

School of APOLOGETICS

IN DEFENCE OF THE GOSPEL



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CHAPTER 1

WHAT IS APOLOGETICS?

Apologetics is the branch of theology that is concerned with the defense or proof of Christianity.

“But sanctify the Lord in your hearts, and be ready to give an answer to every man that asketh you the reason of the hope that is in thee, with meekness...”

I Pet.3: 15

The word “defense” comes from the Greek word apologia and indicates “a defense of conduct and procedure.” It also refers to “... a verbal defense, a speech in defense of what one has done or of truth which one believes.”

“Apologia” translated by the English word “defense” is used eight times in the New Testament (including I Pet.3: 15 above) (Acts 22:1, Acts 25:16, I Cor. 9:3, II Cor.7: 11, Phil.1: 7, Phil.1:16, II Tim.4:16) **A BLIND LEAP?**

Many times Christians have been accused as having „blind faith“. We only believe but it makes no sense.

On the contrary Christianity is not taking a blind „leap into the dark“. It is a step into the light! It can be defended with sound, logical reasoning and with clear backing evidence for its claims.

The best defense for Christianity is a clear, simple presentation of the claims of Christ and who He is.

We must preach the gospel in the power of the Holy Spirit and believe Him to “...

convict the world of sin, of righteousness and of judgment” but we must also be ready to give an answer to every man the reason for the hope that is in us...”

Pinnock, an able apologist and witness for Christ, appropriately concludes: “An intelligent Christian ought to be able to point up the flaws in a non-Christian position and to present facts and arguments which tell in favor of the gospel...”

“Faith in Christianity,” **Paul Little** justifiably writes, “is based on evidence. It is reasonable faith. Faith in the Christian sense goes beyond reason but not against it.”

Faith is the assurance of the heart in the adequacy of the evidence.

CHAPTER 2

UNDERSTANDING CHRISTIAN BELIEFS

A) AUTHORITY: THE BIBLE IS THE WORD OF GOD

The word of which came to Jeremiah from the Lord, saying, “Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, „write all the words which I have spoken to you in a book”.”

(Jer. 30:1,2)

The Bible makes a remarkable claim: it claims to be a message sent from God to man.

Men wrote the books but they were carefully guided by God. This is made very clear from the Bible when it states, “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God...” (II Tim. 3:16) The word “inspired,” as used in this passage, comes from a Greek word, “theopneustos” meaning “God-breathed.” In other words, the Bible claims it is a book from God, not men. Another Scripture says, “... holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit”

(II Peter 1:21)

This may be compared to playing a trumpet. Melodies are produced only when the musician blows skillfully into it. In like manner, God breathed into His chosen servants and they were moved by the Spirit of God to record the word of God.

Paul commends the Thessalonians,

“... when ye received the word of God ... ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God...”

(I Thess.2:13)

Over three thousand times the Bible uses the phrase “Thus says the Lord” or “The word of the Lord came to me saying...” indicating the writers believed they were revealing the true words of God.

God used ordinary men in extraordinary ways to give us His words. Miraculously He did it without changing individual personalities and writing styles. Notice, for instance, the various descriptions of God’s Word expressed by these different biblical personalities: **Isaiah** records:

So shall my word be which goes forth from my mouth: It shall not return to me empty, without accomplishing what I desire. And without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it. (Isa. 55:11)
Ezekiel writes:

For I the Lord shall speak, and whatever word I speak will be performed.

(Ezek.12:25)

The Psalmist in a prayer says: The sum of Thy word is truth, and every one of Thy righteous ordinances is everlasting.

(Ps.119:160)

Forever, O Lord, Thy word is settled in heaven (Ps. 119:89) He sent His word and healed them, and delivered them from their destruction.

(Ps.107:20)

The **Apostle Peter** instructs:

But the word of the Lord abides forever.

(I Pet. 1:25)

Paul asserts:

For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

(Heb. 4:12)

Here’s what some well-known people have said about God’s word: GEORGE WASHINGTON, the first president of the United States said: “ It is impossible to rightly govern the world with the Bible.”

ABRAHAM LINCOLN, the sixteenth President of the United States said: “But for this Book we could not know right from wrong. I believe the Bible is the best gift God has ever given to man”.

WINSTON CHURCHILL, British Prime Minister during World War II said: “We rest with assurance upon the impregnable rock of Holy Scripture”.

H.G. WELLS, English novelist, author of “The Invisible Man,” “War of the Worlds” and “Outline of

History” said: “The Bible has been the Book that held together the fabric of Western civilization... The civilization we possess would not have come into existence and could not have been sustained without it.”

CHARLES DICKENS, author of “David Copperfield”, “Great Expectations,”

“Tale of Two Cities” and many other great works, said: “It is the best Book that ever was or ever will be in the world...”

GENERAL DOUGLAS MacARTHUR, World War II military genius said: “Believe me sir, never a night goes by, be I ever so tired, but I read the Word of God before I go to bed.”

HELEN KELLER, who overcame severe handicaps (blind and deaf from birth) to become a leading American author and lecturer, said: 3

“In the Bible I find a confidence mightier than the utmost evil...”

Truly the Bible is a unique book with a unique claim, but is there enough evidence for us to say with confidence that God communicates to modern man through the Bible?

I believe there is, and I invite you to **consider the evidence**.

HARMONY OF SCRIPTURE

Here is a book:

i. Written over a 1,800 years span

ii. Written over 40 generations

iii. Written by over 40 authors from every walk of life including Kings, peasants, philosophers, fishermen, poets, statesmen, scholars, etc.: Moses, a political leader, trained in the universities of Egypt

Peter, a fisherman

Amos, a herdsman

Joshua, a military general

Nehemiah, a cupbearer

Daniel, a prime minister

Luke, a doctor

Solomon, a king

Matthew, a tax collector

Paul, a rabbi.

iv. Written in different places:

Moses in the wilderness

Jeremiah in a dungeon

Daniel on a hillside and in a palace

Paul, inside prison walls

Luke, while traveling

John, on the isle of Patmos

Others in the rigors of a military campaign

v. Written at different times:

David in times of war

Solomon in times of peace

Paul in bonds

vi. Written during different moods:

Some writing from the heights of joy and others writing from the depths of sorrow and despair.

vii. Written on three continents:

Asia, Africa, and Europe.

viii. Written in three languages:

Hebrews: Was the language of the Old Testament.

II Kings 18:26-28 called “the language of Judah”.

In Isaiah 19:18 called “the language of Canaan.”

Aramaic: Was the “common language” of the Near East until the time of Alexander the Great (6th century BC – 4th century BC) Greek: New Testament language. Was the international language at the time of Christ.

ix. Its subject matter includes hundreds of controversial subjects. A controversial subject is one, which would create opposing opinions when mentioned or discussed.

Biblical authors spoke on hundreds of controversial subjects with harmony and continuity from Genesis to Revelation. **There is one unfolding story: “God’s redemption of man.”**

This book is none other than the Bible – a collection of 66 smaller books that reveal without conflict God’s love and mercy to mankind. Taken as a whole they complement each other.

F.F. Bruce observes:

“Any part of the human body can only be properly explained in reference to the whole body. And any part of the Bible can only be properly explained in reference to the whole Bible.

The writings themselves belong to a great variety of literary types. They include history, law (civil, criminal, ethical, ritual, and sanitary), religious poetry, didactic treatises, lyric poetry, parable and allegory, biography, personal correspondence, personal memoirs and dairies.”

The Bible has a uniformity that is unmatched in any literature.

Alan Hayward, a scientist and author describes it like this: “From Genesis to Revelation the Bible tells one connected story. It starts with the creation of a beautiful world, and says how man brought tragedy into it. It goes on to explain how God introduced a wonderful Plan to put things right: How He first raised up a chosen race; then provided a Savior from among the chosen race. Then sent that Savior’s followers to preach the gospel to all nations; and how the Savior will return to earth, to judge the living and the dead, and to fill the earth with God’s glory.”

Think about it for a moment. This one Plan was unfolded a step at a time, without contradiction, by forty authors over a period of eighteen hundred years.

These authors worked independently and weren’t aware that their writings would be gathered into one volume. God prompted and they wrote to record each important step in the overall Plan. Finally, in the second century after Christ, the writings were collected into a single volume: **THE HOLY BIBLE AS WE HAVE IT TODAY.**

Illustration:

The story is told of a man who wanted to keep his children busy and entertained. He cut out a card of a map of Africa with its complex array of country names and positions to make them a jigsaw puzzle.

However, the children were to assemble the pieces much sooner than he expected. Surprised, he asked them how they had done it so quickly. It turned out that on the other side of the cardboard was a face and they had just turned the pieces over and reconstructed the face. With the one common theme all of the pieces easily fit together.

In a similar way we can see one „face“ in the Scriptures – the face of Jesus Christ. He is the central theme. We meet Him as a Person in the New Testament and throughout the Old Testament He appears in many types and foreshadows.

Biblical scholars agree that Christ can be found in each of the thirty-nine books of the Old Testament. The overall harmony of these forty writers established, let's consider specific examples that bolster the credibility of the Bible.

FULFILLED PROPHECIES

For I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is no one like me, declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things which have not been done. (Isa. 46:9,10) That the Bible is a Book from God and not men is proven by fulfilled prophecies.

Unlike other religious books, the Bible is filled with predictions of future events.

The prophet of God was a man called to speak God's message to the people, and to verify the message, he often made a prediction. The true test of a prophet is that his predictions come to pass.

Biblical predictions stand in contrast to all others. For example, people are named before birth, and entire successions of worldly kingdoms are outlined. These prophecies are not general but specific in

nature, and in many cases, were written hundreds of years before they happened. Even today we see things falling into shape just as the Bible predicted. The Bible contains thousands of predictions, and not one of them has been proven false.

Example 1:

Dan.2,8

Around 600 B.C., Daniel gave the King of Babylon and his subjects a glimpse of coming world events.

One night the King of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar, was deeply troubled with a nightmare so ominous that he called for his magicians and sorcerers: “I had a terrible nightmare,” he said as they stood before him, “and I can’t remember what it was. Then the astrologers (speaking in Aramaic) said to the King, “Sir, tell us the dream and we can tell you what it means.”

But the King replied, “I tell you, the dream is gone- I can’t remember it. And if you won’t tell me what it was and what it means, I’ll have you torn limb from limb and your houses made into heaps of rubble! But I will give you many wonderful gifts and honors if you tell me what the dream was and what it means. So begin.”

They said again, “How can we tell you what the dream means unless you tell us what it was?” The King retorted, “I can see your trick! You’re trying to stall for time until the calamity befalls me that the dream foretells. But if you don’t tell me the dream, you certainly can’t expect me to believe your interpretation!”

(Daniel 2 TLB)

The King was angry – so much so he decreed that all his wise men be killed.

Then the man of prayer, Daniel, came to rescue. He prayed and asked God to reveal to him the dream and its meaning. That night in a vision God told him the dream. Daniel stood before the King and related the dream.

“You dreamed of coming events. He who reveals secrets was speaking to you.

(But remember, it is not because I am wiser than any living person that I know this secret of your dream, for God showed it to me for your benefit.) “Oh King, you saw a huge and powerful statue of a man shining brilliantly, frightening and terrible. The head of the statue was made of purest gold, its chest and arms were of silver, its belly and thighs of brass, its legs of iron, its feet part iron from the mountain side by a supernatural means.

It came hurtling toward the statue and crushed the feet of iron and clay smashing them to bits. Then the whole statue collapsed into a heap of iron, clay, brass, silver, and gold; its pieces were crushed as small as chaff, and the wind blew them all away. But the Rock that knocked the statue down became a great mountain that covered the whole earth.” **(Daniel 2 TLB) *Daniel gave the interpretation of the dream that was meant to reveal future world events to the King:***

“Your majesty, you are a King over many Kings, for the God of heaven has given you your kingdom, power, strength and glory. You rule the farthest provinces, and even animals and birds are under your control, as God decreed.

You are that head of gold. But after your kingdom has come to an end, another world power will rise to take your place.

This empire will be inferior to yours. And after that kingdom has fallen, yet a third great power – represented by the bronze belly of the statue – will rise to rule the world. Following it the fourth kingdom will be strong as iron – smashing, bruising, and conquering.

The feet and toes you saw – part iron and part clay – show that later on this kingdom will be divided. Some parts of it will be strong as iron, and some as weak as clay. This mixture of iron with clay also shows that these kingdoms will try to strengthen themselves by forming alliances with each other but this will not succeed, for iron and clay do not mix.

During the reigns of those Kings the God of Heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed; no one will ever conquer it. It will shatter all these kingdoms into nothingness, but it shall stand forever, indestructible. That is the meaning of the rock cut from the mountain without human hands – the Rock that crushed to powder all the iron and brass, the clay, the silver, and gold.

Thus the great God has shown what will happen in the future, and this interpretation of your dream is as sure and certain as my description of it.”

(Daniel 2)

Later chapters in Daniel (chapter 8) add more detail about the succession of kingdoms. In chapter 8 the vision focuses on the second and third empires.

The two-horned ram which symbolizes the Medo-Persian empire will be superseded by the swift-footed goat – Alexander’s Greek Empire. Alexander himself is the „great horn“. The „four horns“ are the kingdoms into which his empire was divided.

Keep in mind that all this was written while the Babylonian Empire was still in power.

Here is an outline of the main predictions:

1 The Babylonian Empire is to be overtaken by the Medes and Persians (Medo-Persian Empire). (Dan 8:20) 2 Medo-Persian Empire will be conquered by the Greek (Dan 8:21) 3 The Greek Empire will be divided into four parts (Dan 8:22) 4 A fourth kingdom will follow (The Roman Empire) and it will be divided into two parts. (Dan 2:41) Any textbook on world history will verify this order of world kingdoms: The Babylonians were conquered in 539 B. C. by the Medes and Persians 8

who were in turn conquered in 331 B. C. by the Greeks. Finally, in the second century B. C., the Romans conquered the Greeks.

Daniel, over 200 years before the Greeks were an empire predicted that the Greek Empire would be split into four parts after the death of a great leader (Dan. 8:7,8).

H.G. Wells, in his book, *The Outline of History* gives a map showing how the Greek Empire was divided after the death of Alexander the Great. Count the divisions. Four!

Exactly as foretold by Daniel.

Daniel also predicted that the final empire would be a divided empire. The Time-Life book on Imperial Rome informs us that in 395 A.D., “The Roman Empire is permanently divided into Eastern and Western halves.”

Example 2

Ez. 26

By controlling sea routes, the city of Tyre on the Phoenician coast became prosperous and powerful. The book of Ezekiel, written between 592 and 570 B.C.

contains predictions about this magnificent city. They are found in Ez. 26.

Here is a summary of some of the predictions:

a. Nebuchadnezzar will destroy the Mainland City of Tyre.

b. Her debris will be thrown into the water.

c. They will make her a bare rock and fishermen will spread nets over the site.

Let us look at each prediction:

a. ***Nebuchadnezzar will destroy the Mainland City of Tyre.***

History reveals that three years after the prophecy was written Nebuchadnezzar broke down the city gates after a thirteen-year siege. The inhabitants fled to a nearby island and Nebuchadnezzar destroyed the Mainland City.

b. ***The debris from Tyre would be thrown into the water.***

History tells us Alexander the Great plundered the city in 332 B. C. With his engineer Diades, he decided to build a causeway to the island city.

Where did he get the material? From the debris of the mainland city, thus fulfilling the Bible prediction that the debris would be thrown into the water.

c. ***Tyre would be bare like a rock and fishermen will spread their nets over the site.***

The textbook “*General History for Colleges and High Schools*,” by Philip Myers, contains the following report about Tyre: “Alexander the Great ... reduced it to ruin in 332 B C. She recovered, in a measure from this blow, but never regained the place she had previously 9

held in the world. The larger part of the site of the once great city is as bare as the top of a rock – a place where the fishermen that still frequent the sport *spread their nets to dry.*”

Example 3

Isaiah 44:26-28

“It is I who says of Cyrus, „He is my shepherd and he will perform all my desire.“ And he declares of Jerusalem, „She will be rebuilt.“ And of the temple, „Your foundation will be laid.“”

Apparently a man named Cyrus will give the decree to rebuild Jerusalem and lay the foundation for her temple. But at the time of this prediction, about 700 B. C., Jerusalem was a well-established city and the temple was still standing. Why did it need to be rebuilt?

Let’s turn to history. About a hundred years after this prophecy, Nebuchadnezzar destroyed the city of Jerusalem and the temple. A few years after that, around 539

B. C. a Persian King named Cyrus gave orders to rebuild Jerusalem and the temple.

Try to picture it. While the temple of Jerusalem was still standing, the prophet Isaiah predicted that a man named Cyrus, not yet born, would decree that this temple be rebuilt. **Incredible!**

There you have it – history before it happened. Only “God-breathed” men could predict this accurately. Still we have yet to consider the prophecies concerning Christ.

When the Old Testament was completed, the mood was one of anticipation. The people awaited the coming Messiah.

EXAMPLE 4

Predictions About Christ

And beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures. (Luke 24:27) The Old Testament was completed around 400 B. C. and contains references to a special person called the Messiah, or Anointed One, who would be sent from God to complete His message to us. In the last years of Jesus' life we find Him continually referring to the Old Testament predictions of the Messiah and claiming that they were speaking of Him.

Luke 24:44

“Now He said to them, „These are my words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, **that all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the prophets and the Psalms** must be fulfilled.”

John 5:39, 40, 46&47

“You search the scriptures, because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is **these that bear witness of Me**; and you are unwilling to come to Me; that you may have life.

For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for **he wrote of Me**. But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?”

Try to understand the supernatural nature of this. The Old Testament contains hundreds of predictions about the Messiah written centuries before He was born.

Specifically, some of the predictions and their fulfillment in the life of Christ match up as follows: **Old Testament Prediction**

The Life of Christ

1. The Messiah will be born .

“Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem

(Micah 5:2)

Bethlehem...”

(Matthew 2:1)

He will be born of a virgin

“Now all this was done, that it might

(Is.7:14)

be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call His name Emmanuel, which being interpreted, God with us.”

(Matthew 1:22,23)

3. A messenger will announce His

“There came a man sent from God coming

(Mal. 3:1)

whose name was John ...” He said

“I am a voice crying in the wilderness, make straight the way of the Lord...”

(John 1:6,23)

4. He will enter Jerusalem on a

“... they heard that Jesus was coming in a Donkey”s colt

(Zech. 9:9)

to Jerusalem ... And Jesus, finding a young donkey, sat on it...”

(John 12:12b, 14a)

5. He will be betrayed by a friend

“Then one of the twelve, named Judas and received wounds in His hands Iscariot went to the chief priest, (Zech 13:6).

and said „what are you willing to give me to deliver Him up to you?“”

(Matt. 26:14,15a).

“He showed them both His Hands and His side...”

(John 20:20)

6. He will be betrayed for 30 pieces of

“And they weighed out to him (Judas) silver

(Zech. 11:12)

Gold was the 30 pieces of silver, And from then on he currency at the time this prophecy began looking for a good opportunity to betray Him.

(Matt. 26:15,16)

7. The money will be used to buy a

“And they counseled together and with Potters field.

(Zech. 11:13)

the money bought the Potter“s Field...”

(Matt. 27:7)

8. He will be silent before accusers

“And while He was being accused by

(Isaiah 53:7)

the chief priests and elders, He made no answer.”

(Matt. 27:31)

9. He will be crucified

“...and led Him away to crucify Him.”

(Ps.22:16)

(Matt.27:31)

CHAPTER 3

CHAPTER 3: TWENTY PROOFS THAT THE BIBLE IS INSPIRED, AUTHENTIC AND RELIABLE

1. Its wonderful unity.

Over forty authors wrote sixty-six books in different lands over a period of 1,800 years. Many never saw the writings of the others and yet there is no contradiction between any two of them. Collect any group of books of any other forty men on any subject and see if they agree.

2. It's superiority to other books

It is superior to other books in its origin, formation, doctrines, principles, claims, moral tone, histories, prophecies, revelations, literature, present redemption and eternal benefits.

3. Its influence in the world.

It has blessed millions in every generation, made the highest civilizations and given man the highest hope and destiny.

4. The character and greatness of those who accept it.

The wisest, most godly, and honest of men acknowledge it as God's word. Only infidels and the ungodly reject it.

5. Man could not have written it if he would, and would not have written it if he could. No critic of

scripture has ever been able to prove or disprove it.

6. Good men must have written it.

It condemns all sin and records the sins and faults of its writers as well as others. This, evil men would not do. Even good men would not do it unless inspired to do so to help others.

7. All man's present and eternal needs are met by the Bible.

Redemption and promised benefits have been given to all who believe in all generations and this will always be so.

8. Its preservation through the ages.

Whole kingdoms and religions have sought in vain to destroy it. It is still victor and indestructible.

9. The heavenly and eternal character of its contents proves it to be of God.

10. The response of the soul to it.

The Bible fits the soul as a key to a lock.

11. Its infinite depths and lofty ideals.

It is universal in its appeal, reasonable in its teachings, reliable in its promises, durable in its conflicts, everlasting in its usefulness, new and modern in its statements, indispensable to human civilization,

indisputable in its authority, interesting in its histories, colorful in its biographies, accurate in its prophecies.

It is individual in its messages, far reaching in its vision, complete in its laws, comprehensive in its knowledge, infinite in its detail, and unselfish in its purpose, simple in its application, just in its demands, righteous in its judgments, clear in its application, and masterful in its wisdom.

12. Fulfilled prophecy.

About 3,300 prophecies have been fulfilled, predictions made hundreds and even thousands of years before their fulfillment. Not one detail has failed yet.

About 2,908 verses are being fulfilled or will be fulfilled.

13. Miracles.

Hundreds are recorded in scripture and many happen daily among those who pray and claim Bible promises.

14. Its perfection.

It is scientifically and historically correct. No one man has ever found the Bible at fault in any of its many hundreds of statements of history, astronomy, botany, geology, or any other branch of learning.

15. Its adaptability.

It is always up to date on any subject. It fits the lives of all people of all ages and all lands.

16. Its spiritual and moral power.

It meets perfectly every spiritual and moral need of man.

17. Its doctrines.

They surpass all human principles in relationship, religion, culture, etc. (1Cor 2:14).

18. Claims of the Bible itself.

Over 3,800 times Bible writers claim God spoke what they wrote. The Bible itself claims to be the Word of God.

19. Secular history.

Many pagan as well as Jewish and Christian writers confirm the facts of the Bible, quoting it as being genuine, authentic, and inspired by God.

20. Its inexhaustible proofs.

It would take many volumes to deal fully with the many thousands of facts that confirm the Bible to be the Word of God.

The book must be divine. If one will use it properly it will confirm itself to him as the inspired Word of God.

CHAPTER 4

THE UNIQUENESS OF THE BIBLE

Webster must have had this “Book of books” in mind when he wrote the definition for “unique”.

Definition of unique:

1. One and only, single, sole

2. Different from all others, having no like or equal **Professor M. Montiero-Williams**

Professor M. Montiero-Williams, former Boden professor of Sanskrit, spent 42

years studying Eastern books (books of Hinduism, Buddhism, etc.) and said in comparing them with the Bible:

Pile them, if you will, on the left side of your study table; but place your own Holy Bible on the right side – all by itself, all alone – and with a wide gap between them. For, ... there is a gulf between it and the so-called sacred books of the East which severs the one from the other utterly, hopelessly, and forever ...

a veritable gulf which cannot be bridged over by any science of religious thought.

The Bible is Unique. It is the book “different from all others” in the following ways: **A. UNIQUE IN ITS CONTINUITY.**

F.F. Bruce observes:

“The Bible, at first sight, appears to be a collection of literature –

mainly Jewish. If we inquire into the circumstance under which the various Biblical documents were written, we find that they were written at intervals over a space of nearly 1800 years.

The writers wrote in various lands, from Italy in the west to Mesopotamia and possibly Persia in the east.

The writers themselves were a heterogeneous number of people, not only separated from each other by hundreds of years and hundreds of miles, but also belonging to the most diverse walks of life. In their ranks we have kings, herdsmen, soldiers, legislators, fishermen, statesmen, courtiers, priests and prophets, a tent-making Rabbi and a Gentile physician, not to speak of others of whom we know nothing apart from the writings they have left us.

The writings themselves belong to a great variety of literary types.

They include history, law (civil, criminal, ethical, ritual, and sanitary), religious poetry, didactic treatises, lyric poetry, parable and allegory, biography, personal correspondence, personal memoirs and dairies.

Biblical authors spoke on hundreds of controversial subjects with harmony and continuity from Genesis to Revelation. **There is one unfolding story: “God”s redemption of man.”**

B. UNIQUE IN ITS CIRCULATION

The Bible has been read by more people and published in more languages than any other book. There have been more copies produced of its entirety and more portions and selections than any other book in history.

Some will argue that in a designated month or year more of a certain book was sold. However, over all there is absolutely no book that reaches or even begins to compare to the circulation of the Scriptures.

Hy Pickering

Hy Pickering says that about 30 years ago, for the British and Foreign Bible Society to meet its demands, it had to publish:

One copy every three seconds day and night,

22 copies every minute day and night,

1,369 copies every hour day and night,

32,876 copies every day in the year.

And it is deeply interesting to know that this amazing number of Bibles was dispatched to various parts of the world in 4,583 cases weighing 490 tons.

C. UNIQUE IN ITS TRANSLATION

The Bible was one of the first major books translated (Septuagint: Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament, ca 250 BC).

The Bible has been translated and retranslated and paraphrased more than any other book in existence.

Encyclopaedia Britannica says “by 1966 the whole Bible had appeared ... in 240 languages and dialects ... one or more whole books of the Bible in 739

additional ones, a total of publication of 1,280 languages.”

3,000 Bible translators between 1950-1960 were at work translating the Scriptures.

The Bible factually stands unique (“one of a kind; alone in its class”) in its translation.

D. UNIQUE IN ITS SURVIVAL

i. Survival through time

Being written on material that perishes, having to be copied and recopied for hundreds of years before the invention of the printing press, did not diminish its style, correctness or existence. The Bible, compared with other ancient writings, has more manuscript evidence than any 10 pieces of classical literature combined.

John Lea

John Lea in *The Greatest Book in the World* compared the Bible with Shakespeare’s writings. He had this to say:

It seems strange that the text of Shakespeare, which has been in existence less than two hundred and

eight years, should be far more uncertain and corrupt than that of the New Testament, now over eighteen centuries old, during nearly fifteen of which it existed only in manuscript.

... With perhaps a dozen or twenty exceptions, the text of every verse in the New Testament may be said to be so far settled by general consent of scholars, that any dispute as to its readings must relate rather to the interpretation of the words than to any doubts respecting the words themselves. But in everyone of Shakespeare's thirty seven plays there are probably a hundred readings still in dispute, a large portion of which materially affects the meaning of the passages in which they occur."

ii. Survival through persecution

Sidney Collett

Sidney Collett in *All about the Bible* says:

Voltaire, the noted French infidel who died in 1778, said that in one hundred years from his time Christianity would be swept from existence and passed into history. But what has happened? Voltaire has passed into 19

history, while the circulation of the Bible continues to increase in almost all parts of the world, **carrying blessing wherever it goes.**

Concerning the boast of Voltaire on the extinction of Christianity and the Bible in 100 years, Geisler and Nix point out that "only fifty years after his death the Geneva Bible Society used his press and house to produce stacks of Bibles."

WHAT AN IRONY OF HISTORY!

In AD 303, Diocletian issued an edict (*Cambridge History of the bible*, Cambridge University press,

1963) to stop Christians from worshipping and to destroy their Scriptures:

“ ... An imperial letter was everywhere promulgated, ordering the razing of the churches to the ground and the destruction by fire of the Scriptures, and proclaiming that those who held high positions would lose all civil rights, while those in households, if they persisted in their profession of Christianity, would be deprived of their liberty.”

The historic irony of the above edict to destroy the Bible is that Eusebius records the edict given 25 years later by Constantine, the emperor following Diocletian, that 50 copies of the Scriptures should be prepared at the expense of the government.

The Bible is unique in its survival. This does not prove the Bible is the Word of God. But it does prove it stands alone among books.

Anyone seeking truth ought to consider a book that has the above unique qualifications.

iii. Survival through criticism

H.L. Hastings

H.L. Hastings has forcibly illustrated the unique way the Bible has withstood the attacks of infidels and skeptics:

Infidels for eighteen hundred years have been refuting and overthrowing this book, and yet it stands today as solid as a rock. Its circulation increases, and it is more loved and cherished and read today than ever before.

Infidels, with all their assaults, make about as much impression on this book as a man with a tack hammer would on the Pyramids of Egypt.

When the French monarch proposed the persecution of the Christians in his dominion, an old statesman and warrior said to him, „**Sire, the church of God is an anvil that has worn out many hammers.**“ So the hammers of infidels have been pecking away at this book for ages, but the hammers are worn out, and the anvil still endures.

If this book had not been the book of God, men would have destroyed it long ago. Emperors and popes, kings and priests, princes and rulers have all tried their hand at it; they die and the book still lives.

Bernard Ramm

Bernard Ramm adds:

A thousand times over, the death knell of the Bible has been sounded, the funeral procession formed, the inscription cut on the tombstone, and committal read. But somehow the corpse never stays put.

No other book has been so chopped, knifed, sifted, scrutinized, and vilified.

What book on philosophy or religion or psychology or *belles lettres* of classical or modern times has been subject to such a mass attack as the bible? With such venom and skepticism? With such thoroughness and erudition? Upon every chapter, line and tenet?

The Bible is still loved by millions, read by millions, and studied by millions.

E. UNIQUE IN ITS TEACHINGS

i. Prophecy

Wilbur Smith

Wilbur Smith who compiled a personal library of 25,000 volumes writes:

It is the only volume ever produced by man, or a group of men in which is to be found a large body of prophecies relating to individual nations, to Israel, to all the peoples of the earth, to certain cities, and to the coming of One who was to be the Messiah;

The ancient world had many different devices for determining the future, known as divination, but not in the entire gamut of Greek and Latin literature, even though they use the words prophet and prophecy, can we find any real specific prophecy of a great historic event to come in the distant future, nor any prophecy of a Savior to arise in the human race;

“Mohammedanism cannot point to any prophecies of the coming of Mohammed uttered hundreds of years before his birth. Neither can the founders of any cult in this country rightly identify any ancient text specifically foretelling their appearance.

ii. Personalities

The Bible deals very frankly with the sins of its characters. Read the biographies today, and see how they try to cover up, overlook or ignore the shady side of people. Take the great literary geniuses; most are painted as saints. The Bible does not do it that way. It simply tells it like it is.

F. UNIQUE IN ITS INFLUENCE ON SURROUNDING LITERATURE

Cleland B. McAfee

Cleland B. McAfee writes in *The Greatest English Classic*:

If every Bible in any considerable city were destroyed, the Book could be restored in all its essential parts from the quotations on the shelves of the city public library. There are works, covering almost all the great literary 22

writers, devoted especially to showing how much the Bible has influenced them.

Kenneth Scott Latourette

Kenneth Scott Latourette, former Yale historian, says:

It is evidence of his importance, of the effect that he has had upon history and presumably, of the baffling mystery of his being that no other life ever lived on this planet has evoked so huge a volume of literature among so many peoples and languages, and that, far from ebbing, the flood continues to mount

THE CONCLUSION

The above proves that the Bible, acknowledged as the Word of God is unique (“ different from all others; having no like or equal; alone in its class”).

A professor once remarked:

“If you are an intelligent person, you will read the one book that has drawn more attention than any other, if you are searching for the truth.”

MEMORY VERSES

1. I Pet. 3:15

2. II Pet.1:20,21

3. II Tim.3:16

4. Ps. 119:89 :

Forever, O Lord, Thy Word is settled in heaven.

CHAPTER 5

UNDERSTANDING CHRISTIAN BELIEFS II

GOD AND THE TRINITY

The Doctrine of God is the same in all three branches of Christianity. The Westminster Shorter Catechism (Question 6) reads, “There are three persons in the Godhead: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one God, the same in substance, equal in power and glory.”

One of the most misunderstood ideas in the Bible concerns the teaching about the Trinity. Although Christians say that they believe in one God, they are constantly accused of polytheism (worshipping at least three gods).

The Scriptures do not teach that there are three Gods; neither do they teach that God wears three different masks while acting out the drama of history.

What the Bible does teach is stated in the doctrine of the Trinity as: there is one God who has revealed Himself in three persons, the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, and these three persons are the one God.

Although this is difficult to comprehend, it is nevertheless what the Bible tells us, and is the closest the finite mind can come to explaining the infinite mystery of the infinite God, when considering the biblical statements about God’s being.

The Bible teaches that there is one God and only one God:

“Hear, O Israel! The Lord is our God, the Lord is one! (Deut.6:4NASB)

“There is one God” (1 Tim. 2:5 KJV)

“Thus says the Lord, the king of Israel and his Redeemer, the Lord of host: „I am the first and I am the last, and there is no God besides Me”

(Is. 44: 6 NASB)

However, even though God is one in His essential being or nature, He is also three persons.

“Let us make man in our image” (Gen. 1:26 KJV)

“God said, Behold the man has become like one of us” (Gen.3:22 RSV)

God’s plural personality is alluded to here, for He could not be talking to angels in these instances, because angels could not and did not help God create. The Bible teaches that Jesus Christ, not the angels, created all things. (Jn. 1:3, Col. 1:15, Heb. 1:2).

In addition to speaking of God as one, and alluding to a plurality of God’s personality, the Scriptures are quite specific as to naming God in terms of three persons. There is a person whom the Bible calls **the Father**, and the Father is designated as God, the Father (Gal. 1:1).

The Bible talks about a person named Jesus, or **the Son** or the Word, also called God. “The Word was God...”(John 1:1 KJV). Jesus was “also calling God His own Father, making Himself equal with God”(John 5:18NASB).

There is a third person mentioned in the scriptures called ***the Holy***

Ghost, and this person – different from the Father and the Son – is also called God (“Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit?...You have not lied to men, but to God,” (Acts 5:3,4 RSV)

The facts of the biblical teaching are these: There is one God. This God has a plural personality. This one God is called the Father. He is also the Son and the Holy Spirit, all distinct personalities, all designated God. We are therefore led to the conclusion that the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are one God, the doctrine of the Trinity.

C) JESUS CHRIST

Is Jesus Christ God?

Jesus claimed to be God. He did not leave any other options. His claim to be God must be either true or false and is something that should be given serious consideration. Jesus’ question to His disciples, “But who do you say that I am?” (Mark 8:29) is also asked of us today.

First consider that His claim to be God was false. If it was false then we have two and only two alternatives. He either knew it was false or He did not know it was false. We will consider each one separately and examine the evidence.

(i) Was He A Liar?

If, when Jesus made His claim He knew that He was not God, then He was lying. But, if He was a liar, then He was also a hypocrite because He told others to be honest, whatever the cost, while Himself teaching and living a colossal lie.

And, more than that, He was a demon, because He told others to trust Him for their eternal destiny. If He could not back up His claims and knew it, then He was unspeakably evil.

Last, He would also be a fool, because it was His claims to being God that led to His crucifixion.

Mark 14:61-64

“But He kept silent, and made no answer. Again the high priest was questioning Him, and saying to Him, „Are You the Christ, the son of the Blessed One?”

“And Jesus said, „I am; and you shall see the SON OF MAN SITTING AT THE RIGHT HAND OF POWER, and COMING WITH THE CLOUDS OF HEAVEN.”

“And tearing his clothes, the high priest said,” what further need do we have of witnesses?

““You have heard the blasphemy; how does it seem to you? And they all condemned Him to be deserving of death.”

John 19:7

“The Jews answered him, „We have a law, and by that law He ought to die because He made Himself out to be the son of God.””

Philip Schaff, the Christian historian, said: “This testimony, if not true, must be downright blasphemy or madness...

“How could He be an enthusiast or a madman who never lost the even balance of His mind, who sailed

serenely over all the troubles and persecutions, as the sun above the clouds. “

“Who always returned the wisest answer to tempting questions, who calmly and deliberately predicted His death on the cross, His resurrection on the third day, the pouring of the Holy spirit, the founding of His church, the destruction of Jerusalem - predictions which have been literally fulfilled?”

“A character so original, so complete, so uniformly consistent, so perfect, so human and yet so high above all human greatness, can be neither a fraud nor a fiction. The poet, as has been well said, would in this case be greater than the hero. It would take more than a Jesus to invent a Jesus.”

“... How, in the name of logic, common sense, and experience, could an imposter – that is a deceitful, selfish, depraved man – have invented, and consistently maintained from the beginning to the end, the purest and noblest character known in history with the most perfect air of truth and reality?

Someone, who lived as Jesus lived, taught as Jesus taught and died as Jesus died could not have been a liar.

(ii) A Lunatic?

If it is inconceivable for Jesus to be a liar, then could not He actually have thought Himself to be God, but been mistaken? After all, it is possible to be both sincere and wrong.

But we must remember that for someone to think that he is God, especially in a culture that fiercely believes in the worship of only one God, and then to tell others that their eternal destiny depends on believing in Him is no slight flight of fantasy but the thoughts of a lunatic in the fullest sense. Was Jesus Christ such a person?

Napoleon (cited by *Vernon C. Grounds, The Reason for Our Hope*) said:

“I know men; and I tell you that Jesus Christ is not a man. Superficial minds see a resemblance between Christ and the founders of empires, and the gods of other religions. That resemblance does not exist. There is between Christianity and whatever other religions the distance of infinity...

Everything in Christ astonishes me. His spirit overawes me. And His will confounds me. Between Him and whoever else in the world, there is no possible term of comparison. He is truly a being by Himself.

His ideas and sentiments, the truth which He announces, His manner of convincing, are not explained either by human organization or by the nature of things...

The nearer I approach, the more carefully I examine, everything is above me - everything remains grand, of a grandeur which overpowers.

His religion is a relation from an intelligence which certainly is not that of man... One can absolutely find nowhere, but in Him alone, the imitation or the example of His life....

I search in vain in history to find the similar to Jesus Christ, or anything which can approach the gospel. Neither history, nor humanity, nor the ages, nor nature, offer me anything extraordinary.”

Phillip Schaff, the historian, wrote: “ Is such an intellect – clear as the sky, bracing as the mountain air, sharp and penetrating as a sword, thoroughly healthy and vigorous, always ready and always self-possessed – liable to a radical and most serious delusion concerning His own character and mission? Preposterous imagination!”

(iii) LORD!!!!

Who you decide Jesus Christ is must not be an idle intellectual exercise.

You cannot put Him on the shelf as a great moral teacher. That is not a valid option. **He is either a liar,**

a lunatic or the Lord.

You must make a choice. “But,” as the apostle John wrote, “these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God”; and more important, “and that believing you might have life through His name.” (Jn.20:31)

CHAPTER 6

IF GOD BECAME MAN...

1. IF GOD BECAME A MAN THEN WE WOULD EXPECT HIM TO BE WITHOUT SIN.

First of all, we look at **His Witness of Himself**

John 8:46

“Which one of you convicts Me of Sin?”

He received no answer. When He invited them to accuse Him, He could stay and bear their security. He was without sin; thus was able to open Himself in such a manner.

He also said, *“I always do the things that are pleasing to Him”* (John 8:29). He seems to have lived in unbroken communication with God.

Christ’s self-conscious purity is astonishing in that it is totally unlike the experience of the other believers. Every Christian knows that the nearer he approaches God, the more aware he becomes of his sin. However, with Christ this is not the case. Jesus lived more closely to God than anyone else and was free from all sense of sin.

Along this same line of thought, we are told of the temptations of Jesus (Luke 4) but never of His sins. We never hear of Him confessing or asking forgiveness of His sins, although He tells His disciples to do so. It appears that he has no sense of guilt that accompanies a sin nature.

The Witness of His Friends

Throughout the Bible, the inconsistencies of all persons are brought out.

None of the great Jewish heroes are presented without blemish, not even David or Moses. Even in the New Testament, the shortcomings of the apostles are written about in almost every book, and yet nowhere do we find mention of one sin in Christ's life.

First of all, we must establish why we would study the accounts of His disciples. We see that their witness must be studied for the following reasons:

THEY LIVED IN CLOSE CONTACT WITH JESUS FOR ABOUT THREE

YEARS

THEY WERE JEWS AND SINCE BIRTH HAD MADE AWARE OF

THEIR OWN SIN NATURE AND THAT OF OTHERS

THEIR TESTIMONY TO HIS SINLESSNESS IS INDIRECT

They do not set out to prove He was sinless; rather, their remarks on the subject are such that they acknowledge His sinlessness.

Of their writings **A. E. Garvie** states "... It seems absolutely incredible that any one of the disciples could have first invented and then depicted the personality of Jesus as it appears in the Gospels."

In their close contact with Him, they never saw in Him the sins they saw in themselves. They got on one another's nerves, they grumbled and argued, but never did they see this in Jesus. Because of their strict Jewish background, they would be hardset to say that Jesus was without sin unless He really was sinless.

I Peter 1:19

“But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot”(KJV).

I Peter 2:22

“Who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth”(KJV).

I John 3:5

“And ye know that He was manifested to take away our sins; and in Him is no sin”(KJV).

John went so far as to say that if anyone declares himself to be without sin, he is a liar and he is calling God a liar also. However, John also gave testimony to the sinless character of Jesus when he said that in Christ

“there is no sin” (I John 3:5).

Even the one responsible for His death recognized His innocence and piety. Judas, after betraying Jesus, saw His righteousness and fell into deep remorse because he had *“betrayed innocent blood”* (Matthew 27:3,4).

The apostle Paul also bore witness of Jesus' sinlessness in his epistles.

(II Corinthians 5:21).

More important, perhaps, than the Witness of His friends is that of His enemies – **the witness of His enemies.**

One of the men crucified with Jesus gives testimony to His sinlessness. In Luke 23:41, one of the robbers rebuked the other robber, saying, "...this man has done nothing wrong."

Pilate's own testimony of Jesus' sinlessness was "What evil has this man done?" (Luke 23:22).

The centurion at the cross proclaimed, "Certainly this man was innocent"

(Luke 23:47).

It is also evident that His enemies would try to bring forth some accusation to convict Him of wrong. However, they could not (Mark 14:55,56).

In reference to this: Mark assembles four criticisms that His enemies brought forth (in 2:1-3:6)

First they accused him of blasphemy because He had forgiven a man's sins.

However, if He was divine, He had every power to grant forgiveness.

Second, they were appalled by His evil associations: sinners, publicans, harlots, etc. The religious

leaders of that day thought it righteous to avoid contact with such people. To these accusations He refers to himself as a physician to the sinners (Mark 2:17).

Third, He was accused of retaining a frivolous religion in that He did not fast like the Pharisees. However, there is no doubt that He did take His religion seriously.

Last, they were upset by His Sabbath-breaking (healing, picking grain, etc.) Yet no one can doubt that He was submissive to the law of God. Because He was “Lord of the Sabbath,” He chose to destroy false traditions and give God’s law its true interpretation.

Last, we have available **the Witness of History**.

He is seen as sinless in the religion of Islam. In the Koran, (Mary v.19), the angel Gabriel came to Mary and told her that her son, Jesus, would be

“without fault,” i.e. sinless.

Philip Schaff assures us: “Here is the Holy of Holies of humanity...”

“There never lived a more harmless being on earth. He injured nobody, He took advantage of nobody. He never spoke an improper word, He never committed a wrong action.”

“The first impression which we receive from the life of Jesus is that of perfect innocence and sinlessness in the midst of a sinful world. He, and He alone, carried the spotless purity of childhood untarnished through His youth and manhood,. Hence the lamb and the dove are His appropriate symbols.”

“It is, in one word, the absolute perfection which raises His character high above the reach of all other men and makes it an exception to a universal rule, a moral miracle in history.”

“He is the living incarnation of the ideal standard of virtue and holiness, and the highest model for all that is pure and good and noble in the sight of God and man.”

“Such was the Jesus of Nazareth, - a true man in body, soul, and spirit, yet differing from all men, a character unique and original from tender childhood to ripe manhood, moving in unbroken union with God.

Overflowing with love to man, free from every sin and error, innocent and holy, devoted to the noblest ends, teaching and practicing all virtues in perfect harmony, sealing the purest life with the sublimest death, and ever acknowledged since as the one and only perfect model of goodness and holiness.”

With the Witness of History We Find **the Testimonies of some of the World’s Most Renowned Skeptics.**

The famous writer, **John Stuart Mill**, asks: “But who among his disciples or among their proselytes was capable of inventing the saying ascribed to Jesus, or imagining the life and character revealed in the Gospels?”

The historian **William Lecky** states, “He ... has been not only the highest pattern of virtue, but the strongest incentive to its practice...”

“Even **David Strauss**,” writes Wilbur Smith, “the bitterest of all opponents of the supernatural elements of the Gospels, whose works did more to destroy faith in Christ than the writings of any other man in modern times – even Strauss, with all his slashing, brilliant, vicious criticisms and his sweeping denials of everything partaking of the miraculous, was forced to confess, toward the end of his life, that *in Jesus there is moral perfection.*”

This is what **Strauss** said, „This Christ ... is historical, not mythical; is an individual, no mere symbol ... He remains the highest model of religion within the reach of our thought; and no perfect piety is possible without His presence in the heart“”.

To conclude, Bernard Ramm writes: “Sinless perfection and perfect sinlessness is what we would expect of God-incarnate, and this we do find in Jesus Christ. The hypothesis and the facts concur.”

2. IF GOD BECAME MAN, THEN WE WOULD EXPECT HIM TO

MANIFEST THE SUPERNATURAL IN THE FORM OF MIRACLES

The Scriptural Witness

“Go and report to John what you have seen and heard: the blind receive sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf, hear, the dead are raised up, the poor have the gospel preached to them” (Luke 7:22).

Thus, we see that His miracles demonstrate a great variety of power: power over nature, power over disease, power over demons, powers of creation and power over death. This was also an appeal to prophecy and its messianic fulfillment in Christ.

A listing of these would include:

Miracles Of Physical Healing

A leper,

Matthew 8:2-4

A paralytic,

Matthew 9:2-8

Fever (Peter's mother-in-law),

Matthew 8:14-17

Nobleman's son healed,

John 4:46-53

Deafness and dumbness,

Mark 7:31-37

Blindness at Bethsaida,

Mk.8:22-25;

Blindness in Jerusalem,

John 9;

Bartimaeus,

Mark 10:46-52

Ten lepers,

Luke 17:11-19

Miracles In The Natural Realm

Water converted to wine at Cana,

John 2:1-11

Stilling of a storm,

Matthew 8:23-27

Multiplying food: 5,000 fed,

Matthew 14:15-21

Multiplying food: 4,000 fed,

Matthew 15:32-39

Walking on water,

Matthew 14:22,23

Miracles Of Resurrection

Jairus" daughter,

Matthew 9:18-26

Widow"s son,

Luke 7:11-15

Lazarus of Bethany,

John 11:1-44

3. IF GOD BECAME MAN, THEN WE WOULD EXPECT HIM TO HAVE

AN ACUTE SENSE OF DIFFERENCE FROM OTHER MEN

Carnegie Simpson wrote: "Instinctively we do not class Him with others. When one reads His name in a list beginning with Confucius and ending with Goethe we feel it is an offense less against orthodoxy

than against decency. Jesus is not one of the world's great.

Talk about Alexander the Great and Charles the Great and Napoleon the Great if you will ... **Jesus is apart. He is not the Great; He is the only. He is simply**

Jesus. Nothing could add to that ... He is beyond our analyses. He confounds our 33

canons of human nature. He compels our criticism to overleap it self. He awes our spirits."

Napoleon Bonaparte has said: "I know men and I tell you that Jesus Christ is no mere man. Between Him and every other person in the world there is no possible term of comparison. Alexander, Caesar, Charlemagne, and I have founded empires. But on what did we rest the creations of our genius? Upon force.

Jesus Christ founded His Empire upon love; *and at this hour* millions of men would die for Him."

4. IF GOD BECAME MAN, THEN CERTAINLY HIS WORDS WOULD BE

THE GREATEST EVER SPOKEN

Jesus Himself said: "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away"(Luke 21:33).

Luke 4:32 tells us that "they were continually amazed at His teaching..."

From the officers of the guard we hear, "Never did a man speak the way this man speaks"(John 7:46).

The Greatest Words Ever Spoken

Many of today's scholars feel that Jesus' words are the greatest ever spoken: one such man is Bernard Ramm. He feels their greatness lies in their ability to deal authoritatively and clearly with the greatest burdens and problems man faces; namely, those dealing with his relationship to God.

Sholem Ash wrote,

“Jesus Christ is the outstanding personality of all time... No other teacher –

Jewish, Christian, Buddhist, Mohammedan - is still a teacher whose teachings is such a guidepost for the world we live in. Other teachers may have something basic for an Oriental, an Arab, or an Occidental; but every act and word of Jesus has value for all of us. He became the Light of the World. Why shouldn't I, a Jew, be proud of that?”

“For thousand years, He has been the Light of the World, and His words have not passed away.”

Joseph Parker states,

“After reading the doctrines of Plato, Socrates or Aristotle, we feel the specific difference between their words and Christ's is the difference between an inquiry and a revelation.”

Bernard Ramm says,

“ Statistically speaking, the Gospels are the greatest literature ever written. They are read by more people, quoted by more authors, translated into more tongues, represented in more art, set to more music, than any other book or books written by any man in any century in any land.

But the words of Christ are not great on the grounds that they have such a statistical edge over anybody else's words. They are read more, quoted more, loved more, believed more, and translated more because they are the greatest words ever spoken.

And where is their greatness? Their greatness lies in the pure, lucid spirituality in dealing clearly, definitively, and authoritatively with the greatest problems that throb in the human breast; namely, who is God? Does He love Me? What should I do to please Him? How does He look at my sin? How can I be forgiven? Where will I go when I die? How must I treat others?

No other man's words have the appeal of Jesus' words because no other man can answer these fundamental human questions as Jesus as Jesus answered them.

They are the kind of words and the kind of answers we would expect God to give, and we who believes in Jesus' deity have no problem as to why these words came from His mouth."

5. IF GOD BECAME MAN, THEN WE WOULD EXPECT HIM TO HAVE A LASTING AND UNIVERSAL INFLUENCE

To be sure, the personality of Jesus Christ has made such an impact on humanity that even after 2,000 years the impact has not worn off. Each day, there are persons who have revolutionary experiences with Jesus.

Philip Schaff once said:

"This Jesus of Nazareth, without money and arms, conquered more millions than Alexander, Caesar, Mohammed, and Napoleon; without science and learning, He shed more light on things human and divine than all philosophers and scholars combined.

Without the eloquence of schools, "He spoke such words of life as were never spoken before or since

and produced effects which lie beyond the reach of orator or poet.

Without writing a single line, He set more pens in motion, and furnished themes for more sermons, orations, discussions, learned volumes, works of art, and songs of praise, than the whole army of great men of ancient and modern times.”

“That ministry lasted only three years – and yet in these three years is condensed the deepest meaning of the history of religion. No great life ever passed so swiftly, so quietly, so humbly, so far removed from the noise and commotion of the world; and no great life after its close excited such universal and lasting interest.”

Napoleon said:

“Christ alone has succeeded in so raising the mind of man towards the unseen that it becomes insensible to the barriers of time and space. Across the chasm of eighteen hundred years Jesus Christ makes a demand which is beyond all others difficult to satisfy.

He asks for that which a philosophy may often seek in vain at the hands of his friends, or a father of his children, or a bride of her spouse, or a man of his brother.

He asks for the human heart; He will have it entirely to Himself; He demands it unconditionally, and forthwith His demand is granted. Its powers and faculties become an annexation to the empire of Christ. All who sincerely believe in Him experience that supernatural love towards Him.

This phenomenon is unaccountable, it is altogether beyond the scope of man’s creative powers. Time, the great destroyer can neither exhaust its strength nor put a limit to its range.”

Again from **Napoleon**:

“The nature of Christ’s existence is mysterious I admit; but this mystery meets the wants of man – reject it and the world is an inexplicable riddle; believe it, and the history of our race is satisfactorily explained.”

The famous essay, “ONE SOLITARY LIFE,” states

“Here is a man who was born in an obscure village, the child of a peasant woman.

He grew up in another village. He worked in a carpenter shop until He was thirty, and then for three years He was an itinerant preacher.

He never owned a home. He never wrote a book. He never held an office. He never had a family. He never went to college. He never put his foot inside a big city. He never traveled two hundred miles from the place where He was born. He never did one of the things that usually accompany greatness. He had no credentials but himself...

While still a young man, the tide of popular opinion turned against Him. His friends ran away. One of them denied Him. He was turned over to His enemies.

He went through the mockery of a trial. He was nailed upon a cross between two thieves. While He was dying His executors gambled for the only piece of property He had on earth – his coat. When he was dead, He was taken down and laid in a borrowed grave through the pity of a friend.

“Nineteen long centuries have come and gone, and today He is the centerpiece of the human race and the leader of the column of progress.

I am far within the mark when I say that all the armies that ever marched, all the navies that ever were built; all the parliaments that ever sat and all the kings that ever reigned, put together, have not affected the life of man upon this earth as powerfully as has that one solitary life.”

“THE INCOMPARABLE CHRIST,” another vivid essay:

“More than nineteen hundred years ago there was a Man born contrary to the laws of life. This man lived in poverty and was reared in obscurity. He did not travel extensively. Only once did He cross the boundary of the country in which he lived; that was during His exile in childhood.

“He possessed neither wealth nor influence. His relatives were inconspicuous, and had neither training nor formal education. In infancy He startled a king; in childhood He puzzled doctors; in manhood He ruled the course of nature, walked upon the billows as if pavements, and hushed the sea to sleep. He healed the multitudes without medicine and made no charge for His service.

“He never wrote a book, and yet all the libraries of the country could not hold the books that have been written about him. He never wrote a song, and yet he has furnished the theme for more songs than all the songwriters combined.

“He never founded a college, but all the schools put together cannot boast of having as many students.

“He never marshaled an army, nor drafted a soldier, nor fired a gun; and yet no leader ever had more volunteers who have under His orders, made more rebels stack arms and surrender without a shot fired.

“He never practiced psychiatry; and yet He has healed more broken hearts than all the doctors far and near. Once each week the wheels of commerce cease their turning and multitudes wend their way to worshipping assemblies to pay homage and respect to Him.

“The names of the past proud statesmen of Greece and Rome have come and gone. The names of the past scientists, philosophers, and theologians have come and gone; but the name of this man abounds more and more.

Though time has spread nineteen hundred years between the people of this generation and the scene of His crucifixion, yet He still lives. Herod could not destroy Him, and the grave could not hold Him.

“He stands forth upon the highest pinnacle of heavenly glory, proclaimed of God, acknowledged by angels, adored by saints, and feared by devils, as the living, personal Christ, our Lord and Savior.”

6. IF GOD BECAME MAN, THEN WE WOULD EXPECT HIM TO SATISFY

THE SPIRITUAL HUNGER IN MAN

“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied”(Matthew 5:6)

“If any man is thirsty, let Him come to Me and drink” (John 7:37).

“But whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst”(John 4:14).

“Peace I leave with you; My peace I give you; not as the world gives, do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, nor let it be fearful” (John 14:27).

“I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me shall not hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst” (John 6:35).

“Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest”

(Matthew 11:28).

“I came that they might have life, and might have it abundantly” (John 10:10).

Otto Rauk in *Beyond Psychology* says that “man needs to be in touch with something more than himself”.

The major religions testify to man’s need. The pyramids of Mexico and the shrines of India are examples of man’s spiritual search.

Mark Twain wrote of men’s emptiness:

“...From his cradle to his grave a man never does a single thing which has any first and give most objective save one- to secure peace of mind – spiritual comfort for himself.”

Fisher, the historian said:

“... there is a cry in the soul, to which no response comes from the world.”

Thomas Aquinas exclaimed,

“The soul’s restless thirst [is] for happiness, yet it is a thirst to be satisfied in God alone.”

Bernard Ramm states that

“Christian experience alone provides man with an experience commensurate with his nature as free spirit.... Anything less than God leaves the spirit of man thirsty, hungry, restless, frustrated, and incomplete.”

R. L. Mixter, professor of zoology at Wheaton College:

“When he follows the creed of his profession, a scientist believes what he does because of the evidence he can find. I became a Christian because I found in myself a need which would be satisfied only by Jesus Christ. I needed forgiveness and he gave it. I needed companionship and He was a friend. I needed encouragement and He provided it.”

Paul H. Johnson:

“God has shaped a peculiar vacuum inside us – a vacuum shaped like God.

Nothing satisfies that vacuum except God himself. You can put money, homes, wealth, power, fame or anything you want into the vacuum, but it doesn’t fit. Only God fills it, fits it and satisfies it”.

7. IF GOD BECAME A MAN, THEN WE WOULD EXPECT HIM TO

EXERCISE POWER OVER DEATH.

DEATH

It is seen that Jesus was not forced to give up his life. As evidenced in Matthew 26:53,54, He had the power available to him to do whatever He pleased.

It is in John 10:18 that we find the answer: “No one has taken it (My life) away from Me, but I lay it down on My own initiative. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This commandment I received from my father.” We see that Christ willingly died for the sins of man.

W.H. Griffith Thomas feels:

“It was not the death of a suicide, for did He not say, „I lay down My life of Myself.“

The death was purely voluntary. We have to suffer: He need not have suffered. A word from Him might have saved His life. Nor was it an accident death, for the obvious reason that it was foreseen, foretold, and prepared for in a variety of ways.

Again, it was certainly not the death of a criminal, for no two witnesses could be found to agree together as to the charge against Him. Pilate declared that he found no fault in Him, and even Herod has not a word to say against Him. This, then, was no ordinary execution.”

Another important fact of His death is related by **W.C. Robinson**: “For no mere man in all history has ever had the power to dismiss his spirit of his own violation as did our Lord Jesus Christ (Luke 23:46). ... Luke and John use verbs which can only be interpreted as meaning that Jesus miraculously ...handed over His spirit to God when he had paid the full price for sin. There was a miracle on Calvary on Friday as well as a miracle in the garden on Easter morning.

BURIAL

“And when it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who himself has also become a disciple of Jesus. This man came to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate ordered it to be given over to him”(Matthew 27:57,58).

“And Nicodemus came also, who had first come to Him by night; bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds weight”(John 19:39).

“And Joseph bought a linen sheet, took Him down, wrapped Him in the linen sheet, and laid Him in a tomb which had been hewn out in the rock; and he rolled a stone against the entrance of the tomb. And Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Jesus were looking on to see where He was laid” (Mark 15:46,47).

“And they returned and prepared spices and perfumes. And on the Sabbath they rested according to the commandment” (Luke 23:56).

“And they (the Pharisees“ guard) went and made the grave secure, and alone with the guard they set a seal on the stone” (Matthew 27:66).

RESURRECTION

B.F. Westcott writes,

“Indeed, taking all the evidence together, it is not too much to say that there is no historic incident better or more variously supported than the resurrection of Christ. Nothing but the antecedent assumption that it must be false could have suggested the idea of deficiency in the proof of it.”

From **Henry Morris** we read:

“The fact of his resurrection is the most important event of history and therefore, appropriately, is one of the most certain facts in all history.”

Jesus not only predicted His death, but He also predicted His bodily resurrection.

In John 2:19 He says, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.”

Here, temple refers to His body.

Again **Morris** writes: “He alone, of all men who ever lived, conquered death itself.

By all rules of evidence, His bodily resurrection from the grave can be adjudged the best-proved fact of all history.” I am the resurrection and the life,” He said.

„Because I live, ye shall live also” (John 11:25; 14:19).

“The resurrection of Christ is the seal of our resurrection. The healing of sick people does not warrant us in believing that Christ will heal each of us today, nor did the resuscitation of Lazarus guarantee our immortality. It is the resurrection of Christ as firstfruits which alone opens the grave- in anticipation- to the believer and unto life eternal. Because He arose, we shall arise.” (Romans 8:11).

After Jesus’ resurrection, the apostle were able to raise the dead through His power (Acts 9:40,41). Thus, He gave life to others after His death. It follows then that Jesus is alive (Hebrews 13:8) and that “This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven” (Acts 1:11).

“But Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God and the world’s promised Redeemer, has conquered death...”

D) THE HOLY SPIRIT

Central to the Christian faith is the teaching that the Holy Spirit is personal and is God, the third person of the Holy Trinity. The doctrine that the Holy Spirit is a person is clearly taught in Scripture. Notice the following examples of personal attributes displayed by the Holy spirit.

He can be *grieved* (Ephesians 4:30), *resisted* (Acts 7:51) and *lied to* (Acts 5:3).

Moreover, the Holy Spirit *can speak* (Acts 21:11), *think* (Acts 15:28) and *teach* (Luke 12:12). Thus, **the Holy Spirit is personal.**

Furthermore, the Holy Spirit is spoken of in the Bible as a divine person. The Holy Spirit has the attributes of God, for He is *all-powerful* (Luke 1:35-37), *eternal* (Hebrews 9:14), and *all-knowing* (1Corinthians 2:10,11). The Scriptures teach that lying to the Holy Spirit is lying to God (Acts 5:3,4).

The Holy Spirit also was involved in divine works, including *creation* (Genesis 1:2, Job 33:4), the *new birth* (John 3:5), the *resurrection of Christ* (Romans 8:11) and the *inspiration of the Bible* (2 Peter 1:20,21). Finally, to blaspheme against the Holy Spirit is an unforgivable sin (Matthew 12:31,32).

The conclusion is that the Holy Spirit is God, the third person of the Holy Trinity.

E) THE DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH

The true church is made up of all those individuals who have put their trust in Christ as their Savior. It is not merely the attending of church or having a name on the membership list that makes one a member of Christ's true church. Only the transforming work of the Holy Spirit in the heart of the repentant sinner qualifies one for membership in the true body of Christ.

F) THE ATONEMENT

Within all branches of Christianity there is agreement that the deity of Christ was a perfect satisfaction to God as just and substitutionary punishment for the sins of the world.

G) SALVATION

The doctrine of salvation is linked with the atoning death of Christ on the cross.

While all major branches of Christianity agree that Christ's death was satisfactory to God as a sacrifice is appropriated.

We believe the Bible teaches that salvation is by grace, a free gift of God to all those who believe in Christ. Those who receive Christ by faith have their sins forgiven and become children of God, a new creation in Christ Jesus:

“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, that no one should boast”

(Ephesians 2:8,9 NASB).

“He saved us, not on the basis of deed which we have done in righteousness but according to His mercy, in the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy spirit” (Titus 3:5 NASB).

“But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name”(John 1:12 NASB).

“In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace”(Ephesians 1:7 NASB).

“Therefore if any one is in Christ he is a new creature, old things are passed away; behold, new things have come” (2Corinthians 5:17 NASB).

Since salvation is a free gift from God, no one can add anything to the completed work of Christ received it. It is received by faith and faith alone.

H) MAN

The doctrine of Man is succinctly expressed in the Westminster Shorter Catechism, that “God created man, male and female, after his own image, in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness, with dominion over the creatures.” Man is a spirit, he has a soul, and he lives in a body.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Jesus is the second person of the Godhead. He died on the cross as the only possible sacrifice for sin. He alone can bring us to the Father.

(John 1:1; 5:18; 14:6; 20:28; Titus 2:13, 2 Peter 1:1)

Salvation is the free gift of God, through Jesus Christ, that delivers us from the domain and authority of Satan to the kingdom of God.

(John 1:12; Acts 4:10-12; Eph. 2:8,9; Col. 1:13)

The final authority on all matters is the Scriptures. No one can add or take away from them without being disobedient to God.

(2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:20,21; Rev. 22:18,19)

No event in world history has ever shown a prophecy in scripture as false.

Many prophecies have clearly come true and some are yet to be fulfilled.

(Deut. 18:20-22; Is. 55:11).

As Bible-believing Christians, we know that God is personal, eternal and triune. However, cults and other non-Christian religions each deny one or more of the essential Bible doctrines we have discussed.

Beware of any group or individual that changes essential doctrines.

The Bible's teachings cannot be exploited at the whim of any group or individual.

It contains "the faith once for all delivered to the saints" (Jude 3) and one who changes its divine pronouncements acts like those condemned in **2 Peter 3:16** "**The untaught and unstable distort, as they do also the rest of the scriptures, to their own destruction.**"

CHAPTER 7

UNDERSTANDING THE CULTS

DEFINITION OF CULT

A cult is a perversion, a distortion of biblical Christianity and/or a rejection of the historic teaching of the Christian church. The Apostle Paul warned there would be false Christs and a false gospel that would attempt to deceive the true church and the world.

For if one comes and preaches another Jesus whom we have not preached, or you receive a different spirit which you have not received, or a different gospel which you have not accepted, you bear this beautifully...

For such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ and no wonder for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. Therefore it is not surprising if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness, whose end shall be according to their deeds (2 Cor.11:13-15 NASB)

Walter Martin gives us a good definition of a cult when he says:

“A cult, then, is a group of people polarized around someone’s interpretation of the Bible and is characterized by major deceptions from orthodox Christianity relative to the cardinal doctrines of the Christian faith, particularly the fact that God became man in Jesus Christ.” (*Walter Martin, The Rise of the Cults, p.12*).

WHY DO CULTS PROSPER?

a) THE CULTS SEEM TO PROVIDE ANSWERS

A major reason the cults are flourishing is that in an unsure world they provide authoritative answers to man's basic questions: *Who am I? Why am I here? Where am I going?*

Max Gunther, the writer, describes the plight of a young woman, common to many in our generation. "I thought I wanted to become a nurse but I wasn't sure. I thought Christianity meant a lot to me but I wasn't sure of that either. I guess I was kind of desperately looking for somebody who had firm yes-and-no answers, somebody who was sure about things and could make me sure".

Unfortunately, this young lady eventually joined a cult, which willingly supplied her with answers. She put it this way, "I kept going back and 44

asking them questions and they always knew the answers – I mean, really knew them."

Thus the cults offer certainty and easy answers to those who are unsatisfied with the present state of their lives.

b) The Cults Meet Human Needs

All of us need to be loved, feel needed and to sense our lives have direction and meaning.

Individuals who experience an identity crisis or have emotional problems are particularly susceptible to cults. During such difficult moments, many cults give the unsuspecting a feeling of acceptance and direction.

Furthermore, within all of us there is a basic desire to know and serve God.

The cults take advantage of these and offer ready-made, but ultimately unsatisfying, solutions.

Most cults tell their followers what to believe, how to behave and what to think, and emphasize dependence upon the group or leader for their emotional stability.

c) The Cults Impress the Uninformed

The cults prosper because Christians have sometimes failed to be a vital influence in the world.

If the church fails to carefully and seriously provide spiritual warmth and a true exposition of the Word of God, those with spiritual needs will find other avenues of fulfillment.

Many cults prey on ignorance, and try to impress the uninformed with pseudo-scholarship.

Representatives of Jehovah's Witnesses who go door to door give a similar impression of great learning. To combat this, *the believer must know what he believes and why he believes it and thus be able to expose the cult's teachings.*

THE CHARACTERISTICS OF CULTS

a) New "Truth" syndrome

Many cults promote the false idea that God has revealed something special to them. This is usually truth that has never before been revealed and supersedes and contradicts all previous revelations. One cult leader claims that the mission of Christ was left unfinished and the world is now ready for the completion of Christ's work on earth.

The Mormon Church teaches that Christianity was in apostasy for some 18

centuries until God revealed new “truth” to Joseph Smith, Jnr., restoring the true gospel that had been lost. Today the Mormon Church has its living prophets who receive divine revelation from God, continually bringing new

“truth” to the world.

These and other cults justify their existence by claiming they have something more than just the Bible and its “inadequate message.”

b) New Interpretation of Scripture

Some cults make no claim to new truth or extra-biblical revelation, but believe they alone have the key to interpreting the mysteries in the Bible.

The scriptures are their only acknowledged source of authority, but they are interpreted unreasonably and in away different from that of orthodox Christianity.

They testify that the historic beliefs and interpretation of scripture are based upon a misunderstanding of the Bible or were pagan in origin.

An example of this is found in the writing of Herbert W. Armstrong.

“... I found that the popular church teachings and practices were not based on the Bible. They had originated... in paganism. The amazing, unbelievable TRUTH was, the sources of these popular beliefs and practices of professing Christianity was quite largely, paganism and human reasoning and custom, not the Bible!

The Bible is then reinterpreted, usually out of context, to justify the peculiar doctrines of the cults. Without an objective and reasonable way to understand what the Bible teaches, the cult member is at the mercy of the theological whims of the cult leader.

c) Non-biblical Guidance

Some cults have sacred writings or a source of authority that supersedes the Bible.

The Mormon Church says, “We believe the Bible to be the Word of God in so far as it is translated correctly...” Although this sounds like the Mormons 46

trust the Bible, they, in fact, believe it has been changed and corrupted.

Listen to what the Mormon apostle Talmage has said:

“There will be, there can be no absolutely reliable translation of these or other Scriptures unless it is effected through the gift of translation, as one of the endowments of the Holy Ghost... Let the Bible then be read reverently and with prayerful care, the reader ever seeking the light of the Spirit that he may discern between the truth and the errors of men.”

Such a statement opens the door for their additional sacred books, i.e., *The Book of Mormon*, *The Pearl of Great Price* and *Doctrines and Covenants*, as greater authoritative sources.

Thus, the Bible is not truly their final source of authority.

In Christian Science, the Bible is characterized as being mistaken and corrupt and inferior to the writings of Mary Baker Eddy.

Regardless of whether the Bible is superseded by other works or reinterpreted by a cult leader, a sure mark of a cult is that the final authority on spiritual matters rests on something other than the plain teaching of Holy Scripture.

d) Another Jesus

One characteristic that is found in all cults is false teaching about the person of Jesus Christ in the light of historical biblical Christianity. The Bible makes it clear that Jesus was God in human flesh, second person of the Holy Trinity, who lived a sinless life on earth and died as a sacrifice for the sins of the world.

Three days after his crucifixion, Jesus rose bodily from the dead. Fifty days afterward He ascended into heaven, where He now sits at the right hand of the Father, interceding on behalf of believers. He will, one day, return bodily to planet earth and judge the living and the dead while setting up His eternal Kingdom.

The Jesus of the cults is not the Jesus of the Bible. According to the theology of the *Jehovah's Witnesses*, Jesus did not exist as God from all eternity but was rather the first creation of Jehovah God. Before coming to earth, He was Michael the Archangel, the head of all the angels. He is not God.

The *Mormon Church* does not accept the unique deity of Jesus Christ. He is, to them, one of many gods, the "first-born spirit child" spiritually conceived by a sexual union between the heavenly father and a heavenly mother. The physical union of the heavenly mother accomplished his incarnation. He was also the spirit-brother of Lucifer in His preexistent 47

heavenly state. The physical union of the heavenly Father and the human Mary accomplished his incarnation.

e) Rejection of Orthodox Christianity

Joseph Smith, Jr., the founder of Mormonism, said he was given this assessment of the Christian Church when he inquired of the Lord as to which church to join:

“...I was answered that I must join none of them, for they were all wrong; and the personage who addressed me said that all their creeds were an abomination in his sight. That those professors were all corrupt; that “they draw near to me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me, they teach for doctrines the commandments of men, having a form of godliness, but they deny the power thereof”. (Joseph Smith, Jr., The Pearl of Great Price, 2:18-19).

f) Double-talk

A feature of some cultic groups is that they say one thing publicly but internally believe something totally different. Many organizations call themselves Christians when in fact they deny the fundamentals of the faith.

The Mormon Church is an example of this kind of double-talk. The first article of faith in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints reads , “*We believe.... in his son, Jesus Christ.*” This gives the impression Mormons are Christians since they believe in Jesus Christ. However, when we understand the semantics of what they mean by Jesus Christ, we discover they are far removed from orthodox Christianity. Nevertheless, the impression the Mormon Church gives from their advertising is that they are another denomination or sect of Christianity.

One, therefore, must be on the alert for organizations that advertise themselves as “Christians” but whose internal teachings disagree with scripture.

g) Changing Theology

Cult doctrines are continually in a state of flux and have no sure foundation on which to anchor their hope. Adherents of a particular cult will learn a doctrine only to find that doctrine later changed or contradicted by further revelation.

The Jehovah's Witnesses, for example, used to believe vaccinations were sinful. Anyone who allowed himself to be vaccinated would lose his good standing in the organization. Today this is no longer taught.

Other examples of the changing theology of the Jehovah's Witness include the fact that Christ's invisible return was once said to be 1874 but later changed it to 1914 and then to 1975. At one time Witnesses were allowed to celebrate Christmas but not now; initially every Witness had a heavenly hope but now only 144,000 go to heaven with Christ.

The Mormon Church is equally guilty of changing doctrine. The most famous is its belief and practice, later prohibited, of polygamy.

h) Strong Leadership

Cults are usually characterized by central leader figures who consider themselves messengers of God with unique access to the Almighty. Since the leader has such a special relationship with God, he can dictate the theology and behavior of the cult. Consequently, he exercises enormous influence over the group.

This strong leadership leads the cult follower into total dependence upon the cult for belief, behavior and lifestyle. When this falls into the hands of a particularly corrupt leader, the results can be tragic, as with Jim Jones and the People's Temple tragedy and David Koresh and the Waco cult disaster.

The more dramatic the claims of a cult leader, the more the possibility of a tragic conclusion.

i) Salvation by Works

One teaching that is totally absent from all the cults is the gospel of the grace of God. No one is taught in the cults that he can be saved from eternal damnation by simply placing his faith in Jesus Christ. It is always belief in Jesus Christ and "do this" or "follow that."

All cults attach something to the doctrine of salvation by grace through faith. It might be baptism, obedience to the laws and ordinances of the gospel, or something else, but it is never taught that faith in Christ alone will save any one.

f) False Prophecy

Another feature of the cults is they often promulgate false prophecy. Cult leaders, who believe God has divinely called them, have made bold predictions of future events, supposedly revealed by the inspiration of God.

Unfortunately, for the cult leaders, these predictions of future events do not come to pass.

The Jehovah's Witnesses have a well-established record of making false prophecies. Their founder and first president, Charles T. Russell, who conclusively prophesied the end of the world for 1914, established this pattern. Judge for yourself (1 Jn. 4:1)

CHAPTER 8

JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES

Officially known as the Watchtower Bible and Tract society, the Jehovah's Witnesses are a product of the life work of Charles Taze Russell, born February 16, 1852, near Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. In 1890, while still in his teens and without formal theological education, Russell organized a Bible class whose members eventually made him "pastor".

In 1879 he founded the magazine Zion's Watchtower in which he published his own unique interpretation of the Bible, and in 1886, the first volume of seven books (six written by Russell) entitled *The Millennial Dawn* was published (later retitled *Studies in the Scriptures*).

Joseph F. Rutherford

A few months after the death of Charles Taze Russell, the society's legal counselor, Joseph Franklin Rutherford, became the second President of the Watchtower society.

It was under his leadership that the name "Jehovah's Witnesses" was adopted.

Rutherford not only moved the Society's headquarters to Brooklyn, he also moved toward "theocratic" control with the power to make all policy decisions.

Nathan Knorr

Rutherford died in 1942 and was succeeded by Nathan H. Knorr. It was during Knorr's presidency that the society increased from 115,000 to over two million members. In 1961, under Knorr's leadership, the society produced its own English translation of the Bible entitled the New World Translation of

Holy Scriptures.

THE SOCIETY’S CLAIMS

Today, worldwide, the Jehovah’s Witnesses number over three million. The members are zealous and sincere and claim to accept the Bible as their only authority.

However, their theology denies every cardinal belief of the regular Christianity including the Trinity, the divinity of Jesus Christ, His bodily resurrection, salvation by grace through faith, and eternal punishment of the wicked.

The Watchtower has this to say about itself:

It is God’s sole collective channel for the flow of Biblical truth to men on earth

(The Watchtower, July 15, 1960)

F.W. Franz, president of the Watchtower, relaying how their interpretations come from God, stated, “They are passed to the Holy Spirit who invisibly communicates with the Jehovah’s Witnesses – and the Publicity Department”

(Scottish Daily Express, Nov. 24, 1954)

We conclude from these statements that the Watchtower believes itself to be the organization that speaks for God in today’s world.

SOURCE OF AUTHORITY

There are no “articles of faith” or authoritative doctrinal statements issued by the Watchtower. Their theological views are found in their various publications, including *The Watchtower* and *Awake*. The doctrine that proceeds from these works is considered authoritative.

They contend their ultimate source of authority is the Bible, yet we find they constantly misuse the Scriptures to establish their own peculiar beliefs. This is accomplished chiefly by quoting texts out of context while omitting other passages relevant to the subject. **For all practical purposes their publications take precedence over the Scriptures.**

TRINITY

The Watchtower makes it clear they do not believe in the doctrine of the Trinity. “The trinity doctrine was not conceived by Jesus or the early Christians” (*Let God Be True*, 1952, pg.111). “The plain truth is that this is another of Satan’s attempt to keep the God-fearing person from learning the truth of Jehovah and His Son Christ Jesus”

(*Let God Be True*, pg.93)

In the watchtower theology neither Jesus Christ nor the Holy Spirit is God.

JESUS CHRIST

In the theological system of the Jehovah’s Witnesses, Jesus Christ is not God in human flesh, but rather a created being.

“Jesus, the Christ, a created individual, is the second greatest personage of the Universe. Jehovah God and Jesus together constitute the superior authorities”

(Make Sure of All things, pg. 207)

“He was a god, but not the Almighty God, who is Jehovah” (*Let God Be True, pg.33*).

“If Jesus were God, then during Jesus” death God was dead in the grave” (*Let God Be True, 1946, pg.91*)

“The truth of the matter is that the word of God is Christ Jesus, who did have a beginning”. (*Let God Be True, 1946, pg.88*)

To the Jehovah”s Witnesses, Jesus is not equal to Jehovah God. He was rather, Michael, the Archangel in his preexistent state, having a brother named Lucifer who rebelled against God while he (known then as Michael) remained obedient (*see J.*

Rutherford, The Kingdom Is At Hand, pg.49)

During his earthly existence Michael was transformed into a man:

“The life of the Son of God was transferred from his glorious position with God his Father to the embryo of a human” (*Let God Be True, 1946, pg.36*) Upon his resurrection He went back to His former state as an invisible spirit, no longer having a body, according to Jehovah”s Witnesses” theology.

The Jehovah”s Witnesses, in an attempt to demonstrate that Jesus Christ is not Jehovah God, appeal to the Bible to substantiate their beliefs. However, it is the Bible that contradicts their theology.

JOHN 14:28

One favorite passage used by Jehovah's witnesses to prove Christ is less than God is John 14:28: **“My father is greater than I.”**

This verse refers to the voluntary subordination of Jesus during His earthly life when He willingly placed Himself in submission to the Father. It says nothing about His nature, only His temporary rank on earth. Thus, the “greater than” refers to His position rather than His person.

HOLY SPIRIT

According to the Watchtower Society the Holy Spirit is not part of the Godhead. Both the personality and the deity of the Holy Spirit [defined as “the invisible active force of almighty God, which moves His servants to do his will”] are denied. The personality of the Holy Spirit is consistently rejected throughout the New World Translation by not capitalizing the term “spirit” when referring to the Holy Spirit.

SALVATION

In Watchtower theology, salvation is not regarded as a free gift from God based upon Jesus Christ's work on the cross. Rather, their literature stresses a salvation by works.

Russell wrote, “They must be recovered from blindness as well as from death, that they, each for himself, may have a full chance to prove, by obedience or disobedience, their worthiness of life eternal” (Charles Taze Russell, Studies in the Scriptures, Vol.

1) The Bible teaches we are saved by grace through faith alone. Man's good works can never contribute to this salvation. “For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves,

it is the gift of God; NASB).

The “New World Translation”

In 1961, the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society published the New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures. Their work is a highly biased attempt to justify some of their non-biblical doctrines.

In terms of scholarship, the New World Translation leaves much to be desired. The following will make the point clear.

JOHN 1:1

One of the readings of the New World Translation that has caused considerable outrage among Greek scholars is its unsupportable rendering of the last clause of John 1:1, “the word was a god”.

This translation makes Jesus Christ less than God, relegating Him to the position of a

“created being” in accordance with Watchtower theology. There is no basis whatsoever for this rendering, although the Watchtower would have people believe the contrary.

SUMMARY OF BELIEFS OF JEHOVAH’S WITNESSES

1. Jesus is the first created being of Jehovah and therefore not God. He was known as Michael the Archangel both before he came to earth and after he returned to heaven.

2. Lip- service is paid to salvation by faith but strong emphasis is actually place on “earning the gift of eternal life”. The Witness who doesn’t endure to the end with the works of the Society losses the hope

of any future. Those who do not become Jehovah's Witnesses in their earthly life but were not against them will have a resurrection during the millennium and be a second chance.

3. The „Bible“ they use, The New World Translation, has been changed especially where the text deals with deity of Christ. The rest of it is read only with the interpretations found in the society's publications. Their final authority is what the Governing Body says about the Scriptures themselves.

4. Again and again the end of the world has been prophesied – 1874, 1914, 1915, 1918, 1925, 1941, 1975 etc. They have a 100 percent record of being a false prophet.

CHAPTER 9

MORMONISM- “LATTER – DAY SAINTS”

“But even though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to that which we have preached to you, let him be accursed” (Galatians 1:8 NASB).

HISTORY

The founder of Mormonism, or The Church of Jesus of Latter-day Saints, Joseph Smith, Jnr., was born on December 23, 1805 in Sharon, Vermont. Smith was the fourth of ten children of Joseph and Lucy Mack Smith. In 1817 the family moved to Palmyra, New York (near present-day Rochester).

Most of the members of the smith family soon joined the Presbyterian Church, but young Joseph remained undecided. His argument was that all the strife and tension among the various denominations made him question which denomination was right.

It was this conflict that set the stage for Joseph’s alleged visions and the start of the Mormon denomination.

THE CLAIMS OF MORMONISM

The Mormons claim they are the restoration of the true church established by Jesus Christ. It is not Protestant or Catholic, but claims, rather, to be the only true church. “If it had not been for Joseph Smith and the restoration, there would be no salvation outside the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints”.

“No salvation without accepting Joseph Smith... If Joseph Smith was verily a prophet, and if he told the truth ... then this knowledge is of the most vital importance to the entire world. No man can reject that testimony without incurring the most dreadful consequences, for he can not enter the Kingdom of God” (Joseph Smith, Doctrines of Salvation)

The claims of Joseph Smith and his followers are clear. The church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints claims it is God’s true church on earth while all the others are wrong. Commenting on Joseph Smith’s first vision, Dr. Walter Martin puts the matter into perspective:

With one “special Revelation” the Mormons Church expects its intended converts to accept the totally unsupported testimony of a fifteen-year-old boy that nobody ever preached Jesus Christ’s gospel from the close of the Apostolic age until the

“Restoration” through Joseph Smith, Jr., beginning in 1820!

Joseph Smith pronounced everybody wrong, all Christian theology an abomination, and all professing Christians corrupt – all in the name of God!

SOURCES OF AUTHORITY

The Mormons church has four accepted sacred works: the Bible, the Book of Mormons, Doctrine and Covenants, and The Pearl of Great Price. The present prophet’s words are also a source of authority.

THE BIBLE

The Mormons articles of faith read, “We believe the Bible to be the word of God in so far as it is

translated correctly...” The Book of Mormons claims that a correct translation of the Bible is impossible since the Catholic church has taken away from the word of God “... many parts which are plain and most precious; and also many covenants of the Lord have they taken away. And all this have they taken away. And all this have they done that they might pervert the right ways of the Lord” (1 Nephi 13:26b, 27).

“THE BOOK OF MORMONS”

The book of Mormons is also considered inspired: “We also believe the Book of Mormon to be the Word of God”. The book of Mormon is supposedly an account of the original inhabitants of America to whom Christ appeared after His resurrection.

“The Doctrine and Covenants”

Doctrine and Covenants is a record of 138 revelations revealing some of Mormonism’s distinctive doctrines such as baptism for the dead and celestial marriage.

“The Pearl of Great Price”

The Pearl of Great Price contains the book of Moses which is roughly equivalent to the first six chapters of Genesis, and the book of Abraham a translation of an Egyptian Papyrus that later proved to be fraudulent. It also contains an extract from Joseph Smith’s translation of the Bible, extracts from the History of Joseph Smith, which is his autobiography and the Articles of Faith.

MORMON DOCTRINE

God

“We believe in God, the Eternal Father, and His Son Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Ghost”

The above statement leaves the impression that Mormons believe the biblical doctrine of the Holy Trinity – namely, there is one God who manifests himself in three persons, the Father, the son and the Holy Spirit, and these three persons are the one God. However, nothing could be further from the truth.

The Mormons doctrine of God is contradictory to what the Bible teaches. The Mormons believe in many gods and teach that God himself was once a man.

Moreover, Mormon males have the possibility of attaining godhood. Joseph Smith made this clear when he said:

I am going to inquire after God: for I want you all to know him and be familiar with him ... I will go back to the beginning before the world was, to show you what kind of a being God is.

God was once as we are now, and is an exalted man, and sits enthroned in yonder heavens... I say, if you were to see him today, you would see him like a man in a form like yourself in all the person, image, and very form of a man.

I am going to tell you how God came to be God. We have imagined and supposed that God was God from all eternity. I will refute that idea and take away the veil so that you may see.

It is the first principle of the gospel to know for certainty the character of God and to know that we may converse with him as one man with another, and that he was once a man like us, yea, that God himself, the father of us all, dwelt on an earth, the same as Jesus Christ did.

Here then is eternal life- to know the only wise and true God; and you have got to learn how to be Gods yourselves, and to be kings and priest to God, the same as all Gods have done before you.

Other statements by Smith and Young reveal further the Mormon concept of God: *In the beginning, the head of the gods called a council of Gods; and they came together and concocted a plan to create and populate the world and people it.*

Lorenzo Snow repeated Joseph Smith's words about the Mormon idea of God, As Man is, God was,

As God, is, Man may become.

The Mormon writer Milton Hunter came to the obvious conclusion: Mormon prophets have continuously taught the sublime truth that God the Eternal Father was once a mortal man who passed through a school earth similar to that through which we are passing. He became God- an exalted being.

Smith's teaching on the nature of God not only contradicts the Bible, it also contradicts the book of Mormon!

“And Zeezrom said unto him „Thou sayest that there is a true and living God?”

And Amulek said „Yea, there is a true and living God”.

Now Zeezrom said: „Is there more than one God?” And he answered, „No”

(Alma 11:26-26).

The Bible repeatedly affirms that there is only one true God. Isaiah 43:10

emphatically declares, “You are My witnesses, declare the Lord, and My servant whom I have chosen in order that you may know and believe Me, and understand that I am He Before Me there was no God

formed, and there will be none after Me”.

In the New Testament we are assured that though there are false gods and idols worshipped by men, they are worthless. “... We know there is no such thing as an idol in the world, and that there is no God but one” (1 Corinthians 8:4).

Jesus Christ

The Mormon Church teaches that Jesus Christ was a preexistence spirit like the rest of us. Even though we are all literally brothers and sisters of Jesus, He is set apart from the rest of us by being the firstborn of god’s spirit-children. “And now, verily I say unto you, I was in the beginnings with the Father, and am the Firstborn; and all those who are begotten through me are partakers o the glory of the same, and are the church of the Firstborn. Ye were also in the beginning with the Father”

In Mormonism Jesus is not the unique Son of God:

His humanity is to be recognized as real and ordinary – whatever happens to Him may happen to any one of us. The Divinity of Jesus and the Divinity of all other Nobel and stately souls; in so far as they, too, have been influenced by as park of Deity – can be recognized as manifestations of the Divine.

Man

According to Mormonism, man is a preexistent soul who takes his body at birth in this world.

Man is a spirit clothed with a tabernacle. The intelligent part of which was never created or made, but existed eternally- man was also in the beginning with God **Salvation**

Articles 2 and 3 of the Mormon Articles of Faith spell out their doctrine of salvation: No. 2: “We believe that men shall be punished for their own sins and not for Adams’s transgression.”

No. 3: “We believe that through the atonement of Christ, all mankind may be saved, by obedience to the laws and ordinances of the Gospel.”

Changes in the “Book of Mormon”

The Book of Mormon according to Joseph Smith, Jr., is “the most correct of any book on earth”. However, this “most” correct book has, from the 1830 edition to the modern edition, undergone some 3,000 changes.

The revelations claim the Book of Mormon was translated by the power of God, that Joseph Smith was a servant used of God to translate the Book of Mormon using 57

means that God had prepared for translating and that well over a year after its publication, the Lord affirmed the authenticity of the Book of Mormon. Yet a comparison of the latest edition with the first edition (the 1830 edition that was supposed to be translated by the power of God) will show how the more the 3,000

changes.

Original (1830) Edition

Modern Version

... King Benjamin had a gift from

... King Mosiah had a gift from God,

God, whereby he could interpret

whereby he could interpret such

Such engravings... (p 200).

Engravings (p.176, v.28).

... Behold the virgin which thou

... Behold the virgin whom thou

seest, is the Mother of God (p.25)

seest if the mother of the son of God,

.... (Nephi 11:18).

... that the Lamb of God is the eternal

... that the lamb of God is the son

Father and the Savior of the world

of the Eternal Father ...(Nephi

13:40).

... (P.32).

The “Book of Mormon” and Archaeology

Mormon scholars can be frustrated and embarrassed understandably when they realize that after all the years of work by Mormon and other archaeologists:

1. No Book of Mormon cities have been located.
2. No Book of Mormon names have been found in New World inscription.
3. No ancient inscriptions of any kind in America, which indicate that the ancient inhabitants had Hebrew or Christian beliefs, have been found.
4. No mentions of Book of Mormon persons, nations, or place have been found.
5. No artifact of any kind, which demonstrates the Book of Mormon is true, has been found.
6. Rather than finding supportive evidence, Mormon scholars have been forced to retreat from traditional interpretations of Book of Mormon statements (Hal Hougey, Archaeology and the Book of Mormon, p. 12).

In 1 Nephi 2:5-8 it is stated that the river Laman emptied into the Red Sea. Yet neither in historic nor prehistoric times has there been any river in Arabia at all that emptied into the Red Sea.

Apart from an ancient canal, which once connected the Nile with the coast of the Gulf of Suez, there were no streams of any kind emptying into the Red Sea on the western shore above the southern border of Egypt.

Second Nephi states that only the family of Lehi, Ishmael, and Zoram were left in Jerusalem in 600 B. C. to migrate to the New World. These totaled fifteen persons, plus three or four girls, or no more than twenty in all. Yet in less than thirty years, according to 2 Nephi 5:28, they had multiplied so startlingly that they divided up into two nations (2 Nephi 5:5-6, 21).

According to Alma 7:10, Jesus was to be born at Jerusalem (rather than in Bethlehem, as recorded in Luke 2:4 and predicted in Mic 5:2).

False Prophecies

The Mormon religion contains false prophecies. 2 Nephi 10:7, speaking of the Jews, predicts, "... when the day cometh that they shall believe in me, that I am Christ, then have I covenanted with their fathers that they shall be restored in the flesh, upon the earth, unto the lands of their inheritance."

The Jews are today back in their land, but do not believe that Jesus is the Christ. The prophecy is false.

Building the Temple in Zion

Joseph smith claimed that the Lord told him the Latter-day Saints would build a temple in Zion (Jackson County, Missouri) during his generation. Zion would never be removed from its place "... This generation shall not all fall away until an house shall be built unto the Lord... upon the consecrated spot as I have appointed"

(Doctrine and Covenants, 84:5, 31, September 1832).

“Surely Zion is the city of our God and sure Zion can not fall, neither be moved out of place, for God is there, and the hand of the Lord is there...” (Doctrine and Covenants, 97:19, August 1833).

These two prophecies failed since a temple was never built at the „appointed” place.

Moreover, two weeks before Joseph gave the prophecy that Zion would not be

“moved out of her place” the Mormons were unceremoniously run out of Zion. Their printing presses were destroyed, and some of their leaders were tarred and feathered!

Joseph was in Kirtland, Ohio at that time and thus was ignorant of the situation in Jackson County, Missouri, when he uttered his prophecy. Later on that year Smith prophesied a return to Zion!

Mormonism “Latter-day Saints” checklist

1. Jesus is not God but one of Elohim’s spirit children. Lucifer is Jesus’ brother.
2. Their third article of faith shows that we are saved by obedience to the laws and ordinances of the gospel. All have some future, on one of three heavenly levels, but Brigham Young taught that one can only get into the highest level with the consent of Joseph Smith.
3. The Bible is the word of God in as far as it is translated properly, but the Book of Mormon is the word of God without qualification. In practice they hold the Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants and the Pearl of Great Price above the Bible.

4. There are a number of clearly documented false prophecies including one about men on the moon looking like Quakers!

Other Points.

Their secret temple ceremonies including baptism for the dead open up the person to the world of the occult (2 Corinthians 4:2-4). Also, the confusion of Mormonism can be seen from the way their main books of “scripture” [Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants, Pearl of Great Price] contradict each other on several major points (1 Corinthians 14:33).

CHAPTER 10

WHAT IS ROSICRUIANISM?

The Rosicrusian Order borrows ideas and beliefs from divergent and sometimes opposing sources, attempting to unify those ideas and beliefs into a coherent world view.

Rosicrcians deny that it is a religion, holding rather that it is a philosophy, making use of the most modern scientific methods and techniques, as well as the methods of the occultist, the mystic and the seer, in the quest for truth.

The Teachings of Rosicrucianism

Although one of the attractions of Rosicrucianism is its claim that it is not a religion, its writings contain specific religious teaching that denies every cardinal doctrine of Christianity.

The Bible

The Rosicruian Order does not hold the Bible in any special favor. One Rosicrucian writer states, “All secret and sacred writings have truth in them, irrespective of their source, and must be judged by their inculcation“s rather than the source”.

Jesus Christ

“Jesus was born of Gentile parents through whose veins flowed Aryan blood”

Jesus did not die on the cross, for “an examination of the body revealed that Jesus was not dead. The blood flowing from his wounds proved that His body was not life-less...”(p. 265).

The Ascension is rejected because “there is nothing in the original accounts of it to warrant the belief that Jesus arose physically or in His physical body in a cloud into the heavens” (p. 283).

And finally, it is claimed that Rosicrucian archival records “clearly show that after Jesus retired to the monastery at Carmel he lived for many years, and carried on secret missions with His apostles...” (p. 289).

None of the above claims by Rosicrucians concerning Jesus Christ conforms to the Bible. Matthew 1:1-18 and Luke 3:23-38 affirm the long Jewish ancestry of the human nature of Jesus Christ. Acts 2:23, 24 clearly shows that the death of Jesus Christ on the cross was according to the predetermined plan of God.

St. Paul reminds us that “if Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless; you are still in your sins” (1 Corinthians 15:17, NASB). Finally, Acts 1:9-11 and Matthew 24:30

confirm Christ’s ascension into heaven and His eventual public (not secret) return to earth. The Jesus Christ of the Rosicrucians is not the Jesus Christ of the Bible.

Salvation

Rosicrucianism does not teach that a person should trust Christ and Him alone for his eternal salvation. Their system is one of self-effort, their motto being, “TRY” They believe Jesus Christ never died for the sins of the world but that such teachings were added to the Bible by the Church at the Council of Nicea in 326 A.D (see R. Swinburne Clymer, op. Cit., p. 18). Clymer also states:

Man through his own individual and consciously-made efforts must attain spiritual enlightenment and ultimate immortality (Ibid, p. 19).

The Bible doctrine of salvation states that salvation is only, and completely, by grace.

In fact, Paul states, “Now to the one who works, his wage is not reckoned as a favor, but as what is due. But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is reckoned as righteousness, just as David also speaks of the blessing upon the man to whom God reckons righteousness apart from works”

(Romans 4:4-6, NASB).

Occult Influence

Kurt Koch cites a German Rosicrucian pamphlet, *Meissterung des Lebens* which reveals its occultic teachings.

Things are made even clearer elsewhere in the booklet. The page is entitled: “The secret World Within Us. Abilities which we know of and Ought to Use.”

What abilities are these?

[1] “By touching letters and other objects we can become the recipients of painful messages.” This is psychometric, a form of extrasensory perception.

[2] “Thoughts or sense-impressions can be transmitted at a distance.” This is an occult form of mental suggestion.

[3] “Our consciousness can suddenly see far-off places and events.” This is clairvoyance by means of psychic powers.

[4] “Some people reveal their true character by magnetic radiation.” This is the spiritists’ idea of the so-called “aura.”

In this booklet *Meisterung des Lebens* therefore, the Order of rosicrucians encourages its members to take up psychic and occultic practices (Kurt Koch, *Occult ABC*, Grand Rapids, MI: Int. Publs., n.d., p.193).

Rosicrucianism does not call itself a religion but rather a secret society which

“expounds a system of metaphysical and physical and physical philosophy intended to awaken the dormant, latent faculties of the individual whereby he may utilize to a better advantage his natural talents and lead a happier and more useful life” (Who and What Are the Rosicrucians? Op. Cit., p. 3).

However, Rosicrucianism does not speak about religious matters and denies every central doctrine of the Christian faith. There are strong occultic teachings in rosicrucianism, something the Bible soundly condemns, Like Freemasonry, Rosicrucianism holds many of its practices in secret which is in contrast to Christianity, which emphasizes the open and public nature of its proclamation.

One who desires to serve Jesus Christ and his kingdom has no business belonging to the rosicrucian Order, working in darkness. Rather he should shout the message of Jesus Christ from the roof tops, as the Bible exhorts us: What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light, and what you hear whispered in your ear, proclaim upon the housetops (Matthew 10:27.NASB) **Rosicrucianism checklist**

1. Jesus was a Gentile man (Matthew 1:18) who did not die on a cross (John 19:32,33) but retired to a Carmel monastery.
2. By our own conscious effort we must attain to spiritual enlightenment and ultimately to immortality.
3. All sacred writings have some truth in them.

Other points

The claim is the rosicrucianism is not a religion but their own leaflets are full of examples of Eastern meditation and Buddhist worship etc. There are strong occultic influence including the use of a witchcraft oath in he initiation ritual. Many of the meetings are in secret with secret signs of recognition.

CHAPTER 11

TRANSCENDENTAL MEDITATION

The founder of TM Mahesh Prasad Warma, later known as Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, was born in India around 1910. After graduating from Allahabad University in 1942

with a degree in physics, Mahesh became the disciple of the Indian religious leader Guru Dev. It was Guru Dev who instructed Maharishi to devise a meditation technique from the Vedes (part of the Hindu scripture).

The Maharishi (as he is referred to) was devoted to fulfilling the plan of Guru Dev in bringing his teachings to the world. In 1958 Maharishi founded the spiritual Regeneration Movement. In India He came to America the following year and set up his organization while spreading the gospel of Guru Dev. Today, several million people in the United States and around the world have been taught the Maharishi's meditation techniques, said to be nonreligious, although thoroughly Hindu.

The Claim of TM

How would you like to have your health improved, your self-image and productivity increased, and your intelligence and creativity heightened without stress or tension?

According to its advertisements, these are some of the ways TM will benefit individuals. Allegedly all this can be done within any religious or non-religious system since TM supposedly has no religious basis. Moreover, TM has developed some very admirable goals to accomplish this in the lives of people by setting up nationwide centers.

Under a World Plan, 350 teaching centers of the science of Creative Intelligence have been founded in the largest cities throughout the United States and the world. In fact, resolutions drawn up by the Maharishi and promoting TM have been adopted by legislatures throughout the country.

TM can appeal to all segments of society, including the famous (such as the Beatles in the mid-60's), the counter-culture, the business community and the intelligentsia.

Stanford law professor John Kaplan testifies, "I use it the way I'd use a product of our technology to overcome nervous tension. It's a non-chemical tranquilizer with no unpleasant side effects" (Time Magazine, October 30, 1975).

TM, however, is not a neutral discipline that can be practiced without harm to the individual. In actuality, TM is a Hindu meditation technique that attempts to unite the mediator with Brahman, the Hindu concept of God.

The Religious Nature of TM

Despite claims to the contrary, TM is religious in nature. The following is a translation of the Puja, the initiation ceremony read in Sanskrit by the TM instructor.

Puja

Whether pure or impure, whether purity or impurity is permeating everywhere, whoever opens himself to the expanded vision of unbounded awareness gains inner and outer purity.

Invocation

To Lord Narayana, to lotus-born Brahma the Creator, to Vashita, to Shakti, and to his son, Parashar, to Vyasa, to Shukadava, to the great Guadapada, to Govinda, ruler among yogies, to his disciple, Shri Trotika and Varttika-Kara, to others to the tradition of our masters I bow down. To the abode of the wisdom of the Shrutis, Smiritis and Puranas, to the abode of kindness, to the personified glory of the Lord, to Shankara, emancipator of the Lord, I bow down. To Sharkaracharya, the redeemer, hailed as Jkrishna and Badarayana, to the commentator of the Brahma Sutras, I bow down again and again. At whose door the whole galaxy of gods pray for perfection day and night, adorned with immeasurable glory, preceptor of the whole world, having bowed down to him, we gain fulfillment. Skilled in dispelling the cloud of ignorance of the people, the gentle emancipator, Bramananda Sarawti – the supreme teacher, full of brilliance, him I bring to my awareness.

Offering

Offering the invocation to the lotus feet of Shri Guru Dev, I bow down.

Offering a seat to the lotus feet of Shri Guru Dev, I bow down.

Offering an ablution to the lotus feet of Shri Guru Dev, I bow down.

Offering a cloth to the lotus feet of Shri Guru Dev I bow down.

Offering sandalpaste to the lotus feet of Shri Guru Dev I bow down.

Offering rice to the lotus feet of Shri Guru Dev I bow down.

Offering a flower to the lotus feet of Shri Guru Dev I bow down Offering incense to the lotus feet of Shri Guru Dev I bow down.

Offering light to the lotus feet of Shri Guru Dev, I bow down.

Offering water to the lotus feet of Shri Guru Dev, I bow down.

Offering fruits to the feet of Shri Guru Dev, I bow down.

Offering betel leaf to the lotus feet of Shri Guru Dev, I bow down.

From the translation of the Puja, the religious nature of TM can clearly be seen. In 1977, a New Jersey federal court barred the teaching of TM in the schools of that state, the presiding judge concluding, “The teaching of SCI/TM and the Puja are religious in nature; no other inference is permissible or reasonable... although defendants have submitted well over 1500 pages of briefs, affidavits and deposition testimony in opposing plaintiffs” motion for summary judgement, defendants have failed to raise the slightest doubt as to the facts or as to the religious nature of the teaching of the Science of Creative Intelligence and the Puja. The teachings of SCI/

TM courses in New Jersey violates the establishment clause of the First Amendment, and its teaching must be enjoined”(United States District Court, District of New Jersey, Civil Action No. 76-341). Therefore the claim of the Maharishi and his followers as to the non-religious basis of TM has no basis in fact.

Is It Harmless?

“The TM program has no adverse side effects and can promote what pills cannot –

natural psychological growth” (Harold Bloomfield, mediator and psychiatrist, *Discovering Inner Energy and Overcoming Stress* p. 149).

There are, however some authorities that would disagree with Bloomfield’s statement.

That the dangers of meditation are considerable among the immature appear to be overlooked by these TM enthusiasts who meditation as a universal panacea (Una Kroll, M.D., *London Times*, June 30, 1973).

There are risks in cultivating altered states of consciousness. One of these risks...may be a permanent alienation from ordinary human attachments (Elsa First, child psychotherapist, *Frontiers of Consciousness*, p. 65, John White, ed.).

As a person enters or is in an ASC (altered state of consciousness), he often experiences fear of losing his grip on reality, and losing his self-control (Arnold M.

Ludwig, *Altered States of Consciousness*, p. 16, Charles Tart, ed.).

Jesus Christ

The Maharishi does not have much to say about Jesus Christ but when he does, he contradicts the Bible.

Due to not understanding the life of Christ and not understanding the message of Christ, I don't think Christ ever suffered or Christ could suffer... it's a pity that Christ is talked of in terms of suffering.. Those who count upon the suffering it is a wrong interpretation of the life of Christ and the message of Christ.. How could suffering be associated with the One who has been all joy, all bliss, who claims all that? It's only the misunderstanding of the life of Christ (Maharshi Mahesh Yogi, Meditations of Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, pp. 123-124).

It is the Maharishi who misunderstands the purpose of Christ's coming which was to die for the sins of the world. "The next day he saw Jesus coming to him, and said, Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29 NASB) and

"just as the son of man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many" (Matthew 20:28 NASB). Jesus Christ, contrary to the teaching of the Maharishi, suffered on the cross for our sins so we might receive forgiveness from God for our sins. His suffering was real.

Transcendental Meditation Checklist

1. Christ is a prophet who did not suffer, that's simply a misunderstanding.
2. TM is supposed to give inner calm and peace and eventually lead you to the Absolute, the source of All things. It transcends this material world and leads you to attain cosmic consciousness or complete God consciousness.
3. They use the Hindu Vedic scriptures including the Bhagvad-Gita.

Other Points

TM is taught as being “not a religion” but this is a blatant lie. In the initiation ceremony offering is made to Maharishi’s dead master, Guru Dev; a “puja” is sung invoking the presence of Hindu gods (Exodus 20:3) and finally a declaration is made of bowing down to Guru Dev. The mantra, a secret Sanskrit word, is given to be repeated over and over again (Matthew 6:7) which can often lead to a self-hypnotic state and an openness to receive from the occult realm.

CHAPTER 12

ISLAM

THE NATURE OF ISLAM

Arabs have taken a 7th Century religion and turned it into a religion.

In his famous two volume work, *Religion In the Middle East*, Prof. Arberry states that Islam is a “peculiarly Arabian religion” because, Islam, “as a religion and a culture we recognize as fundamentally one”.

Even Muslim scholars such as Dr. Ali Dashti, a past Foreign Minister of Iran, in his book, *Twenty Three Years: A study of the Prophetic Career of Muhammad*, carefully documents how Islam must be understood in terms of its essential identification with 7th century Arab culture.

Whenever Islam becomes the dominant religion in a country, it alters the culture of that nation and transforms it into the culture of 7th Century Arabia. As Egyptian born Victor Kahlil points out,

“Islam regulates every aspect of life, to the point that culture, religion and politics in a Muslim country are practically inseparable.”

In Islam there is no “separation of Mosque and state” that compares to the “separation of church and state” in most non-Islamic countries. Islamic religion and politics are one.

Muhammad took the Arab culture around him with all of its secular and sacred customs and made it into the religion of Islam.

Muhammad took the Arab culture around him with all of its secular and sacred customs and made it into the religion of Islam.

7TH CENTURY CULTURAL IMPOSITIONS

1. Arab Islamic Law

First, Muhammad took the political laws which governed 7th century Arabian tribes and made them into the laws of Allah.

In such tribes, the sheik, or chief, had absolute authority over those under him.

There was no concept of civil or personal rights in 7th century Arabia. The head of the tribe decided whether you lived or died.

This is why Islamic countries are always inevitably ruled by dictators or “strong men”

who rule as tyrants. There are 21 Arab nations and not one of them is a democracy.

Democracy has never flourished in Arab nations because of the religion of Islam.

Thus the more “secular” an Arab nation becomes, the more “democratic” it becomes.

The highly secularized Egypt is an example. But whenever Islamic fundamentalism regains dominance, the nation is plunged back into the „dark ages” of 7th century Arabia. Iran is a recent example of what happens to a nation when Islamic fundamentalism takes over the government.

The despots of the Ottoman Empire, and the dictators of Libya, Jordan, Iran, Iraq, Syria, Sudan, Yemen, etc., are merely examples of 7th century Arabian tyranny.

2. Civil Rights

Secondly, because there was no concept of personal freedom or civil rights in the tribal life of 7th century Arabia, Islamic law does not recognize freedom of speech, freedom of religion, freedom of assembly, or the freedom of the press. This is why non-Muslims, such as Christians or the Bahais, are routinely denied even the most basic civil rights.

In the most non-Islamic countries, people are free to protest what their government is doing. This is why thousands of people were even allowed to protest the Allied war against Iraq. They had the freedom of speech and assembly to do so.

3. Praying towards Mecca

Thirdly, a Muslim is required to pray five times a day. This, in and of itself, is not offensive. It is good for a man to pray.

However, the Muslim is told that he must pray toward Mecca, which is in Saudi Arabia, five times a day.

4. Pilgrim to Mecca

Fourthly, a Muslim is required, despite the hardship and great cost, to make a pilgrimage to Saudi Arabia to worship at the Kabah in Mecca at least once in his lifetime.

5. Dietary Laws

Fifthly, what foods were acceptable and not acceptable in 7th century Arabia are now mandated by Islam for all people. Thus what Muhammad ate and did not eat is made to be a divine law for all people.

6. The Woman's Veil

What an illiterate, nomadic tribeswoman wore in the desert of 7th century Arabia is mandated by Islam as the dress code for Muslim women today in every nation.

7. Women's Rights

The oppressive nature of Islam is seen most clearly in its denial of basic civil rights to women. The well-known Muslim scholar Ali Dashti states, *In pre-Islamic Arab society, the women did not have the status of independent persons, but were considered to be possessions of the men. All sorts of inhumane treatment of the women were permissible and customary.*

The Quran states in Sura 4:34

Men are the managers of the affairs of women... those you fear may be rebellious – admonish; banish them to their couches and beat them.

SUMMARY OF ISLAMIC BELIEFS

Reference page 366 of “Kingdom of the cults”

SECTS OF ISLAM

Reference page 365 of “Kingdom of the cults”

CHAPTER 13

THE CULT OF THE MOON GOD

The meaning of Islam

The word “Islam” was not revealed from heaven or invented by Muhammed. It is an Arabic word which originally referred to the attribute of manliness in which one would be heroic and brave in battle even unto death.

Islam did not originally mean “submission”. Instead, it referred to that strong attribute that characterised a desert warrior who would fight for his tribe even unto death. The word slowly developed into the meaning “submission”.

The Quran and violence

The Word Allah comes from the compound Arabic word “Al – ilah”

“Al” = “the”

“Ilah” = “god”

Astral Religions

In Arabia, the sun god was viewed as a female goddess and the moon as the male god.

As has been pointed out by many scholars such as Alfred Guillaume, the moon god was called by various names, one of which was Allah!

The Crescent Moon Symbol of the Moon God

The symbol of the worship of the moon god in Arabian culture and elsewhere throughout the Middle East was the crescent moon.

The Gods of the Quraysh

The Quraysh tribe into which Muhammad was born was particularly devoted to Allah, the moon god and especially to Allah's three daughters who were viewed as intercessors between them and Allah.

The literal Arabic name of Muhammad's father was Abd-Allah. His uncle's name was literally Obied-Allah.

Praying Towards Mecca

An Allah idol was set up at the Kabah along with all the other idols. The pagans prayed toward Mecca and the Kabah because that is where their gods were stationed.

It only made sense to them to face in the direction of their gods and then pray. Since the idols of their god were at Mecca, they prayed toward Mecca.

The worship of the moon god was far greater than the Allah worship of the moon.

In the field of comparative religions, it is understood that each of the major religions of mankind has its

own peculiar concept of deity. In other words, all religions do NOT worship the same God just under different names.

The sloppy thinking that would ignore the essential differences, which divide world religions, is an insult to the uniqueness of world religions.

Which of the world religions holds to the Christian concept of one eternal God in three persons? When the Hindu denies the personality of God, which religions agree with this? Obviously, all men do NOT worship the same God, gods or goddesses.

The Quran's concept of deity evolved out of the pre-Islamic pagan religion. It is so uniquely Arabian that it cannot be simply reduced to Jewish or Christian beliefs. It is rooted in pagan ideas of God.

THE GOD OF ISLAM

Allah and the God of the Bible Historic differences between the God of the Bible and the Allah of the Quran.

Knowable versus Unknowable.

According to the Bible, God is knowable. Jesus Christ came into this world that we might know God (John 17:3) But in the Quran, Allah is so transcendent and exalted that no man can ever personally know him.

Thus while according to the bible, man can come into a personal relationship with God, the allah of the Quran is so distant, so far off, so abstract, that no one can know him **Personal versus Non-personal**

The God of the Bible is spoken of as a personal being with intellect, emotion and will.

This is in contrast to Allah who is not to be understood as a person. This would lower him to the level of man according to Muslim theology.

Spiritual versus Non-spiritual

To the Muslim, the idea that Allah is a person or a spirit is blasphemous because this would demean the exalted One.

But that “God is a spirit” is one of the cornerstones of the biblical nature.

Trinitarian versus Unitarian

The God of the Bible is one God in three persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. This Trinity is not three gods but one God.

When we turn to the Quran, we find that it explicitly denies the Trinity. The Quran states that God is not a Father and Jesus is not the Son of God. Neither is the Holy Spirit to be viewed as God.

Limited versus Unlimited

The biblical God is limited by His own immutable and unalterable nature. Thus God cannot do anything and everything.

In Titus 1:2, we are told, “God cannot lie.” We are also told this in Heb. 6:18. Thus God can never act in such a way that it would contradict His divine nature (II Tim.2:13).

But when you turn to the Quran, you discover that Allah is not limited by anything.

He is not even limited by anything. He is not even limited by his own nature. Allah can do anything, any time, any place, anywhere with no limitations.

Trustworthy versus Capricious

Because the God of the Bible is limited by his own righteous nature and there are certain things He cannot do, he is completely consistent and trustworthy.

But when we turn to study the actions of Allah in the Quran, we discover that he is totally capricious and untrustworthy. He is not bound by his nature or his word.

Love of God versus No Love of God

The love of God is the chief attribute of the biblical God as revealed in such places as John 3:16. God has feelings for his creatures, especially man.

But when we turn to the Quran, we do not find the love of God presented as the chief attribute of God.

Instead, the transcendence of Allah is his chief attribute.

Neither does Allah “have feelings” toward man. The love of Allah is foreign to Islamic teaching. That would reduce Allah to being a mere man – which is blasphemous to a Muslim.

Grace versus Works

Lastly, the Bible speaks much of the grace of God in providing a free salvation for man through a Savior who acts as an intercessor between God and man (I Tim. 2:5) Yet, in the Quran there is no concept of the “grace” of Allah. There is no savior or intercessor according to the Quran.

In conclusion, when you examine the attributes of the God who has revealed Himself in the Bible to the Allah who is described in the Quran, they are not one and the same God.

In giving this material in a lecture format, one person responded that he believed that Islam and Christianity worship the same God because “they both worship only one God”.

What he failed to understand is that monotheism in and of itself does not tell us anything about the identity of the one God who is to be worshipped. In other words, it is not enough to say there is only one God if you have the wrong God.

Merely arguing that there is one God does not automatically mean that the one God you chose to worship happens to be the right one.

Is Allah In The Bible?

In a conversation with an Ambassador from a Muslim country, I pointed out that the name “Allah” was an Arabic word that had to do with the worship of the moon god in pre-Islamic Arabia.

As such, this Arabic word “Allah” could not be found in the Hebrew Old Testament or in the Greek New Testament.

First he claimed that the name Allah was found in the biblical word “allelujah.” The

“alle” in the first part of the word was actually “Allah” according to him!

I pointed out to him that the Hebrew word “allelujah” is not a compound Hebrew word. That is, it is not made up of two words. It is one single Hebrew word which means “Praise to Yahweh.”

Also, the name of God is in the last party of the word, “jah,” which has reference to Yahweh or Jehovah. The name Allah simply cannot be found in that word.

Secondly, he then proceeded to tell me that when Jesus was on the cross and he cried out, “Eli, Eli,” he was actually saying “Allah, Allah.”

But this is not true either. The Greek New Testament at this point gives us the Aramaic, not the Arabic, translation of a portion of Psalm 22:1. Jesus was saying, “My God, My God, why has Thou forsaken me?”

It is a far cry to go from “Eli, Eli” all the way to “Allah, Allah.” It simply cannot be done.

CHAPTER 14

THE PROPHET OF ISLAM

Birth and Early Life

Mohammad was born in A.D. 570 in Mecca to Abdullah and Aminah. He was born into the Quraysh tribe which was in control of the city of Mecca.

The Quraysh tribe was the custodian of the Kaaba and of the religious worship centered around it. He was a normal Arab boy who enjoyed talking with those who travelled in the caravans. The only thing that was unusual with his childhood was that he began to experience religious visitations.

Early Visions

Muhammad claimed that a heavenly being had split open his stomach and then stirred his insides around and then sewed him back up!

One possible explanation of these early religious episodes has to do with the fact that many Middle East scholars have felt that Muhammad was afflicted with either some kind of mental problem or the medical problem of epilepsy.

Muhammad's Mother

His mother, Aminah, was of an excitable nature and often claimed that she was visited by spirits, or jinns. She also at times claimed to have visions and religious experiences. Muhammad's mother was involved in what we call today the "occult arts" and this basic orientation seems to have been inherited by her son, Muhammad.

The Possibility of Epilepsy

Scholars suggest that Muhammad's early visions were the result of a combination of epileptic seizures and an over active imagination.

Early Muslim tradition records the fact that when Muhammad was about to receive a

"revelation" from Allah, he would often fall down on the ground, his body would begin to jerk, his eyes would roll backward, and he would perspire profusely. They would often cover him with a blanket during such episodes.

It was while Muhammad was in such a trance like state that he would receive divine visitations. After the trance, he would arise and then proclaim what had been handed down to him.

In the Arab culture of Muhammad's day, epileptic seizures were interpreted as a religious sign of either demonic possession or divine visitation.

Muhammad initially considered both options as a possible interpretation of his experience. At first he worried about the possibility that he was demon possessed.

This led him to attempt to commit suicide. He was stopped by his devoted wife who persuaded him that he was a good man and that he could not possibly be demon possessed.

It should be noted that to speak of the possibility that Muhammad may have had epileptic seizures is very offensive to Muslims, and even considered blasphemous.

However, just as Muslims are free to interpret them as divine visitations, non-Muslims are free to interpret them as epileptic seizures, demon possession, an over active imagination, fraud, religious hysteria, or whatever else gives them an adequate explanation of what Muhammad was experiencing.

In McClintock and Strong's Encyclopedia we read the following:

“Muhammad was endowed with a nervous constitution and a lively imagination. It was not at all unnatural for him to come after a time to regard himself as actually called of God to build up his people in a new faith. Muhammad, as we gather from the oldest and most trustworthy narratives, was an epileptic, and as such, was considered to be possessed of evil spirits. At first, he believed the sayings, but gradually he came to the conclusion, confirmed by his friends, that demons had no power over so pure and pious a man as he was, and he conceived the idea that he was not controlled by evil spirits, but that he was visited by angels whom he, disposed to hallucinations, a vision, an audition, afflicted with the morbid state of body and mind, saw in dreams. Or even while awake, conceived he saw. What seemed to him good and true after such epileptic attacks, he esteemed revelation in which he, at least in the first stage of his pathetic course, firmly believed and which imparted to his pensive, variable character, the necessary courage and endurance all mortifications and perils.”

Religious Background

The Quraysh tribe was particularly addicted to the cult of the moon god, Allah. They had a peculiar fondness for his three daughters, who were called Al-Lat, Al-Uzza, and Manat.

The fact that Muhammad's father was named Abdullah (lit. Abd-Allah) and his uncle Obeidullah (lit. Obeid-Allah) not only proves the pre-Islamic use of the word "Allah"

but also that Muhammad's family was deeply involved in the worship of the moon god, Allah, and his three daughters.

Muhammad grew up in Mecca where the Kabah shrine had at least 360 idols and the sacred magical black stone, which was considered the "good luck charm" for the Quraysh tribe.

He witnessed pilgrims coming to the Mecca every year where they would worship at the Kabah by running around it seven times, kissing the black stone, and then running down to a nearby Wady to throw stones at the devil.

It is no surprise to find that most of the elements of his religious upbringing were transferred into the religion of Islam and did not come from a "new" revelation from Allah to Muhammad.

His First Wife

His life was uneventful as a young man. At the age of 25, he was tending a caravan (explain „caravan“). The woman who owned it was 15 years older than he was and a widow. She fell in love with him and married him. Together they had two sons, though both died young, and four daughters.

One of the daughters married Uthman, who became the Caliph who later, standardized the text of the Quran.

After he married the wealthy widow, Muhammad lived a life of leisure and his duties were limited to running the family produce stand in the market.

His Call to be a Prophet

While the term “prophet” was used in the hope that the Jews would accept Muhammad as the next prophet, the term “apostle” was likewise used in the hope that the Christians would acknowledge him as the next apostle.

Four Conflicting Versions

The Quran gives us four conflicting accounts of Muhammad's call to be a prophet.

We are first told in Sura 53:2 and Sura 81:19-24, that Allah personally appeared to Muhammad in the form of a man and that Muhammad saw and heard him.

We are then told in Sura 16:102 and Sura 26:192-194 that Muhammad's call was issued by the "the Holy Spirit".

The third account of his original call is given in Sura 15:8 where we are told that "the angels" were the ones who came down to Muhammad and announced that Allah had called him to be a prophet.

This account was later amended in Sura 2:97 so that it was only the angel Gabriel who issued the call to Muhammad and handed down the Quran to him.

The Concept of Islamic Revelation

The word “revelation” in Arabic literally means “handed down.” It means that the Quran did not come “through” or “by” any man, Muhammad included. The Quran only came “to” man, in this case, Muhammad.

Thus there are no human authors of the Quran. Allah speaks directly to man and man is the receiver and not the originator of the Quran.

Doubts and Suicide

After this initial religious experience in which he felt that he had been called to be a prophet and an apostle, Muhammad began to have grave doubts about his sanity. In particular, he was frightened that he was demon possessed.

The bodily characteristics connected with his trances seemed, even to Muhammad, to parallel those in his community who would fall down in fits. It was believed that they were possessed by devils.

He became so depressed that he decided to commit suicide. But on his way to the place where he was going to kill himself, he fell once again into a seizure.

Opposition Begins

At one point, the hostility against Muhammad was such that people in Mecca had laid siege to the section of the city where Muhammad lived and he faced a very difficult situation.

The Satanic Verses

In order to appease his pagan family members and the members of the Quraysh tribe, he decided that the best thing he could do was to admit that it was perfectly proper to pray to and to worship the three daughters of Allah – Al-Lat, Al-uzza, and Manat.

This led to the famous “satanic verses” in which Muhammad, in a moment of weakness and supposedly under the inspiration of Satan, according to Muslim authorities, succumbed to the temptation to appease the pagan mobs in Mecca. (Sura 53:19).

Muhammad Gets Rebuked

When his disciples at Medina heard of Muhammad's "fall" into polytheism, they rushed to him with rebukes and counsel.

Muhammad would later claim that Gabriel himself had come down from heaven and rebuked him for allowing Satan to inspire him to concede to the Meccan worship of the daughters of Allah.

Forced to Flee

Because of the ridicule and the hostility that was now growing, he left Mecca and went to Ta'if.

Finding no success or converts in Ta'if, he decided to return to Mecca.

On his way back to Mecca, according to the Quran in suran 46:29-35; 72:1-28, Muhammad preached to and converted the jinn or the genies!

According to the Quran, the jinns in turn preached Islam to the people. Thus, the male and female spirits, who inhabited the trees, the rocks, and the waters of Arabia were now Muslims and under the control of Muhammad..

Flight to Medina

Muhammad once again left Mecca and this time moved to Medina where his preaching was received.

While at Medina, Muhammad realized that his family and tribe would not give up their worship of idols unless they were forced by physical violence to do so.

Muhammad's Personal Life

In terms of his personal life, Muhammad had two great weaknesses. The first was that of greed. By looting caravans and Jewish settlements, he had amassed fabulous wealth for himself, his family, and his tribe.

Secondly, his next greatest weakness was women. Although in the Quran he would limit his followers to having four wives, he himself took more than four wives and concubines.

The question of the number of women with whom Muhammed was sexually involved either as wives, concubines or devotees was made a point of contention by the Jews in Muhammad's day.

The Quran in Sura 4:3 forbids the taking of more than four wives. To take anymore would be sinful.

The Women In Muhammad's Harem

Khadija

Sawda

Aesha (8 years old)

Hafsa

Zaynab (of Jahsh)

Safiya

Maymuna (of Hareth)

Fatema

Hend

Asma (of Saba)

Zaynab (of Khozayma)

Habla

Asma (of Noman)

Mary (the Christian)

Omm Sharik

Maymuna (not of Hareth)

Zaynab (a 3rd one)

Khawla

Several observations need to be given about the above list.

First, the first 16 women were wives.

Second, numbers 17 and 18 were slaves or concubines.

Third, the last four women were neither wives or slaves but devout Muslim women who “gave” themselves to satisfy Muhammad’s sexual desires.

Fourth, Zaynab of Jahsh was originally Muhammad’s adopted son’s wife. The fact that Muhammad took her for himself has been problematic to many people, Muslims included.

Fifth, Aesha was only eight or nine years old when Muhammad took her to his bed.

This facet of Muhammad’s sexual appetite is particularly distressing to Westerners.

Muhammad’s Death

The traditional view is that his death was due to poisoning by a Jewish woman whose relatives were murdered in one of Muhammad’s pogroms against the Jews.

It is also true from the early biographers that Muhammad had no premonition of his own death. Thus he had made no arrangements for a successor. He had not set up any kind of governmental bureaucracy to run things in event of his death.

Neither had he gathered or put together his various revelations into what is now known as the Quran. His death was sudden and gave him no time whatsoever to arrange his own affairs.

This is why Islam was soon to break apart into warring sects such as the Shiites versus the Sunis. Chaos followed because Muhammad had not clearly spelled out what was to be done after his death.

Conclusion

The amazing genius and forceful personality of Muhammad enabled him to take a minor pagan cult of the worship of the moon god Allah and turn it into the second largest religion in the world!

CHAPTER 15

MUSLIM AND JESUS CHRIST

The life of Muhammad will be drawn only from the Quran just as the life of Jesus will be drawn from the New Testament.

1.1 Prophecy

Micah 5:2 gives us the very name of the town in which the Messiah would be born. On the day Christ died, no less than 33 Old Testament prophecies were fulfilled. The coming of Christ was preceded by the preaching of John the Baptist, in the spirit and power of Elijah, according to the prophcy in Isaiah 40 and Malachi 4.

This is in stark contrast to the coming of Muhammad whose coming was not predicted by pagan soothsayers, Old Testament prophets, or New Testament apostles.

The vain attempt of some modern Muslims to claim that when Jesus predicted the coming of a Comforter in John chapters 14,15 and 16, that this had reference to Muhammad, falls to the ground when one reads John 14:26 where the Comforter is specifically identified as the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send in the name of Jesus Christ.

1.2 Births

Second, the birth of Jesus Christ was miraculous in that he was conceived by the Holy Spirit in the womb of the Virgin Mary.

The Quran and orthodox Islam fully accept the virgin birth of Jesus. It is only in modern times that we

find some small heretical Muslim groups who deny and ridicule the doctrine of the virgin birth of Jesus.

They do this out of a reaction to the fact that there was nothing miraculous or supernatural about the birth of Muhammad. He was the natural product of the sexual union of his father and mother.

1.3 Sinlessness

In Sura 18:110, Muhammad is commanded by Allah, “Say, I am but a man like yourselves.”

Those Muslims who claim that Muhammad was sinless just like Jesus have failed to note Sura 40:55, where Allah told Muhammad to repent of his sins!

1.4 Miracles

During his lifetime, Jesus did many great and mighty miracles. But according to the Quran in dozens of places such as Sura 17:91-95, Muhammad never performed a single miracle. He did not heal the sick, raise the dead, cast out demons, or rule the wind and the waves. He had no more power than any normal man.

1.5 The Love of God

Fifth, according to the New Testament, Jesus preached the love of God. He was the greatest example of God’s love in that,

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. (John 3:16) In contrast, we do not have any record in the Quran of Muhammad ever preaching the love of God. As a matter of fact, God’s love for man or man’s love for God do not play any significant role in the preaching of Muhammad, the Quran or the religion of Islam.

Whereas Christianity can point to the coming of Christ as the greatest proof and example that God loves mankind, Islam cannot point to anything that reveals the love of God.

1.6 Human and Divine Nature

According to the New Testament, Jesus Christ was unique in that he was divine as well as human. This is why Jesus is called “God” in John 1:1, 18; 20:28; Acts 20:28; Rom. 5:9; Tit.

2:13; II Pet. 2:1 etc.

When we turn to Muhammad, we find that he was only a man.

1.7 On Beauty of Speech

When you study the speeches of Jesus as given in the gospels, for example, the Sermon on the Mount, you find that Jesus was the greatest speaker who ever lived. Even His enemies had to confess that no man ever spoke as He spoke.

But when you turn to the ecstatic confused speeches of Muhammad as found in the Quran, you do not find anything outstanding. There is nothing which matches the beauty, substance, or style of the way that Jesus preached the gospel during His lifetime.

1.8 A High Moral Example

The way Jesus lived and the way He was willing to die for sinners, has given us a high moral example to follow.

But when you turn to the example of Muhammad, you do not find a high moral example.

You find him involved in many acts which must be deemed as immoral and unjust.

1.9 Killing and Robbing

Jesus never killed or robbed anyone. If He had done so, this surely would have been brought up during His trial. When we turn and look at the life of Muhammad we find that he clearly killed and robbed people in the name of Allah according to the Quran.

1.10 Coercion

Jesus never used physical violence to force people to believe His message or to accept Him as the Messiah.

As a matter of fact, when Peter took out his sword, Jesus told him to put it back in its sheath, because the thought of physical persuasion through violence was not the way of his kingdom (Matt 26:51-54).

But when we turn to the example of Muhammad, we find that he frequently used physical violence to force people to give up their idols and to accept Islam.

1.11 Directing Disciples To Kill

Jesus never instructed His followers by way of command, example, or precept to kill in His name, to rob in His name, or to subdue enemies in His name.

But Muhammad did. He taught his disciples by example, command, and precept that they could and

should kill and rob in Allah's name and force people to submit to Islam.

1.12 On taking another Man's Wife

Jesus did not take any man's wife.

But Muhammad did. He even took the wife of his adopted son to be his own wife.

1.13 Child Brides

Jesus could not be described as a child molester or someone who was sexually involved with young children.

But this is the only description that one can give of Muhammad's marriage to an eight year old little girl who was still playing with her dolls according to the Hadith.

1.14 Unclean Foods

Jesus relinquished Jewish dietary laws for His followers and made all foods clean (Mark 7:14-23). Muhammad, on the other hand, maintained the dietary laws which were in usage in his day and thus his followers are forbidden to eat pork or drink wine.

1.15 On Dying for Others

When Jesus Christ died, he died for the sins of his people in order to deliver them from the wrath of God (I Cor. 15:3-4) but when Muhammad died, he died for his own sins. He did not die for anyone.

1.16 Resurrection

Jesus did not remain dead but he conquered sin, Hell and the grave and rose again on the third day bodily and physically in the same body that had hung on the cross. Just as He died for our sins, he arose again according to the Scriptures for our justification.

But when Muhammad died, he stayed dead. He did not rise from the dead. Muhammad is dead while Jesus Christ is alive.

1.17. Ascension.

Jesus ascended bodily into Heaven. This was witnessed by the disciples in Acts 1:9-11. But Muhammad did not ascend into Heaven. The Quran never states that he ascended.

1.18. Heavenly Intercession

Jesus is now in Heaven as our intercessor and Saviour, the only mediator between God and man. But Muhammad is not an intercessor or saviour. As a matter of fact, the Quran states that there is no intercessor or saviour (Sura 6:51, 7; 10:3, etc.). You have to save yourself.

1.19 Worship

In the New Testament, Jesus was worshipped as a living Saviour (John 20:28). Muslims will admit that Muhammad should not be worshipped by anyone because he was only a man.

1.20 Personal Relationship

According to the New Testament, man can have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ as He enters into their heart through His Spirit at conversion. This is why Christians talk about their love of Jesus.

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On the other hand, what Muslim speaks of Muhammad in terms of loving him? There is no personal relationship possible with Muhammad. He is dead!

1.21 Returning to Earth

Jesus will return to resurrect and judge all men. Even orthodox Muslims will often admit that this is clearly true. But, at the same time, it must be stated that there is no teaching in the Quran that says that Muhammad will return one day or that he will resurrect or judge anyone.

As all the standard reference works point out, there were fabrications made by embarrassed Muslims who were faced with the rather obvious fact that Muhammad was inferior to Jesus Christ.

CONCLUSION

To any rational mind who examines the differences between the biblical Jesus and the quranic Muhammad, it is obvious that Jesus and Muhammad did not both come from the same God. They did not live or preach like each other. On all the essential issues they were poles apart.

CHAPTER 16

THE SACRED BOOK OF ISLAM

The Order of the Suras

As you pick up the Quran, you will discover that the 114 Suras, or revelations, given to Muhammad are not laid out in the chronological order in which Muhammad received them.

If this were so, then the first Sura would be the first revelation Muhammad received and the last Sura would be the last revelation.

Neither is the Quran laid out in terms of a progressive historical narrative in which we follow the life, actions, and teachings of Muhammad from beginning to end.

We are confronted instead with a jumbled mass of Suras which defy any natural organisation according to chronology or logic.

The way that the Quran was put together by those left behind after Muhammad died was to do so on the basis of size. Thus the Quran is arranged from the biggest Sura down to the smallest Sura irrespective of the chronology in which an individual Sura was given.

Mass Confusion

In the Quran, one will often find that what is clearly commanded in the first part of the Quran is **“abrogated”, i.e., contradicted**, by something that is written in the latter part of the Quran.

When one tries to construct the life and teaching of Muhammad in a chronological order, he finds himself jumping all over the Quran from one Sura to the other, irrespective of the order in which the Suras are placed in the Quran.

This, of course, causes tremendous confusion to anyone who attempts to understand the Quran as a piece of literature.

Date The Suras

Most scholars believe that the shortest Suras were no doubt the first ones Muhammad preached and the longer Suras were the last. As time went on, the Suras would get longer as he had more to say.

But there is at times a mixture of Meccan and Medinan revelations in the same Sura, so that even size is not an infallible guide in dating the Suras.

First Person speech

In terms of the way in which the Quran is written, the Muslims claim that the Quran is always in the first person speech in which Allah himself is speaking to man.

Such a claim, alas, does not fit the text of the Quran. There are many sections in which it is clear that Allah is not speaking, but someone else.

Endless Repetition

Another problem with the Quran is that since it was intended to be memorized by those who were illiterate and uneducated and thus could not read it, it engages in the principal of endless repetition of the same material over and over again.

Thus one will frequently encounter the same stories the same revelations in the Quran. While this is no doubt helpful to the illiterate masses often found in the Muslim world, it does tend to irritate educated people.

The Right “Feel” of being complete

The last observation about the Quran as a whole is that it does not have the feeling that it is complete.

When you pick up the Bible, you find that it begins at the BEGINNING of all things, the creation of the heavens and the earth (Gen 1:1) As you proceed through the Bible, you learn in chronological order about the Fall of man into sin, the great Flood, the Tower of Babel, the calling of Abraham, the patriarchs, the calling of Moses, the Exodus, the building up of the nation, the ultimate captivity of the nation, the people going into exile, their return under Cyrus, the rebuilding of Israel, the prediction of the coming of the Messiah, the coming of the Messiah, His life, death, resurrection, and the beginning of the church age. Then when you come to the last book of the Bible, you read concerning the END of the universe.

Thus the Bible gives us a sense of wholeness or completeness for it begins at the BEGINNING and runs all the way through to the END of history.

No Beginning or End

But when you turn to the Quran, because of its jumbled and disordered condition, you are not left with that sense or feeling of completeness.

You are, as it were, left hanging after each Sura because there is no logical connection from one to the other.

For example, one Sura will deal with some pedantic matter such as Allah wants Muhammad's wife to stop arguing and bickering in his presence while the next Sura attacks the idols of the Arabians.

Thus you are left with a feeling of incompleteness and dissatisfaction that you are not getting the whole story.

Conclusion

If one were to contrast the 66 books of the bible written over a period of several thousand years by at least 40 different authors with the Quran which came through one man, Muhammad, during his lifetime, there would be no contest as to which was the superior literature.

The fact that the Quran claims that it is a continuation of the Old and New Testament is actually damaging to the Muslim cause, because the Quran, in the final analysis, simply does not fit the literary style or structure that is found in the Old and New Testament.

To go from the Bible to the Quran is to go from the superior to the inferior, from the greater to the lesser, from the real to the counterfeit.

CHAPTER 17

MUSLIM CLAIMS FOR THE QURAN

6 False Claims about the Quran.

1. Perfect Arabic

Muslims claim that the text of the Quran is written in perfect Arabic in every respect because Allah wrote it in heaven.

Since whatever Allah does must be perfect, the Quran must be in perfect Arabic. This claim is found in Sura 12:2, 13:37; 41:2,44.

2. A Table in Heaven

Allah wrote the Quran in heaven on a stone tablet the size of a table before it was handed down to Muhammed.

3. No inconsistent Readings

It is further claimed that because the Quran is perfect, there are no inconsistent readings, lost verses or conflicting manuscripts on the text of the Quran.

4. The Originals Found

Many Muslims have told us with absolute confidence that the “original manuscript” of the Quran which Muhammad himself gathered and constructed is still in existence and all Qurans come from this one single original manuscript.

5. No Translations

Because the Quran is in the language of Allah, no mortal man can translate it into another language.

6. Unique Literature

No one can write any literature like that found in the Quran. (Sura 10:37-38) **ARE THESE CLAIMS TRUE? (NO THEY ARE NOT)**

(Counter Claims – CC)

cc1

Not Perfect Arabic

First of all, the Quran is not in perfect Arabic. It contains many grammatical errors, such as in Sura 2:177, 192; 3:59; 4:162; 5:69; 7:160; 13:28; 20:66; 63:10, etc.

Secondly, there are parts of the Quran that are not even in the Arabic language!

cc2 Many inconsistent Readings

This is exactly the case with the text of the Quran. There are many conflicting readings on the text of the Quran.

cc3 Some Verses Missing

Some of the original verses of the Quran were lost. For example, the Sura Al-Saff had 200 verses in the days of Ayesha, but by the time Uthman standardized the text of the Quran, it had only 52 verses left. A total of 128

had been lost and they have never been recovered.

Other Suras were lost as the individuals who retained them in their living memory died in battle before they could be committed to writing.

The Shiite Muslims claim that Uthman left out 25% of the original verses in the Quran for political reasons.

That there are verses which were left out of Uthman's version of the Quran is universally recognized.

John Burton's book, The Collection of the Quran, which was published by Cambridge University, documents how such verses got lost.

Burton states concerning the Muslim claim that the Quran is perfect : The Muslim account of the history of the Quran Texts are a mass of confusion, contradiction and inconsistencies.

cc4 Changes in the Quran

One interesting way that some of the original verses of the Quran were lost is that a follower of Muhammad named Abdollah Sarh would make suggestions to Muhammad about rephrasing, adding or subtracting to the Suras.

Muhammad often did as Sarh suggested.

Dashti explains what happened.

Abdollah renounced Islam on the ground that the revelations, if from God, could not be changed at the prompting of a scribe such as he.

After his apostasy he went to Mecca and joined the Qurayshites.

Some verses “abrogated”

In another process, called “abrogation,” verses which are contradictory to Muslim faith and practice have been removed from the text. The “satanic verses” in which Muhammad approved of the worship of the three goddesses, the daughters of Allah were removed for this reason.

No originals

As to the claim that the original manuscript of the Quran is still in existence, it is noteworthy that there was no single “manuscript” of the Quran.

The Shorter Encyclopedia of Islam comments:

One thing only is certain and is openly recognized by tradition, namely, that there was not in

existence any collection of revelations in final form, because, as long as he was alive, new revelations were being added to the earlier ones.

cc5 Plenty of Translations

As to the Muslim claim that the Quran cannot be translated, it is amazing to us that the English Muslim, Mohammed Pickthal could state, “The Koran cannot be translated”, in the very introduction to his excellent translation of it!

The claim that the Quran cannot be translated is clearly refuted by the existence of many such translations.

cc6 The Fingerprints of Muhammad

Since Muslims claim that the Quran was “handed down” from Heaven, and that Muhammad cannot be viewed as its human author, it is interesting to point out that, according to the Concise Encyclopaedia of Islam, the Arabic of the Quran is in the dialect and vocabulary of someone who was a member of the Quraysh tribe living in the city of Mecca. Thus Muhammad’s fingerprints can be found all over the Quran.

Conclusion

The true history of the collection and the creation of the text of the Quran reveals that the Muslim claims are indeed fictitious and not in accord with the facts. The 93

fingerprints of Muhammad can be seen on every page as a witness to its human origin.

CHAPTER 18

A SCIENTIFIC EXAMINATION OF THE QURAN

Mistakes

1. How many days of creation

The very first problem in the Quran concerns the number of days it took God to create the world.

The Quran says that it took God EIGHT days to create the world when you add up all the days mentioned in the Sura 41:9,10,12 (4 days + 2 days + 2 days = 8days) But it only took SIX days according to the Bible (Gen 1:31). Thus the Quran begins its contradiction of the Bible in the very first chapter of the Bible.

In Sura 7:51 and 10:3 of the Quran, it agrees with the biblical account that the creation of the world only took six days. Thus the Quran is in deep trouble either way.

2. Noah, the Flood and His sons

According to the Bible, all three sons of Noah went into the ark with him and were saved from the Flood (Gen 7:1,7,13).

Yet the Quran in Sura 11:32-48 says that one of the sons refused to go into the ark and was drowned in the flood!

Sura 11:44 also claims that the Ark came to rest on top of Mt. Judi while the Bible says Mt. Ararat.

These contradictions cannot be clearer.

3. Mistakes About Abraham

The Quran makes many errors concerning Abraham:

- a. The Quran says that his father's name was Azar but the Bible says his name was Terah (Sura 6:74).
- b. He did not live and worship in the valley of Mecca (Sura 14:37) but in Hebron according to the Bible.
- c. It was his son Isaac that he went to sacrifice and not Ishmael as the Quran says. (Sura 37:100-112) d. He had eight sons and not just two as the Quran claims.
- e. He had three wives and not two as the Quran says.
- f. He did not build the Kabah even though the Quran says so in Sura 2:125-127.
- g. He was not thrown into a fire by Nimrod as the Quran claims in Sura 21:68-69 and 9:69.

This last error is most serious because it reveals a very frequent problem in the Quran.

Nimrod lived many centuries before Abraham. Thus they did not live at the same time. How then did Nimrod manage to throw Abraham into a fire when Nimrod had been dead for centuries?

4 The Quran Violates Both Historical Chronology of Biblical and Secular History.

The 7th Century Arab and Muhammad in particular, did not think in terms of linear time, i.e. historical chronology.

In the West, people think of history in terms of a straight line with a beginning, a middle, and an end.

In the East people think of time in terms of never ending cycles and not a straight line.

Evidently, in the Middle East at the time of Muhammad, Arabs did not have any settled conception of time.

Arab stories and legends would put together places, people and events in one present vision as if they were all living at the same time!

This is why throughout the Quran, Nimrod and Abraham, Haman and Moses, Mary and Aaron, etc. were all pictured as living and working together.

This is why the Quran can put together the Flood and Moses, the Tower of Babel and Pharoah, etc., as if all those things happened at the same time.

5. Mistakes About Joseph

The Quran makes the mistake of saying that the man who bought Joseph was named Aziz (Sura 12:21 ff) when his name was really Potiphas (Gen 37:36) 96

6. Biblical Characters

The Quran makes the same kind of error when it refers to Goliath as Jalut, Korah as Karun, Saul as Talut, Enoch as Idris, Ezekiel and Dhu'l-Khifl, John the Baptist and Yahya, Jonah as Yunus, etc.

Muhammad did not have access to the Bible because an Arabic translation of the Bible was not in existence at that time. Thus he frequently got the names, events and chronology all wrong.

7. Mistakes About Moses

The Quran contains many errors concerning Moses.

It was not Pharaoh's wife who adopted Moses as the Quran claims in Sura 28:8-9. It was actually Pharaoh's daughter (Exo.2:5)

b. Noah's flood did not take place in Moses day (Sura 7:136 cf, 7:59f). This goof cannot be easily swept aside!

c. The Quran says that Haman lived in Egypt during the time of Moses and worked for Pharaoh building the tower of Babel! (Sura 27:4-6; 28:38; 29:39; 40:23-24, 36-37) But Haman actually lived in Persia and was in the service of King Ahauerus. See the Book of Esther for details.

This is a very serious error, as it not only contradicts the Bible, but secular history as well.

d. Crucifixion was not used in the time of Pharaoh although the Quran says so in Sura 7:124.

8 Mistakes about Mary

The Quran contains many errors concerning Mary, the mother of Jesus:

a. Her father's name was not Imram (Sura 66:12)

b. She did not give birth to Jesus under a Palm tree but in a stable (Sura 19:22 vs Luke 2:1-20) c. Muhammad confused the mother of Jesus with the Miriam who was the sister of Moses and Aaron (Sura 19:28). This is a very serious error as it reveals that Muhammad had no understanding of the different time periods for biblical figures.

d. He clearly made up fraudulent speeches and miracles for her in Sura 19:23-26.

Zacharias could not speak the entire time until his son was born, not just for three days as the Quran claims. (Sura 19:10 vs Luke 1:20).

The Water Test

The test of how the soldiers drank water from a stream did not take place in the days of Saul when David defeated Goliath but many years earlier with Gideon. Compare Sura 2:249-250 with Judges 7:1-8.

9. Secular History Mistakes

1. In Sura 105, Muhammad claimed that the elephant army of Abrah was defeated by birds dropping stones of baked clay upon them.

According to the historical record, Abrah's army withdrew their attack on Mecca after small-pox broke out among the troops.

2 .The Kabah was not built by Adam and then rebuilt by Abraham. It was built by pagans to worship a

black rock which fell out of the sky.

Abraham never lived at Mecca.

3. In Sura 20:87, 95 we are told the Jews made the golden calf in the wilderness at the suggestion of “the Samaritan.”

The Samaritans did not come into existence until AFTER the Captivity of Israel first by the Assyrians and then by the Babylonians.

Yusuf Ali tries to get away from this error by obscuring the translation of the name but the Arabic is clear.

4. One of the greatest errors in the Quran is concerning Alexander the Great who is mistakenly called Zulqarnain.

The Quran claims that he was a Muslim who worshipped Allah and that he lived to an old age (Sura 18:89-98) The indisputable fact of history is that Alexander was not a Muslim and he did not live to an old age.

This error is iron-clad as the historical evidence concerning Alexander is as clear.

10. Self-Contradictions

Since the Quran claims in Sura 39:23, 28 to be free from all contradictions, just one contradiction is sufficient to show that it is not Gods word.

The presence of conflicting wording is serious because the Muslims claim that the Quran is absolutely perfect even in its quotations.

Christians do not make such claims for the bible but view the speeches found in the Bible as summaries of what was said.

At first Muhammad told his followers to face Jerusalem in prayer. Then he told them since God was everywhere they could face any way they wanted. Then he changed his mind yet again and directed them to pray toward Mecca. (Sura 2:115 vs 2:144) 98

Many scholars believe that the change in direction took place depending on whether he was trying to please the Jews or the pagans.

Muhammad first started out saying that his followers could defend themselves if attacked (Sura 22:39). Then he commanded them to go to war on his behalf (Sura 2:216-218). This was to gain wealth by robbing caravans. But as his army grew, so did his thirst for loot (Sura 5:33). So he ordered wars to persecute other religions as well as to gain more wealth (Sura 9:5,29). Allah's will seem to change according to Muhammad's success in killing and looting.

Who was the first to believe? Abraham or Moses? (Sura 6:14 vs 7:143) You can't have two "firsts."

The fact that Judaism and Christianity broke up into different sects was used in the Quran to prove that they were not of God (Sura 30:30-32; 42:13-14).

Yet, Islam has itself broken up into many warring sects. Thus it too cannot be true if the Quran is right.

11. Convenient Revelations

The Quran contains convenient revelations for the personal gain or pleasure of Muhammad:

- a. When Muhammad wanted his step-son's wife, he suddenly got a revelation from Allah declaring it right to take another man's wife (Sura 33:36-38).
 - b. When he wanted to stop his wives from quarrelling or to accept more wives, he got a quick revelation for it (Sura 33:28-34).
 - c. When people bothered him at his house, he got a quick revelation setting up rules when to visit him and when not to bother him. (Sura 33:53-58; 29:62-63; 49:1-5)
12. Legendary Materials

1. Arabian Sources

First, the Quran repeats fanciful Arabian fables as if they were true.

- Arabic legends about the fabulous genies or jinns fill its pages.

- The story of the she-camel who leapt out of a rock and became a prophet was known long before Muhammad. (Sura 7:73-77, 85; 91:14; 54:29)
- The story of an entire village of people who were turned into apes because they broke the sabbath by fishing was a popular legend in Muhammad's day. (Sura 2:65; 7:163-166)
- The gushing twelve springs story found in Sura 2:60 comes from pre-Islamic legends.

2. Jewish Sources

Many of the stories in the Quran come from the Jewish Talmud, the Midrash, and many apocryphal works.

This was pointed out by Abraham Geiger in 1833 in his pioneer article, “Was hat Mohammed aus dem Judenthume aufgenommen?” The evidence was brought up to date and further documented by another Jewish scholar, Dr.

Abraham Katsh, of New York University in 1954.

- The source of Sura 3:35-37 is the fanciful book called the Protevangelion's James The Lesser.
- The source of Sura 87:19 is The Testament of Abraham
- The source of Sura 27:17-44 is the II Targum of Esther.
- The fantastic tale that God made a man “die for a hundred years” with no ill effects on his food, drink or donkey was a Jewish fable (Sura 2:259f).
- The idea that Moses was resurrected and other material came from the Jewish Talmud (Sura 2:55-56, 67).
- The story in Sura 5:30-31 can also be found in pre-Islamic works from Pirke Rabbi Eleazer, the Targum of Jonathan ben Uzziah and the Targum of Jerusalem.
- The tale of Abraham being delivered from Nimrod's fire came from the Midrash Rabbah. (see: Sura 21:51-71; 29:16-17; 37:97-98). It must also be 100

pointed out that Nimrod and Abraham did not live at the same time.

Muhammad was always mixing people together in the Quran who did not live at the same time.

- The non-biblical details of the visit of the Queen of Sheba (Saba) in Sura 27:20-44 came from the II Targum of the Book of Esther.
- The source of Sura 2:102 is no doubt the Midrash Yalkut (ch. 44).
- The story found in Sura 7:171 of god lifting up Mt. Sinai and holding over the heads of the Jews as a threat to squash them if they rejected the law came from the Jewish book Abodah Sarah.
- The story of the making of the golden calf in the wilderness in which the image jumped out of the fire fully formed and actually mooed (Sura 7:148; 20:88) came from Pirke Rabbi Eleazer.
- The seven heavens and hells described in the Quran came from the Zohar and the Hagigah.
- Muhammad utilized the Testament of Abraham to teach that a scale or balance will be used on the day of judgement to weigh good and bad deeds in order to determine whether one went to heaven or hell (Sura 42:17; 101:6-9)/

3. Heretical Christian Sources

One of the most documented and damaging facts about the Quran is that Muhammad used heretical “Christian” Gnostic gospels and their fables for material in the Quran.

The Encyclopedia Britannica comments, “The gospel was known to him chiefly through apocryphal and heretical sources.”

This has been demonstrated many times by various scholars. For example, in Sura 3:49 and 100:110, the baby Jesus speaks from the cradle! Later on, the Quran has Jesus making clay birds come alive!

The Bible tells us that the FIRST miracle Jesus did was at the wedding at Cana (John 2:11). The contradiction cannot be ignored.

4. Sabeen Sources

Muhammad incorporated parts of the religion of the Sabeans into Islam.

He adopted such rituals

- Worshipping at the Kabah;

- Praying five times a day toward Mecca; (Mohammad chose five of the same times the Sabeans prayed.) - Fasting for part of a day for an entire month etc.

14. Mistakes About Jesus

It contradicts the Bible's teaching on the person and work of Jesus Christ by saying in Sura 4:157; 5:19, 75; 9:30: a. Jesus was not the Son of God.

b. He did not die

c. He was not crucified

d. He was not God as well as human

e. He is not the Saviour

The utter contradiction between the biblical and quranic view of Jesus cannot be dismissed so easily. This is clearly not an issue of corruption but of contradiction. It is one of the fundamental issues which will forever divide Christians from Muslims.

15. Mistakes About The Trinity

The Quran contains many errors about what Christians believe and practice. One of the most significant is that the Quran misrepresents the Christian doctrine of the Trinity.

Muhammad mistakenly thought that Christians worshipped three gods: the Father, the Mother (Mary) and the Son (Jesus) (Sura 5:73-75, 116).

As Richard bell pointed out, Muhammad never understood the doctrine of the Trinity.

The Encyclopaedia Britannica states that there are, “mistaken concepts of the Trinity in the Quran.”.

In reality, Christians believe only in one God who is in three persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. They do not believe that Mary is a part of the Trinity.

16. Mistakes About the “Son” of God

The Quran also makes the mistake of saying that Christians believe that Jesus is the

“Son” of God in the sense that God the “Father” has a male body and had sexual intercourse with Mary.

In Muhammad's mind, to say that God has a son was to blaspheme because it would mean that God had sex with a woman (Sura 2:116; 6:100-101; 10:68; 16:57; 19:35; 23:91; 37:149, 157; 43:16-19).

Christians believe that Mary was a virgin when Jesus was conceived in her by the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:35).

17. Praying Toward Jerusalem

The Quran makes the mistake of teaching that Christians bow in prayer toward Jerusalem (Sura 2:144-145). Christians do not bow toward any place on earth when in prayer.

18. Is Allah the Name of Christ

Christians do not claim that Allah is the name of the Messiah or the Christ as Sura 5:72 claims. They believe in one God in three persons and that Jesus Christ was human as well as divine.

19. Mistakes About Jewish Beliefs

The Quran makes the mistake of claiming that the Jews believed that Ezra was the Son of God, i.e. the Messiah, just as Christians claim that Jesus was (Sura 9:30). This is absurd.

As The Concise Dictionary of Islam points out, "There are many details regarding Judaism which are in variance with Jewish belief."

20. Arab Racism

According to the literal Arabic of Sura 3:106-107, on the Judgement Day, only people with white faces will be saved. People with black faces will be damned. This is racism in its worst form!

As the Khalils pointed out in their article on Islam: *American blacks have been widely wooed by Islam, but through misinformation. They hear, "Christianity is the white man's religion; Islam is the religion of all mankind." They are told that Allah and Mohammed are black. In reality, Muslims in the Middle East still regard blacks as slaves. It would be worse than blasphemy for them to believe that either Allah or Mohammed were black.*

It must be also pointed out that Arab Muslims were enslaving black Africans long before Westerners to their shame got involved.

21 Carnal Heaven

The Quran promises a heaven full of wine and free sex (Sura 2:25; 4:57; 11:23; 47:15).

If the drinking of wine and gross immorality is sinful on earth, how is it right in Paradise?

Is this not yet more proof that Islam reflects the ideas and customs of 7th Century Arab culture?

The Quran's picture of paradise is exactly what a 7th century pagan Arab would have thought wonderful.

The concept of a harem of beautiful women and all the wine you can drink is in direct conflict with the spirituality and holiness of the biblical concept of heaven (Rev.

22:12-17). The contradiction cannot be clearer.

22 The Problem of Usury

In 7th century Arabia, the practice of charging interest on the money that you loaned to people was condemned as usury. Thus, it is no surprise to learn that Muhammad likewise condemned usury in the Quran (Sura 2:275 ff; 3:130; 4:161; 30:39).

The reason that we point this out is that modern Muslims openly disobey the Quran at this point. Thus Muslims will charge interest on the money they loan and they will pay interest on the money that they borrow.

If the Muslims were to apply the Quran's condemnation of usury to their modern day financial practices, there would be no Muslim banks and not even Muslim governments could charge interest or receive interest on any loans.

This is why some Muslim apologists try desperately to stay clear of the issue of usury or they try to define it as taking unjust interest.

But is clear, not only from the Quran, but also from the historical context, that Muhammad was denying the charging of any interest at all on money when it is loaned particularly to those who are fellow Muslims.

Conclusion

The religion of Islam is False. It is no surprise therefore that Western scholars have concluded that Allah is not God, Muhammad was not his prophet and the Quran is not the Word of God.

