by her diligence in hosting the annual gathering.

The crowning event of the 20th convention was a live taping of a six-program series on Jehovah’s Witnesses by *The John Ankerberg Show*. The guests for Ankerberg’s shows included Joan Cetnar, Lorri MacGregor, Duane Magnani and David Reed, all former Jehovah’s Witnesses.

—MKG

## HOLYFIELD’S GREATEST OPPONENT NOT IN THE BOXING RING

During the past decade, Evander Holyfield has been a celebrated star in professional boxing arenas. His name and achievements will be indelibly recorded in boxing history books. Following his appearance at a Benny Hinn Miracle Crusade in Philadelphia, the three-time heavyweight champion’s prominence among Christians escalated as well. At the June 1994 crusade, Hinn claimed God was healing Holyfield’s heart of an alleged condition that forced him into early retirement. After his solidarity with the faith healer, Holyfield began to appear on the Trinity Broadcasting Network, and at

another of Hinn's crusades, and at least one charismatic conference.

On TBN's *Praise The Lord* show, Holyfield professed to be a devout Christian. With the help of Benny Hinn, Paul Crouch and others, Holyfield found himself ascending into Christian "superstar" status. He claimed his latest victories in the boxing ring were a result of the Lord's help and his second wife, Janice. Holyfield had met Janice at the Philadelphia crusade where Hinn prayed to God for a wife for the boxing star and a mother for his children. The faith healer "prophesied" that his wife would come from among those attending the crusade. Janice, a medical doctor from Chicago, did volunteer work for Hinn. The two dated briefly and were married in October 1996.

However, particulars of Holyfield's past and recent revelations of his current lifestyle should cause Christians to restrain from making him a superstar or role model. Holyfield married his first wife, Paulette, in 1985, a year after the birth of their first child. The couple broke up in 1991 with "infidelity" being named as a factor in the divorce.

Faithfulness to his present wife Janice has not risen significantly either. According to a report in the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, prior to the birth of his first child with Janice, Holyfield confirmed "that he has fathered two children out of wedlock in the past year with previous girlfriends." In all, the boxing champ has nine children: one with his wife, Janice; three with his first wife, Paulette; and five others born out of wedlock to

four other women. In October, a paternity suit between Holyfield and Tamie Dewan Evans "was filed, settled and sealed all in one day in Fayette County [Ga.] Superior Court."

The Atlanta newspaper also stated that Holyfield and Janice "have been in and out of counseling" since their marriage began. *People* magazine portrayed to its readers a veneer of marital bliss of the couple: "A fervent born-again Christian, Holyfield can see God's fingerprints on every part of his life, especially his marriage to Janice ... What they are sure of is their marriage. 'I always thought I wouldn't want to be married again until after I stopped boxing,' says Holyfield. 'But the way God wanted it turned out right.'" The *Journal-Constitution* also reported that Holyfield "told Janice of his infidelity and the impending births and suggested they get divorced 'quietly' to spare her any humiliation." She declined and the couple has continued to attend counseling. She was against Holyfield speaking publicly on his recent infidelities and issued a statement through her husband's attorney: "Tell them Evander's wife has forgiven him, and that's all that should matter."

In a September interview, *Journal-Constitution* reporter Jeff Schultz asked Holyfield: "Where is your marital situation now?" Holyfield responded: "I'm not going to talk about that."

Holyfield himself was one of nine children born out of wedlock, the newspaper also reported.

—MKG

## PERSONAL FREEDOM OUTREACH — STATEMENT OF BELIEF

- I. THE BIBLE AS THE DIVINELY INSPIRED, INERRANT WORD OF GOD: IT IS IN ITS ENTIRETY THE SOLE AUTHORITY FOR ALL MATTERS OF CHRISTIAN BELIEF AND PRACTICE.
- II. THE ONE TRUE GOD: IN THE ONE TRUE GOD THERE EXIST THREE PERSONS, BEING: THE FATHER, THE SON JESUS CHRIST, AND THE HOLY SPIRIT.
- III. JESUS CHRIST: HIS DEITY, HUMANITY, VIRGIN BIRTH, SINLESSNESS, DEATH AND BODILY RESURRECTION; WHO WILL PERSONALLY AND VISIBLY RETURN AGAIN TO EARTH.
- IV. THE PERSONALITY AND DEITY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.
- V. THE EXISTENCE AND PERSONALITY OF SATAN, HIS TOTAL OPPOSITION TO GOD, AND HIS POWER OVER THE UNREGENERATE.
- VI. THE COMPLETE AND TOTAL DEPRAVITY OF ALL MEN WHICH MAKES THEM HOPELESSLY LOST WITHOUT THE NEW BIRTH OBTAINABLE THROUGH FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST.
- VII. THE FINAL ESTATE OF MAN: FOR THE SAVED, EVERLASTING LIFE IN THE PRESENCE OF GOD AND FOR THE UNSAVED, EVERLASTING PUNISHMENT BECAUSE OF THEIR UNBELIEF.
- VIII. THE GOSPEL BY WHICH WE ARE SAVED BEING SUMMED IN THE DEATH, BURIAL AND RESURRECTION OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.
- IX. THE CHURCH BEING THE BODY OF CHRIST, UNITED IN THE HOLY SPIRIT, CONSISTING OF THOSE WHO HAVE RECEIVED JESUS CHRIST AS SAVIOR. A LOCAL CHURCH IS AN ORGANIZED ASSEMBLY OF BELIEVERS UNITED FOR THE PURPOSE OF CARRYING OUT THE GREAT COMMISSION OF CHRIST.
- X. THE GREAT COMMISSION OF CHRIST BEING TO PREACH THE GOSPEL TO ALL MEN, BAPTIZING AND DISCIPLING THOSE WHO HAVE BELIEVED.



# Books in Review

## WHAT'S WITH THE DUDES AT THE DOOR?

### Stuff to Know When the Cults Come Knocking

by Kevin Johnson & James White

Bethany House Publishers, 159 pages, \$7.99

From the title alone, one can accurately guess that this book is about the cults and written for teen-agers. Its lingo keeps it interesting, yet is very sound, direct and to the point for any budding apologist.

James White is a familiar name to cult apologists. Kevin Johnson is Bethany House's senior editor and formerly served as the youth minister at Elmbrook Church in Waukesha, Wis. The confluence of these men's wisdom and background provide a commendable work to establish and equip the Church's future leadership.

Within the pages of this much needed publication, answers to these four basic questions are found: 1) What makes a cult? 2) Why you need to stick to what you believe? 3) What does real Christianity teach? and 4) How do cults miss that standard?

Numerous subtitles and tallies of key points are listed throughout the book, which will hold a young person's interest and assists in easy recall. Each chapter ends with a "Think About This Stuff" section, asking questions whose answers summarize that section of the book.

Chapter 3 is titled, "Can't We All Just Get Along?" This segment stresses the importance of not being unequally yoked and not being blinded by love. It speaks of being baited by someone in a cult with the possibility of being trapped into converting to their belief system. This chapter is more important than most realize. Anyone who has done even a moderate amount of counseling with families that have been cult-infected, has come across the "love-struck" teen-ager who is being drawn into a potential girlfriend's or boyfriend's religion. And in most cases, the absence of some prior precautions (like this chapter) results in a "too-little, too-late" situation.

Not only should every youth minister be aware of this new book, but every parent of a teen-ager as well. Teens

must know how to defend themselves. They must be able to accurately understand their Christian beliefs in order to identify a counterfeit. *What's With the Dudes at the Door?* will assist your teen to a solid knowledge of biblical Christianity with the ability to contend for the faith with love and compassion.

—AMG

## ELLEN G. WHITE: THE SPIRIT BEHIND THE CHURCH

Jeremiah Films, 50-minute video, \$19.95

This hard-hitting and powerful video is a real eye-opener. If anyone had questions as to where Seventh-day Adventism stands as Christian or cult, this video will clear that up.

In this presentation we meet a number of ex-Adventists. In addition, the video chronicles how people are subtly proselytized into this doctrinally defective group.

Though Ellen G. White founded this organization over 100 years ago, she continues to exert an incredible grip on the followers through her writings even, though it can be demonstrated beyond doubt that most of her works are plagiarized.

The history of Seventh-day Adventists is laid out and the "visions" of White described. She went so far as to say that her mistakes were God's mistakes. White even taught that Satan is the sinbearer. With writings 17 times larger than the Bible, White's writings are believed to be inspired truth given by angels. Her notes and teachings are included in the SDA's own study Bible.

This video shows beyond all doubt that Ellen G. White meets all the qualifications of a false prophet. This is done with historical accuracy and heavy primary documentation. What is shown as well from the writings of the Adventist Church, is that the authoritative teachings cannot be changed and challenged. This includes law-keeping for salvation (conditional salvation).

Also documented is the Adventist propensity for altering and changing Scripture itself. This is a video that needs to be seen not only by individuals but needs to be shown in churches as well.

—GRF

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