The Major Cults

A Biblical Analysis of
MORMONISM and
JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES

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Index

Preface	Page 1
Mormonism	Page 5
Jehovah's Witnesses	Page 33

Preface

In the study of modern cults it is both enigmatical and intriguing that people are led astray in religious matters with such seeming ease. Many, apparently sensible in other ways, allow themselves to be duped by any sort of cult system, as long as it uses a few verses of Scripture to make it look as though it is religious. Unfortunately, the great mass of professing Christians have nothing more than a vague, general familiarity with spiritual truths, and could not substantiate their beliefs because of an inadequate knowledge of the Word of God. One reason people in cult systems confuse and confound orthodox Christians is because they are so thoroughly indoctrinated with their particular "line," even though most of the time an elementary knowledge of the Scriptures would quickly expose the error of these false systems and vindicate the truth. It would seem that a man, with only a general knowledge of spiritual truth, would give considerable thought and serious investigation to any teaching that would encourage him to discard the simple, genuine faith "once and for all delivered to the saints." Furthermore, you would think that if there are places where one would seem to have difficulty in interpreting the Scripture, he would be more inclined to lean on what practically all of the great theologians and scholars of all the centuries have agreed upon, rather than to follow the lead of someone who appears on the scene with an interpretation of his own, utterly contrary to what two thousand years of theological study has unanimously agreed upon as the revelation of God's truth.

The gullibility of people and the ease with which they are deceived, is astonishing. The repeated warning of our Lord was that "False prophets shall arise and shall deceive many." Our Lord frequently warned His disciples lest they should be led astray (Matt. 24:4,11,24). Yet, when any one of these self-appointed prophets, self-deceived enthusiasts, and self-estimated wise ones comes along, claiming an authority for God's Word or a particular revelation that came only to them, or a vision that no one else had,

like sheep following a bellwether, all too frequently people from inside the organized church, who are uninformed and ungrounded in the Word of God, will go with him or her, as the case may be. They will follow them into all sorts of peculiar vagaries, religious eccentricities, extravagant perversions, and religious nonsense in general, as long as "thus saith the Lord" is emblazoned on their banner.

Apostasy is not new. In comparatively recent times a rash of new cults has appeared, with a veritable multitude of false teachers expounding pernicious doctrines and wielding tremendous influence far beyond anything experienced in past centuries. William Peterson, executive editor of *Eternity* magazine, says, "The 'new cults' mark the disillusionment of millions with the shallow and outworn solutions of both secular society and those religious institutions which have ossified instead of remaining vital and responsive—but they are no more than a temporary and mindless escape from the truths they claim to provide."

The Word of God does not predict a converted world at the end of the age, but, rather, contains many prophecies concerning the apostasy of the "latter times," and the "last days" that predict an epidemic of false teachers with their deceptive doctrines of the devil. Note carefully the following scriptures: II Peter 2:1,2; II Peter 3:3,4; I Tim. 4:1,2; II Tim 3:1-5; and II Tim. 3:13.

The growth of many of the cults in the United States can only be described as fantastic. Unfortunately, many of these cult systems were not taken seriously, mainly because their peculiar tenets and doctrines were so obviously incompatible and inconsistent with the revelation of God that we possess in His Word, the Bible. When these false systems are brought to the judgment of the Word of God, they fall to pieces. Timidity, tolerance, and compromise, in this respect, have become grave sins, because men who know better have failed to declare "the whole counsel of God," and in so doing have aided and abetted the malignant growth of these false doctrines.

Someone has described cults as the "unpaid bills of the church," meaning that if the false prophets of these so-called revelations had been refuted publicly, thoroughly, and scripturally at the very beginning, many of them would never have achieved

the proportions they enjoy today. I confess to you that the more I study the cults the more they grieve me, the more they break my heart, and the more they increase my passion to teach and preach the pure, unadulterated Word of the living God.

I know of no better example of the tragedy of cults than the development of Mormonism and Jehovah's Witnesses. Since many of the doctrines of these cults are not well known even among many of their own constituency, evangelical believers will be shocked beyond words at the blasphemous statements found in their writings.

It is high time that these false systems, like others, be brought to the witness and the judgment and, if need be, the condemnation of the Word of God.

However, I am anxious that it be clearly understood it is my great burden and love for the people trapped in these systems, souls who are without the knowledge of the true God revealed in Jesus Christ and are therefore lost, that makes it imperative for me to uncover its falsehood and deception. My fervent prayer is that there will be those who will be *delivered from the power of darkness...translated into the kingdom of His Dear Son, in whom we have redemption through the blood, even the forgiveness of sins* (Col. 1:13,14).

Jack MacArthur

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Mormonism

In a pamphlet, published by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, entitled "About Mormonism," by former President Stephen L. Richard, we read:

The Church [Mormon Church] *is definitely and fully Christian in every possible interpretation of that characterization. It proclaims itself to be the church of Jesus Christ, and is so denominated. The priesthood, which governs it and exercises the authority for the administration of all its ordinances and ceremonies, is derived from the Redeemer of the world. The gospel which it teaches is that set forth by the Savior Himself, and the Christian virtues constitute the standards of living for its members.*

Some of the tenets of Mormon faith are not unlike those of other Christian churches. It believes in the Trinity, the Lordship, the atonement of Jesus Christ, resurrection from the dead, and immortality of the soul. But the interpretation which it places on these and other commonly accepted doctrines and the contributions which it has made in new theological conception and principles, have given it a very unique and distinctive place in the religious world. It asserts, however, that novel as some of its doctrines may appear to be, there is no principle or truth which it advocates which is not and has not always been part of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

This is typical of much of modern Mormon writings. On the surface this particular statement sounds very credible, very sympathetic to other Christian groups, and it would almost seem that Mormonism is simply another denomination within the general category of what is commonly known as Christendom. The facts are, on the basis of the history and teaching of Mormonism, that nothing could possibly be further from the truth. Mormonism strives with great effort to masquerade as the Christian church, complete with an exclusive message, infallible prophets, higher

revelations for a new dispensation, which the Mormons would have us believe began with Joseph Smith, Jr. But even a cursory examination of both the history and the theology of Mormonism will immediately demonstrate that though Christian terminology is used freely, Mormonism is as pagan as the Hindu pantheon. Consequently, the statement just quoted by former President Stephen L. Richards, will not stand up under the light of truth.

Joseph Smith, in his own story, written in 1838, says he saw the Father and Son in a vision, and he asked the question, "Which sect is the right one, that I may join it?" At that particular time, according to his own story, he was attending a Presbyterian church occasionally, but was more interested in the Methodist church. To quote his exact words, he said, "I was answered that I must join none of them, for they were all wrong. And the personage that 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 doctrine the commandments of men, having the form of godliness, but they deny the power thereof" (paragraph 19).

Interestingly, these phrases are taken from different Scriptures: II Tim. 3:5; Isaiah 29:13; and Matt. 15:9. Joseph Smith was not seeking a relationship with God, not seeking the salvation of his soul—for he asked the foolish question, "What sect is the right one, that I may join it?" However, one fact is clear: according to Joseph Smith every body of believers in the world—every church—is wrong. Our creeds are an abomination, and all of us who preach are corrupt. Confronted with this charge, we should most certainly be "set for the defense of the Gospel" (Phil. 1:17).

Brigham Young said (*Millennial Star*, Vol. 5, page 118), "Every spirit that confesseth that Joseph Smith is a prophet and the book of Mormon is true, is of God. And every spirit that does not is of the antichrist."

Orson Pratt, one of the apostles of the Mormon church, said, "All churches preach false doctrines and are under the curse of God. Mormonism is the sole church of the living God" (*Journal of Discourses*).

Doctrines and Covenants, Section 84, verse 74, states: "He who does not believe on the words of Joseph Smith will be damned."

The conclusion is undeniable: anyone who does not accept the tenets of the Mormon faith is an antichrist under the curse of God, and is to be damned. This, once again, gives a lie to the declaration of former President Stephen L. Richards.

The Mormon church exists in two principal groups: the larger, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, with headquarters in Salt Lake City, Utah, claiming a membership in exess of 2 million. The smaller group, the reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, has its headquarters in Independence, Missouri. This group claims a membership of half a million, and is often referred to as the "fundamentalist" segment of the Mormon religion. The reorganized church is a source of embarrassment to the Utah church because of their adherence to the practices of early Mormonism. Repeatedly, they have established their claim in court decisions that they represent the true church and the Utah branch represents the heretical element.

Former President Richards, in his pamphlet, does not mention this schismatic fracture. I have a copy of a report made in 1953 by Charles F. Adams, chief probation officer of Mohave County, Arizona, concerning a polygamist community in Short Creek, Arizona, that bases its infamous practices on Mormon teaching. The following is part of the report:

As chief probation officer of Mohave County, I signed the petitions in juvenile cases involving some 200 Short Creek children. I had reliable information of immoral conditions surrounding them and knew that the parents were to be arrested. So it was imperative that the children should be protected, at least until the cases against their elders were disposed of.

I was present at the hearings in all the juvenile cases and heard the testimony of approximately 30 men and 50 women, that they were living in polygamy, that Short Creek was a polygamist community and that they were teaching and would continue to teach polygamy to their children, regardless of the Constitution and any laws of the state of Arizona to the contrary.

I personally saw households composed of the legal wife and her children, and several so-called 'plural wives' and their children, all living under the same roof and under the domi-

nance of the same lord and master, under conditions that could not help endangering the morals of the children.

After the arrests of the people engaged in these crimes, the welfare problem became overwhelming. What was to be done with approximately 100 little girls who had been duped into fake marriages before they were 15 years of age? And what was to be done with the nursing babies born out of wedlock? Or the expectant mothers? This was the real tragedy of Short Creek.

Former President Richards admits: "In the early days of the Church, the doctrine of plural marriage was introduced through divine revelation. The practice of plural marriage has never been general in the Church, and at no time have more than three per cent of the families in the Church been polygamists." Mr. Richards further says the early Mormons flouted the laws that forbade polygamy and were persecuted and imprisoned. However, in 1890 he informs us the Church issued a manifesto declaring that it abandoned the practice of plural marriage and forbidding its members to enter into such a relationship. Further, he says, "This practice of entering into plural marriage is now, and for many years past, has not been tolerated." However, his pamphlet concludes with this statement: "In more than 100 years it has never departed from the organization and principles given to it by the prophet Joseph Smith."

To those who wish to continue this deplorable practice, reference could be made to the teachings and the practices of the venerated apostles of the church. Brigham Young's daughter, Susan Young Gates, said (*The Life Story of Brigham Young,* by Susan Y. Gates, page 321), "The principle of plural marriage was adopted by my father as it was taught by the prophet Joseph Smith." In 1877 Brigham Young died in Salt Lake City, leaving either 17 or 19 wives and 56 children. "Ready References," a work containing 11 pages devoted to the teaching of polygamy, was distributed in England in 1907. The article closes with this statement, "The prohibition of polygamy is not only a prohibition of what nature permits in the fullest manner, but of what she requires for the reparation of states exhausted by wars, etc. It [polygamy] was practiced without doubt by some of Christ's own disciples" (Section 132—point 32).

In fact, Brigham Young says that Adam practiced polygamy in heaven before he ever came to earth. *Journal of Discourses,* Vol. 1, page 50: "When our father Adam came into the garden of Eden, he came into it with a celestial body, and brought Eve, one of his wives, with him." In other words, God practiced polygamy in heaven before He ever came down to this world as Adam. It is a Mormon teaching that God was a man before He became God.

Wife Number 19, chapter 35, says, quoting Brigham Young: "Jesus was a polygamist; Mary and Martha, the sisters of Lazarus, were His plural wives. Mary Magdalene was another. Also, the bridal feast at Cana of Galilee where Jesus turned the water into wine, was on the occasion of one of His own marriages."

Orson Hyde, former president and one of the greatest leaders of the Mormon Church, said this (*Journal of Discourses,* Vol. 2, page 80): "We say it was Jesus Christ who was married at Cana to Mary and Martha, whereby He could see His own seed before He was crucified." The reference given to support this travesty is Isaiah 53:10 where the Word of God says that our Lord would see His seed. *Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand.* All Christendom knows that the "seed" of Christ are those who are born of the Spirit of God because of the great sacrificial death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. To say that Jesus Christ engaged in physical procreation and that before He died upon the cross He saw His own children whom He had begotten in the flesh with His many wives, is to plumb the very darkest deeps of hell's lies. And to claim that such falsehood has any affinity with the truth revealed on the precious pages of the Holy Book, can only be described as monstrous chicanery.

It is difficult to understand, apart from satanic delusion, the statement of former President Richards that Mormons believe in the Bible, and that "the gospel which it teaches is that which is set forth by the Savior Himself(!)"

The claims of Mormonism prove that this is not an age of incredulity, but an age of unbelieveable credulity. The wildest fantasy

is accepted as fact without the requirement of evidence or verification of any kind. Sad to say, the great majority of Mormons are in almost total ignorance of the shady historical and theological sources of their religion. They are frequently shocked when the unglamorous and definitely pagan background of the Mormon Church is exposed to them.

On one occasion, after I had spoken on "Mormonism," carefuly documenting from Mormon writings the evidence I presented, several Mormons came to me, obviously upset and extremely hostile, to inform me that much of what I had quoted was no longer believed, that new revelations had replaced old revelations. I suggested that this was an easy way out of the dilemma, but that such an evolutionary process would ultimately destroy the integrity and authenticity of their history and their doctrines (*The Book of Mormon*). Actually, *The Book of Mormon* is claimed as an inspired translation of sacred plates, setting forth the history of prehistoric people who immigrated to and settled portions of the Americas with an account of their religious, national, and international experiences. And if historical, scientific evidence will not support the history of this prehistoric people, (and evidence shows it will not) then Mormonism has no foundation.

Doctrines and Covenants is said to be a compliation of revelations on many subjects pertaining to the Church, divinely given to their prophets. *The Pearl of Great Price,* containing the Book of Moses, the Book of Abraham and other writings of Joseph Smith, is also said to be divinely inspired. If the doctrinal revelations and conclusions made by these prophets are no longer valid, then nothing the prophets have said is valid because it has no permanence. The argument, then, about progressive revelation and the evolution of Mormonism is unsubstantiated and contradictory. Former President Richards denies this progressive revelation idea when he says, concerning these books, "These books amplify, but they do not contradict each other; in them are to be found authority and verification for substantially all of the theological and religious doctrines of the [Mormon] Church."

No matter how incompatible these revelations may be Scripturally and scientifically, according to former President Richards they cannot be changed; they can only amplify revelations pre-

viously given, and are never contradictory! He also says, "These other Scriptures do not in any sense contradict the Bible or detract from its authority and importance."

We have already seen, on the basis of Mormon writings, that it is absolutely impossible to believe the doctrines taught in the Word of God and at the same time believe the heresy of this pagan, polytheistic cult.

Mormons have attempted for many years to gain acceptance as a true Christian body. Contemporary Mormon literature obviously has this as one of its primary aims. The public media has been used extensively to present Mormonism as a legitimate branch of the Christian church. However, this is direct and specious deception, for even a cursory examination of biblical doctrines, as compared with Mormon doctrines, clearly demonstrates that they have absolutely nothing in common, and that one is in comlete contradiction to the other. There is not a single Mormon doctrine consistent with the traditional faith of evangelical Christians.

One reason this deception is so successful is because there is a brief doctrinal statement found in practically all Mormon literature entitled "Mormons Believe." The very first statement in this so-called declaration of faith is one that all truly born-again Christians would immediately accept, because it is affirmed that Mormons believe "in the Trinity of God the Father, Jesus Christ His Son, and in the Holy Ghost, and that they are three separate entities gathered together in the Godhead...."But when Mormon literature is studied, as to what is meant by the use of these words, it becomes instantly obvious that they are in no way related to the biblical concept of these exalted names and titles.

What, for example, Mormons believe about God is not what Christians believe about God. The god of Mormon theology is not the God of the Bible. Interestingly, the god of Mormon theology is not even the god of the *Book of Mormon*. Actually, the doctrine of God has undergone a very strange progression. Following the publication of the *Book of Mormon,* Smith's ideas developed rapidly. A thoroughly corporeal god emerged as the *Doctrines and Covenants* started to accumulate, and as the alleged "inspired version of the Bible was prepared. This "inspired version" was an attempt on the part of Joseph Smith to give a revision of the Scrip-

ture by way of revelation. The attempt was made with the framework of the King James Version as a basis. In this dubious work a great deal of the matter is completely non-biblical and has no justification except to document his doctrines. Several hundreds of verses are added to Genesis, and many others are changed to suit Smith's ideas.

Anyone reading Mormon literature or expository works should be careful to check the supposed biblical references. The expression "as one of the old prophets has written," is usually followed by a quotation from a purely Mormon scripture. Special care should be exercised with respect to quotations from the Bible, because the quotation given may be from the spurious "inspired version." A Mormon who visited me reminded me of the Scripture in Genesis that speaks of the Seer who would bring knowledge and salvation "in the latter days." He thought that was in the Scriptures. Actually, it is one of the 17 extra verses added to Genesis 50. After speaking about the work of Moses, verse 33 says, "And that seer will I bless, and they that seek to destroy him shall be confounded; for this promise I give unto you, for I will remember you from generation to generation; and his name shall be called Joseph, and it shall be after the name of his father, and he shall be like unto you, for the thing which the Lord shall bring forth by His hand shall bring my people unto salvation."

This Mormon evidently did not know that these interpolations and additions were never a part of the Word of God. This particular version is often a source of embarrassment to some Mormons because it is so obviously inferior and frequently ridiculous.

For instance, in support of the unique Mormon doctrine that all men were created as spirits and they existed as unembodied spirits in ages past, the quotation given is Genesis 2:5,6, which in the so-called "inspired version" reads: "For I the Lord created all things of which I have spoken, spiritually, before they were naturally upon the face of the earth. For I the Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the face of the earth, and I the Lord God had created all the children of men, and not yet a man to till the ground, for in heaven I created them, and there was not yet flesh upon the earth."

Anyone familiar with the Scripture would know instantly that this was not Scripture. It is incoherent babbling and a conglomeration of unrelated King James Version phrases. But, unfortunately, there are many who do not possess a knowledge of the Word of God that would give them the discernment to recognize this false, pseudo edition.

By the time *The Pearl of Great Price* was finished, Smith's concept was that of a plurality of gods. By the end of his short lifetime, in his discourse at the funeral of Elder King Follett, known as the "King Follett Discourse," delivered in April 1884, God was one of many gods, and Adam was the god of this world. The gods had become super men and men had become incipient gods. Whatever Smith's concept of God at the beginning, it was now polytheistic.

The following excerpts speak for themselves:

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 form—like yourselves 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 converses with another, and that he was once a man like us. Yea, that God himself, the Father of us all dwelt on earth the same as Jesus Christ did.

What did Jesus say?...The Scripture informs us that Jesus said, 'As the Father hath power to himself, even so hath the Son power'....To do what? Why, what the Father did; the answer is obvious—in a manner to lay down his body and take it up again. 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 priests to God, the same as all gods have done before you. Namely, by going from one small degree to another, and from a small capacity to a greater one,

from grace to grace, from exaltation to exaltation until you attain to the resurrection of the dead and are able to dwell in the everlasting burnings (?) and to sit in glory as do those who sit enthroned in everlasting power.

The Reorganized Church has tried to discredit this discourse in their attempt to evade the Adam-God doctrine which they claim to repudiate. They insist it was manufactured by the followers of Brigham Young. Many of the apostles of Joseph Smith have written and lectured on Smith's concept of God. And while what they say is not necessarily considered "inspired" by the church, it is considered authoritative. Actually, these men have written prolifically in confirmation of the unique doctrines taught by Smith. The limitation of both time and space forbids the tremendous volume of documentation by the Mormon apostles and the church leaders, amplifying and repeating over and over again this strange Adam-God doctrine.

The case of the Reorganized Church in attempting to dismiss the discourse upon which these men have written so vigorously, is extremely weak because Joseph Smith delivered this discourse to an audience of 20,000 reported by four scribes: Willard Richards, Wilford Woodruff, Thomas Bullock, and William Clayton. Smith was murdered June 27, 1844, and the "King Follett Discourse" was published in "Times and Seasons" August 1, 1844.

Lorenzo Snow, who was president of the Mormon Church, confirmed the Adam-God doctrine when he wrote the following in a poem entitled, "Man's Destiny."

Still, 'tis no phantom that we trace
Man's ultimatum in life's race;
This royal path has long been trod
By righteous men, *each now a god:*
As Abram, Isaac, Jacob, too
First babes, then men—*to gods they grew*
As man now is, our God once was;
As now God is, so man may be—
Which doth unfold man's destiny....

Elder John Jacques wrote in a book of Mormon catechism:

Question: *Are there more gods than one?*

Answer: *Yes, many. In the beginning, the head of the gods*

called a council of the gods and they came together and concocted a plan to create the world and people it. Remember that God our heavenly Father was perhaps once a child and moral like we are, and rose step by step in the scale of progress in the school of advancement, has moved forward and overcome until he has arrived at the point where he now is. Mormon prophets have continually taught the sublime truth that God the eternal Father was once a mortal man who passed through a school of earth similar to that through which we are passing. He became God—an exalted being. Mormonism does not tend to debase God to the level of man but to exalt man to the perfection of God.

It immediately comes to our minds that this last statement would certainly please the adversary, for in his attempt to seduce man to rebellion against God, he told two lies. He said in their act of disobedience they would not die, and he said they would be as gods.

In the *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 1, page 50, Brigham Young said, "Now hear it, O inhabitants of the earth, Jew and Gentile, saint and sinner, when our father Adam came into the garden of Eden, he came into it with a celestial body and brought Eve, one of his wives, with him. He helped to make and organize this world. He is Michael the Archangel, the Ancient of Days about whom holy men have written and spoken. He is our father and our God and the only God with whom we have to do."

When I confronted some Mormon leaders with this quotation it did seem to be a source of embarrassment to them, and they told me it would take a proper interpretation to be correctly understood. The truth is that the statement is a commentary on the very words of Joseph Smith in Section 27 of the *Doctrines and Covenants:* "and also Michael or Adam, the father of all, the prince of all, the Ancient of Days."

However, if the words of Brigham Young are embarrassing, the same theme is emphasized again and again by other apostles. Writing in 1853, the Mormon apostle, Orson Pratt stated: "The celestial beings who dwell in the heaven from which we came, have been raised from the grave in a former world, and having been filled with all the fulness of these eternal attributes, are called gods....In heaven where our spirits were born, there are

many gods, each one of whom has its own wife or wives, which were given to him previous to his redemption while yet in his mortal state. Each god, through his wife or wives, raises up a numerous family of sons and daughters....As soon as each god has begotten many millions of male and female spirits...he, in connection with his sons, organizes a new world after a similar order to the one which we now inhabit where he sends both the male and female spirits to inhabit tabernacles of flesh and bones....''

The rest of Orson Pratt's statement is so incoherent it sounds much like the ravings of a diseased mind.

Considering a few quotations from the Word of God we see the utter incompatibility of the Mormon concept of God with the God revealed in the Word of God. The Bible tells us:

Isaish 43:10,11:...*I am he; before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me. I, even I, am the Lord; and beside me there is no saviour.* Isaiah 44:6: *I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God.* Isaiah 45:21, 22:...*and there is no God else beside me; a just God and a Saviour; there is none beside me. Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else.* Numbers 23:19: *God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent....* John 1:18: *No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.* I Tim. 1:17: *Now, unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen.* I Tim. 6:16: *Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see....* Col. 1:15: (Speaking of our Lord Jesus Christ) *Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.* John 4:24: *God is a Spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.* Jeremiah 23:24: *Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the Lord. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord.* Malachi 3:6: *For I am the Lord, I change not....* Psalm 102:26, 27 (see also Hebrews 1:11,12): *They shall perish, but thou shalt endure; yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed:*

But thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end.

Gordon H. Fraser, author of *Is Mormonism Christian?*, points out that Joseph Smith's concept of God and that of his disciples, has followed the pattern of deterioration of the Gentile concept of God, as outlined by the Apostle Paul in Romans 1:21-26. This deterioration in doctrine parallels a corresponding pattern of deterioration in morals. No religious system ever rises higher than the deities it enthrones. Paul says, "They knew God," which is the original position of mankind in his proper appreciation of the nature of God. "They worshiped him not as God." "Their foolish heart was darkened." "Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools." "They changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into the likeness of corruptible man." "God gave them up to vile passions."

The logical deterioration of such a system would lead at last to a practice as abhorrent as polygamy. Although that practice is repudiated by the Mormon Church today, *Time* Magazine made the assertion that it is still prevalent, and that it was given religious significance cannot be denied. This reminds us of the idolatry that was such a source of agony to God in the days of ancient Israel.

Writes Gordon H. Fraser: "In the history of man's religions it is always observable that three developments occur almost coincidentally: (1) The emergence of a corporeal god; (2) The deification of man; (3) The development of sexual irregularities, usually as acts of worship. This is what Paul is saying in the Roman letter. This is the status of the Mormon theism."

Obviously, belief in the triunity of God and in polytheism cannot be held at the same time. Dr. James E. Talmage, in *The Articles of Faith*, pages 47 and 48, scoffs at the idea of one God manifested in three Persons. He says, "It would be difficult to conceive of a greater number of inconsistencies and contradictions expressed in words as few." Interestingly, it is a fact that the *Book of Mormon* teaches only one God. II Nephi 31:21 declares: "This is the doctrine of Christ, and the only and true doctrine of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, which is one God without end." The Mormons tell us that this verse and others mean that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are one in purpose, but not one God. Thus, they reject their own scripture when it contradicts

present-day Mormon teaching.

One tremendous fact becomes crystal clear: There is no reconciliation between the God of the Word of God, and the polytheistic pantheon of Mormonism. What we have seen with respect to the doctrine of God taught in the Scriptures as compared with the doctrine of God taught by Mormonism, is true of every other evangelical doctrine accepted by believers from the early days of the true Church of Jesus Christ to the present hour. If men are not straight with respect to the doctrine of God as taught in the inspired Word of God, they can only be in error on every other doctrine. The supreme test of orthodox Christianity is the great question: "What think ye of Christ?"

There were those who objected with great hostility to the quotation from the *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 1, pages 50 and 51, in which Brigham Young declares, "When the Virgin Mary conceived the child Jesus, the Father had begotten him in his own likeness. He was not begotten by the Holy Ghost. And who is his Father? He is the first of the human family. Jesus, our elder brother, was begotten in the flesh by the same character that was in the garden of Eden, who is our Father in heaven."

A very concerned Mormon leader told me this was not necessarily an accurate quotation. In fact, the statement was made that many of the scribes who copied the sermons of the various apostles made mistakes. This is not a tenable position because Brigham Young himself declared in the *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 13, page 95: "I have never yet preached a sermon and sent it out to the children of men that they may not call scripture." The discourse in which this quotation is found, however, was not only preached on April 9, 1852, but printed in the *Journal of Discourses*, and then nineteen months later it was again printed in the *Millennial Star*, No. 48, Vol. 15, for Saturday, November 26, 1853.

Further confirmation of this strange belief is found in a quotation of Dr. James Talmage's, *Articles of Faith* in the current edition on pages 472 and 473. He declares that Christ had "unique status in the flesh as the offspring of a mortal mother, and of an immortal or resurrected and glorified father." Talmage does not tell us who the "resurrected and glorified father" of Jesus is, but repeatedly, Brigham Young did. The virgin birth of our Lord Jesus

Christ is denied with a blatant, direct contradiction of the plain statement of Scripture when he said, concerning our Lord Jesus Christ: "He was *not* begotten by the Holy Ghost...."

In the Mormon concept of "eternal progression," the second stage of life is the premortal spirit life. At the time Mormons believe that Jesus Christ, Satan, and all of us were spirit children of God. In the *Pearl of Great Price,* Moses 5:13, Satan declares, "I also am a son of God." In *The Gospel Through the Ages,* page 15, Milton R. Hunter wrote: "The appointment of Jesus to be the Savior of the world, was contested by one of the other sons of God. He was called Lucifer, Son of the Morning. Haughty, ambitious, and covetous of power and glory, this spirit—brother of Jesus—desperately tried to become the savior of mankind."

That Mormons claim Jesus Christ had to be a polygamist is undeniable, because the whole system of Mormon progress in the life to come is based on the sealing of marriages in this life. Celestial marriage is one of the qualifications for exaltation to godhood after death. For Jesus to become a god, He would have to have a wife or wives. In the *Journal of Discourses,* Vol. 2, page 82, we read: "Jesus was the bridegroom at the marriage of Cana of Galilee." Again, Orson Pratt, in the *Seer,* page 159, says, "If all the acts of Jesus were written, we no doubt should learn that these beloved women (Mary, Martha, and Mary Magdalene) were His wives." On page 172, Pratt again says, "We also proved most clearly that the Son followed the example of His Father and became the great bridegroom to whom kings' daughters and many honorable wives were to be married."

According to Mormon teaching, if Jesus were not married during His earthly life, He could not rise any higher than an angel in the next life. *Doctrines and Covenants,* page 132, verses 15-17, says that "angels did not abide my law; therefore, they cannot be enlarged, but remain separately and singly without exaltation in their saved condition to all eternity, and from henceforth are not gods, but are angels of God forever and ever." Mormon revelation demands, then, that Jesus Christ be married or He was not a god.

The blasphemy of all this distortion, in the light of the clear, plain truths of Scripture, is overwhelming. The Bible does not speak of our Lord Jesus Christ as *a* god, but *God,* the eternal God

incarnate. Jesus Himself claimed Deity. Speaking to the Jews in the temple, He claimed to be the eternal One who was before Abraham. He said (John 8:56-58), "Before Abraham was, I am." Using the form of the verb "to be," He identified Himself with the One who revealed Himself to Moses as the self-existent One. This One instructed Moses, when He appeared to him in the burning bush, to tell Israel that (Exodus 3:14) "I AM hath sent me unto you." Thus it was, He identified Himself as Jehovah of the Old Testament, the eternal One who spoke to Moses from the burning bush. To His disciples in the upper room He identified Himself as one with the Father, when He said (John 14:7-11), "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father."

Over and over again, in the magnificent 17th chapter of John, He asserts His oneness with the Father and His pre-existence and co-equality with the Father. John 17:5: *...glorify thou me...with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.* the prologue of John's Gospel introduces Jesus Christ as one with God. And, in giving the reason for the writing of his Gospel, John says (John 20:31), *...these* [things] *are written, that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.* The Word of God declares that He was the fusion of humanity and Deity in an indivisible oneness—the earthly Son of a heavenly Father, and the heavenly Son of an earthly mother—the virgin-born Son of the eternal God (Matt. 1:18-22; Luke 1:35).

The Word of God teaches His flawless purity. Repeatedly it is stated that He never sinned (I Peter 2:22; II Cor. 5:21; Heb. 4:15; 7:26; I John 3:5). The Word of God teaches that because of who Jesus Christ is, He was absolutely unique. He paid the penalty for our sins. He was "made a curse for us." He died the righteous for the unrighteous, that we might be reconciled to God (I Pet. 3:18). Yet, though He became the victim of the Calvarian murderers, His body never saw corruption, and as He had so clearly foretold, on the morning of the third day He rose literally, physically, bodily from the dead. The Apostle Paul proclaims in Romans 1:4, *He was...declared to be the Son of God with power...by the resurrection from the dead....* These great facts concerning who Jesus Christ is, and concerning His life, death, and resurrection, repre-

sent the very heart of the Christian message.

In one way or another, Mormons deny every one of these tenets of orthodox Christianity. They make the interesting claims again and again that man existed before he ever came to earth, that all men were with God "in the beginning," and that our Lord Jesus Christ was no more divine before His incarnation than any of us. The Mormons use the name of Jesus Christ in the title of their church, but it is not the Christ we worship as the eternal Son of God. This is, as the Apostle Paul said, "another Jesus," with "another gospel." The words of the Apostle Paul are frightening in Galatians 1:8,9: *But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.* In II Corinthians 11:4 he warns, *For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him.* In verses 13-15 he says, *For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore, it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness, whose end shall be according to their works.* How accurately the true revelation of God exposes the claims of the false!

I have made the interesting discovery that modern-day Mormons do not know their own theology. Frequently, leaders in the church will deny the teaching of their own prophets and apostles. One Mormon historian, B. H. Roberts, writing in *The Deseret News* (July 23, 1921), denied that the Mormon Church taught the Adam-God doctrine, or the blasphemous doctrine that Adam is the literal father of the Lord Jesus Christ, as declared by Brigham Young. This denial flatly contradicts the fact that the Mormon Church teaches the absolute authority of its prophetic office and that Brigham Young is regarded as second greatest in lineage. For a Bible believing, born again believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, it is self-evident that Mormonism has no relation to true Christianity.

MORMONISM AND SALVATION: Obviously, if Mormon doctrine is in tragic error with respect to the triunity of God and the uniqueness of our Lord Jesus Christ in His Deity, it will be in error with respect to every doctrine taught in the Word of God. Gordon H. Fraser reminds us that salvation, from the point of view of a Mormon theologian, is purely a hypothetical proposition. Since Mormon teaching says God is no more than an exalted man who passed through the experiences of an earthly existence as do all men, there is no need for attaching to Him the attributes of absolute holiness and righteousness. Since there is nothing unique about our Lord Jesus Christ, and He is no different than we are, He is reduced to the moral level of all men. Furthermore, since man does not inherit a sinful nature, and since his sins can be nullified by water baptism at the age of eight, and since there is no particular penalty attached to sin, the problem of sin in human life becomes minimal.

In his biography of Brigham Young, Morris Robert Werner writes, page 63: "In his youth, Joseph Smith was torn between the fear of not being saved eternally, and the desire to have a good time from day to day. Fortunately, for his peace of mind, he was able to reconcile the two by having himself appointed by God to have a good time."

It is interesting that there is a very strange similarity between the Moslem philosophy of man's ideal condition in the next life, and the ultimate salvation anticipated by the Mormons. The difference being principally one of cultural background; the Moslem "Paradise" is based on Oriental values, and the Mormon "Paradise" that which would be more in keeping with the culture of Occidentals. This becomes evident in the pretentious architecture of the magnificent, luxurious temples the Mormons build. They boast that in every temple there is the investment of millions of dollars. Such a temple was completed in 1956 in Los Angeles. Some feel this to be the most spectacular, contemporary religious edifice in existence. This temple was open for inspection by the "Gentiles" (anyone who is not a Mormon) for a period of several weeks. After the visiting of "Gentiles" was prohibited, all the carpets, furniture, etc., were replaced because of "Gentile" contamination. The temple is now open only to Mormons in good standing

for ritualistic purposes such as the sealing of marriages for eternity and baptism by proxy for the dead.

One of the features of the temple is a series of five rooms, the decor and murals of which attempt to depict the several stages of man's earthly history from creation to his final state in a restored, earthly paradise. The final room, known as the "celestial," is intended to simulate the joys and delights of those who finally attain the celestial kingdom. *Time* Magazine (January 16, 1956), describes it as "a luxurious sitting room with well-upholstered chairs and settees, delicate murals, and elaborate chandeliers." *Time* suggests it is all that would be pleasing to ease-loving Americans who would like to live on and on in a physical body without physical ills or cares. This is the Moslem idea of heaven—intensely physical and sensual. The Mohammedans believe the highest type of happiness is a large harem, so for them the ultimate happiness of heaven is the promise of 72 beautiful young women, members of the harem he is to enjoy forever. The Mormon and the Moslem paradise know nothing of the great spiritual truths and values of divine revelation and promise such as the unspeakable joy and peace of the forgiveness of our sins, of knowing the thrilling, eternal life of God in our souls, and of living in the eternal bliss of conscious fellowship with God in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ forever.

To be the president of the Mormon Church carries with it the power to receive "revelations," with as much authority, for example, as the Roman Catholics claim for the Pope when he speaks ex cathedra.

In what appeared to be an extremely pertinent and timely revelation, Mormon church President Spencer Kimball and two counselors declared that henceforth "all worthy male members of the church may be ordained to the priesthood without regard for race or color" (*Time*, June 19, 1978). It would be very difficult not to believe that the threat of losing their status as a tax-free religious institution, because of their long discrimination against blacks, had something to do with this unusual and completely contradictory "revelation" permitting blacks to be priests in the Mormon church.

The Mormon church has historically received convenient revela-

tions whenever they have been found to be in conflict with the government of the United States. Polygamy was practiced (and, by strict orthodox Mormons, is still practiced) until it came into conflict with the laws of the nation and the states.

The inconsistency of this new decision is evident, because the prohibition against blacks is specifically taught in the Mormon *Book of Abraham*, one of the three scriptures revealed to Prophet Joseph Smith and accepted as holy writ only by Mormons. According to the key verse, descendants of Cain (identified elsewhere in Mormon scripture as blacks) are "cursed as pertaining to the priesthood." Because of this the racial bar could only be lifted by a "revelation" direct from God. The church leaders said they had spent many hours in the Upper Room of the Salt Lake City Temple. Eventually God "confirmed that the long-promised day has come." (Had it not been for the tax status of the church, I believe the long-promised day would never have come.)

One of the most difficult problems in dealing with any cult system is what could be properly called "the language barrier." Dr. Walter Martin explains, "The average non-Christian cult owes its very existence to the fact that it has utilized the terminology of Christianity, has borrowed liberally from the Bible, almost always out of context, and sprinkled its format with evangelical cliches and terms whenever possible or advantageous. Up to now, this has been a highly successful attempt to represent their respective systems of thought as 'Christian.' On encountering a cultist, then, always remember that you are dealing with a person who is familiar with Christian terminology and who has carefully redefined it to fit the system of thought he or she now embraces."

Dr. Martin says, in the course of numerous contacts with cultists, he has had opportunities to see the semantic maze in full operation, and "it is awesome to behold." All the cult systems use theological and biblical terms familiar to all of us, but with entirely redefined, and therefore entirely different meanings. For example, Mormons readily admit that they believe in the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, that He is man's Savior. But as we have seen, they do not teach that our Lord is unique in His deity, therefore their whole concept of Christ as Savior is unbiblical and false. Mormons do not see themselves as lost sinners (Rom. 3:23). The

teaching of Mormonism is that man is basically good.They do not believe that man is, as the Bible teaches, a "fallen creature" in desperate need of redemption.

Sterling W. Sill, a Mormon leader, states, "Adam fell, but he fell in the right direction. He fell toward the goal...Adam fell, but he fell upward" (*Deseret News*, Church Section, July 31, 1965, page 7). Joseph Fielding Smith, President of the Mormon Church, wrote: "This was a transgression of the law, but *not* a sin in the strict sense, for it was something that Adam and Eve had to do" (*Doctrines of Salvation*, by Joseph Fielding Smith, Vol. 1, page 115). Of course, in the teaching of the Adam-God doctrine, there could only be terrible confusion with respect to Adam's fall. For example, later on Smith states: "It was also necessary, because of Adam's transgression, for the only begotten Son of the Father to come to redeem the world from Adam's fall" (*Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. 1, page 121).

Because Mormon theology does not consider men without a personal, vital relationship with Jesus Christ to be eternally and irrevocably lost, they think of salvation as being resurrection and an achievement they must personally merit and accomplish. Expressed briefly, salvation, according to Scripture, involves a threefold deliverance: (1) deliverance from the penalty of sin so that the sinner who puts his faith in the great redemptive work of our Lord Jesus Christ stands justified before a holy God, cleansed from the guilt of sin, the recipient of life abundant and eternal and deliverance forever from judgment for sin; (2) deliverance from the power of sin in his daily life and throughout his earthly experience as a believer, because of the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit; (3) deliverance one day from the very presence of sin when we shall stand in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ, redeemed souls in redeemed bodies, in a redeemed universe. All Christians agree that these benefits are the result of the great redemptive work of our Lord Jesus Christ when He died on the cross for our sins.

Further, the validity of the redemptive work of our Lord Jesus Christ is assured by His triumph over death, by His literal, physical, bodily resurrection on the morning of the third day. Salvation, according to the Word of God, is offered to all men, of all

climes, and in all conditions. Further, the great redemptive work of our Lord Jesus Christ is complete. "It is finished." Nothing can be added to it. The salvation offered to us can be accepted only on the basis of God's infinite grace. *For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God—Not of works, lest any man should boast* (Eph. 2:8,9). Salvation is not attained or achieved by self-effort or by good deeds of works, but only through faith in what our Lord Jesus Christ has done for us. Titus 3:5-7: *Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Spirit, Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ, our Savior, That, being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.*

The very fact that we are saved through faith in the finished work of our Lord Jesus Christ and that alone, begets within us, by the motivation of gratitude and love, the desire to produce good works. This ability becomes ours because of our dependence upon the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit. Following the magnificent statement of our justification on the basis of grace, the next verse (Titus 3:8) reads: *This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men.* Good works have nothing to do with the achieving or attaining of salvation, but they are the direct and assured result of our salvation (Eph. 2:10).

Now, notice the contrast of the doctrines (there are two) of Mormon salvation. In Vol. 1 of *Doctrines of Salvation,* Joseph Smith says, on page 134: "Salvation is twofold: general—that which comes to all men, irrespective of a belief (in this life) in Christ; and individual—that which man merits in his own acts through life, and by obedience to the laws and ordinances of the Gospel."

James Talmage, in *The Articles of Faith,* page 87, says, "The first effect [of the atonement] is to secure to all mankind alike exemption from the penalty of the fall, thus providing individual salvation whereby mankind may secure remission of personal sin. As these sins are the result of individual acts, it is just that

forgiveness for them should be conditioned on individual compliance with prescribed requirements—obedience to the laws and ordinances of the Gospel [Mormon gospel]."

Former Mormon President, Stephen L. Richards, in his pamphlet entitled, "Contributions of Joseph Smith," page 5, tells us that "there will be a general salvation for all in the sense in which the term is generally used. But salvation, meaning resurrection, is not exaltation."

Here we learn that Mormon salvation means "resurrection." In this sense salvation is synonymous with immortality and it will be the experience of all men. This is a "universal salvation" on the basis of God's grace. This kind of universal salvation is not taught in the Word of God. The purpose of our Lord's coming into the world was to save sinners (I Tim. 1:15). The second type of salvation, conditional, or individual salvation, according to Mormon theology, comes by grace, coupled with obedience to the laws and ordinances of the Gospel and not by grace alone. Mormon writer, Bruce R. McConkie, states, "Salvation in the celestial kingdom of God, however, is not salvation by grace alone. Rather, it is salvation by grace, coupled with obedience to the laws and ordinances of the Gospel." Mormons believe that nearly all men will be saved or exalted to one of the three degrees of glory when they are resurrected. In *The Articles of Faith,* page 91, Talmage says, "Some degree of salvation will come to all who have not forfeited their right to it." There is no biblical support for the concept that salvation means "resurrection," or that everyone is automatically saved. This contradicts John 3:18: *He that believeth on him* [our Lord Jesus Christ] *is not condemned; but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.*

Personal salvation, of "exaltation," is then, according to Mormon teaching, something man merits by his own "obedience to the laws and ordinances of the Gospel." In this sense, salvation is progressive. John A. Widtsoe, who is considered by Mormons to be among their most competent apologists, writes, "Wha is salvation? It is the condition that results when a person is in harmony with truth. Man may ever be on the way to salvation, but in its fullness salvation is the eternal goal. The law of salvation, as of all

life, is eternal progression. One must grow daily and forever in righteousness and good works. Those who are in a state of salvation, are in a constant state of progression. Those who are static, or who retrograde, are 'lost.' Even for the latter, the tender mercy of God provides a fitting place in His kingdom, and the opportunity for continuous repentance. Whoever has placed himself by obedience to divine law beyond the power of evil to that extent is saved. How may salvation be attained? By accepting the principles and practices of truth issuing from God and constituting the plan of salvation by the resolute use of the will to obey at any cost the requirement of the Gospel, and the constant appeal in prayer to God for assistance. Does Christ do something for man which man cannot do for himself? Yes, He is our redeemer. He leads us along the dim path. His sacrifice will enable us to recover the bodies we lay down in the grave. He is our advocate with the Father. He is our Captain.

Notice, the emphasis is entirely on works in order to achieve "exaltation." Thus, we find Mormons trusting in their baptism, church membership and attendance, tithing, keeping the "Word of Wisdom" (abstaining from tea, coffee, tobacco, alcohol, etc.) and temple work for themselves as well as their dead relatives. They all admit that these are works of righteousness according to their standards. How all this is contradicted by the inspired Word of God in Titus 3:5,6! Works have absolutely nothing to do with man's salvation (Eph. 2:8,9; Rom. 4:5,6; 10:3,4; Gal. 2:16). Ephesians 2:8,9 emphatically declares, *For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God—Not of works, lest any man should boast.*

Mormons consistently belittle the truth of "justification by faith." Those who believe this doctrine are called "gracers," and similar derogatory terms. In *The Articles of Faith,* pages 107 and 479, James Talmage says, "The sectarian dogma of justification by faith alone has exercised an influence for evil." Twice he calls it a "pernicious doctrine." How enigmatical this is in the light of Romans 5:1: *Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Mormon Doctrine,* page 671 tells us: "...The mere fact of resurrection is called salvation by grace alone.... Salvation in the celestial kingdom of God, however,

is not salvation by grace alone; rather, it is salvation by grace, coupled with obedience to the laws and ordinances of the gospel."

It is nothing short of amazing how freely Mormon prophets and apostles flatly contradict the plain statement of the Scriptures. When we think of the emphasis upon works in order to achieve personal salvation, we are reminded of those who came to our Lord with evidently a similar idea of salvation. They asked our Lord: "What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?" His terse and simple reply was, *This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent* (John 6:28,29). Once again, in contrast to the simple Gospel of God's grace, Mormonism teaches "another gospel" of works plus grace.

Necessary for exaltation (salvation) is baptism by immersion, performed by one holding the "priesthood." Further (according to "The Plan of Salvation," by Elder John Morgan), another essential to exaltation is the "laying on of hands." This, too, is the exclusive right of the priesthood, and is a signal of "confirmation," making the candidate a member of the one true church—the Mormon church. *Doctrines and Covenants,* chapter 1:30, calls it "the only true and living church upon the face of the whole earth," and declares in chapter 10:55: "Whosoever belongeth to my church need not fear, for such shall inherit the kingdom of heaven." Interestingly, this is salvation by church membership, which is not taught in the New Testament. We are placed in the body of Christ (I Cor. 12:12,13,20) after we have experienced the miracle of spiritual birth and have become (II Cor. 5:17) "new creatures in Christ Jesus." Joining a visible, organized church never constitutes salvation nor the right to enter the kingdom of God.

In *The Gospel Through the Ages,* Milton R. Hunter, page 116, is the statement that in order to enter the celestial (highest) heaven, you must be a member of the Mormon church. By the way, tithing is also extremely important in order to achieve the highest heaven. *Doctrines and Covenants,* chapter 63:23 says, "He that is tithed shall not be burned at His coming," promising the faithful tither deliverance from God's wrath. If this is believed, it would certainly be a powerful incentive for tithing. It would also give a motive of fear, and aid and abet the idea that, in a sense, salvation can be purchased by money. In this respect, the Mormon church is doing

what the *Book of Mormon* warns against in Mormon 8:32 where it is stated there will be apostate churches that teach, "Come unto me for your money; you shall be forgiven of your sins." If burning is the penalty for failing to tithe, it is another way of saying deliverance and forgiveness can be purchased.

One of the features of progressive salvation in the Mormon church is known as "temple work." Marvin Cowan has written in *Mormon Claims Answered:* "In addition to baptism, church membership, tithing, and other acts of goodness, LDS's must also go to the temple and be sealed to their spouse as well as to any children born prior to that ceremony. It is usually at this time that both the men and women put on their 'sacred garments,' which are commonly known as 'bulletproof underwear.' The reason for this strange name is because Mormons tell such fantastic stories about how their 'garments' protected them from harm. Until relatively recent years, no good LDS would part with his garment, even while bathing. Some sat on it, or stood on it while they bathed so that its protective power would not leave them. Times have changed—and so have clothing styles. Thus, the garments have gotten shorter and shorter. Since bikini bathing suits don't fit very well over this 'union suit' of underwear, many now take it off while swimming. It is a wonder more don't drown without it.

A careful study of what Mormons teach about salvation demonstrates that in the end they believe in universalism, that "all men will be saved." For example, we read in *Doctrines and Covenants,* chapter 88:102: "At the end of the Millennium the second resurrection begins.... These are the ones who have earned telestial bodies, who were wicked and carnal in mortality and who have suffered the wrath of God in hell, 'until the last resurrection, until the Lord, even Christ the Lamb, shall have finished His work.'" *Doctrines and Covenants,* chapter 26:85 states that their final destiny is to inherit a telestial glory. *Mormon Doctrine,* page 640: "Finally, in the latter end of the resurrection of damnation, the sons of perdition, those who 'remain filthy still' shall come forth from their graves."

Joseph Fielding Smith informs us in *Doctrines of Salvation,* Vol. 2, pages 131,132: "Truly, He has declared that those who reject His truth shall be damned, but He had not said that when they

have paid the penalty of their transgression they shall not come forth from their prisonhouse. But, on the other hand, He has said that after they have paid the penalty of their transgression they shall come forth and they shall receive their reward."

On this subject of judgment, once again, with unbelievable distortion of Scripture, Elder John Morgan, in his pamphlet "The Plan of Salvation" writes, "Eternal punishment is God's punishment. Everlasting punishment is God's punishment. Or, in other words, it is the name of the punishment God inflicts, He being eternal in His nature. Whosoever, therefore, receives God's punishment receives eternal punishment, whether it is endured one hour, one day, one week, one year, or an age." How could such a false definition of "eternal punishment" conceivably be made when, for example, our Lord plainly said in Matthew 25:46: *And these shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal.* The word used for "eternal" is the Greek work *aionios*. If the state of the unrighteous is not eternal but temporal (an impossible contradiction), then the state of the righteous is not eternal but temporal because the word *aionios* is used in both instances. Further, the obvious construction of the sentence shows the eternal punishment refers to the wicked. Scores of scriptures could be cited to refute this distortion of both scripture and grammatical construction (Matt. 10:28; John 5:28, 29: etc).

After espousing the teaching of the laying on of hands as a necessity before salvation—"exaltation," Elder John Morgan further declares in his pamphlet that those who do not teach such a doctrine are perverting the Gospel, and, once again lifting Scripture not only out of context but, in diamatric opposition to the truth revealed in the Word of God, quotes Galatians 1:8: *But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.* Anyone who reads, even in a cursory manner, the book of Galatians, realizes that the "perverters" of which the Apostle Paul is speaking, are those who have attempted to mix law and grace. His epistle was directed to the "Judaizers" who were attempting to bring back rites, rituals, and ceremonies as an addition to justification by faith and faith alone in the finished work of our Lord

Jesus Christ on the cross. Elder John Morgan could not have quoted a better Scripture to refute the false teaching of this specious system. What better words could we quote than Galatians 5:1 where the Apostle declares, *Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.*

We have discussed but a few of the false doctrines of Mormonism and have seen their error when compared with the Scriptures, and what we have discovered is that the Mormon doctrine of salvation is not salvation at all! This is the sad and tragic fact about every other false doctrine the Mormon church proclaims. The words of Isaiah come to mind: *To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them* (Isaiah 8:20). Out of this maze of contradiction and confusion how comforting, assuring, and dependable is the clear testimony of the unadulterated, pure Word of God, and our Lord's promise in John 6:37: *All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.*

Jehovah's Witnesses

In his excellent and thorough work, *Apostles of Denial*, an examination and expose of the history, doctrines and claims of Jehovah's Witnesses, Edmond Charles Gruss, associate professor of history and apologetics, Los Angeles Baptist College and Theological Seminary, Newhall, California, states that one can clearly see, from the standpoint of orthodoxy, the doctrinal system of Jehovah's Witnesses is chiefly one of denials. These include a denial of the Trinity, the deity of Christ, the personality of the Holy Spirit, the inherent immortality of the soul, the total depravity of man, the bodily resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, the atonement and finished work of Christ, the need of the new birth for all, the Second Coming of Christ, eternal punishment, and a multitude of other doctrinal perversions. It is indeed a system of denials.

Consider the statement of godly men who are now in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ, whose ministry and messages continue to bring untold blessing to hundreds of thousands. Dr. A. C. Dixon, minister of Spurgeon's Tabernacle in England, said of Russellism, "Its plan of salvation is a plan of damnation." Dr. James M. Gray, who served as head of the Moody Bible Institute, Chicago, stated, "Russellism contradicts almost every fundamental revelation." Dr. I. M. Haldeman, distinguished pastor of the First Baptist Church, New York, and a great biblical expositor, calls Russellism "The wicked and blasphemous system which teaches the annihilation of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Dr. H. I. Ironside, honored and loved by millions, pastor of the great Moody Church in Chicago, declared, "This is indeed a sect of perdition, and its teaching is rightly labeled 'damnable heresy.' 'From such turn away.'"

Writes A. J. Pollock: "The system is anti-Christian. It comes under the lash of the Apostle Paul, who wrote, 'But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed' (Gal. 1:8). Russellism is another gospel. If Rutherford and his followers died

in the beliefs that are advocated in his books, they died unbelievers in the Gospel that Paul preached."

Because any system can be properly evaluated and judged by the character of its leaders, we must consider briefly Charles Taze Russell, the originator of what has now become the group known as Jehovah's Witnesses. He lived in what was then known as Allegheny, Pennsylvania, later incorporated into the city of Pittsburgh, becoming simply part of the "North Side." Born in 1852, as a young man he became a member of the Congregational Church. The writings of Mrs. Ellen G. White, who was responsible for Seventh-Day Adventism, fascinated Russell. Consistent with Seventh-Day Adventist teaching, he rejected the doctrine of eternal torment and entered into controversy with every other accepted doctrine of historic Christianity.

A small group collected around him, and in 1874 he wrote and published a pamphlet entitled "The Object and Manner of the Lord's Return." His thesis was that our Lord's return would be invisible rather than visible, secret rather than public. In 1879, the first issue of the *Watch Tower* magazine appeared, and has been published continuously ever since. Its purpose was to announce Jehovah's kingdom. And, in spite of the fact that our Lord Jesus Christ stated clearly, *But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only* (Matt. 24:36), in 1880, through his magazine Russell devised a chronology indicating that "the times of the Gentiles" would end in 1914, and there would be the "second presence" (Second Coming) of Christ. The Word of God does teach there is a secret coming of our Lord Jesus Christ for His Church in the Rapture (I Thess. 4:13-18), but there is no such things as a secret coming of our Lord Jesus Christ in the establishment of His kingdom! When our Lord returns with His Church, the world—and Jehovah's Witnesses—will know it. It will certainly not be a secret. *For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west, so shall the coming of the Son of man be* (Matt. 24:27). *Behold, he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him, and they also who pierced him; and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen* (Rev. 1:7). *He who testifieth these things saith, Surely, I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus* (Rev. 22:20). This

certainly contradicts any idea of an invisible coming of our Lord Jesus Christ in the establishment of His kingdom!

Wrote Russell in his *Studies in the Scriptures*, series II, page 77: "Sometime before the end of A.D. 1914, the last member of the divinely organized church of Christ, 'the royal priesthood,' 'the body of Christ,' will be glorified with the head." Page 81: "Their reign (the heirs of the heavenly kingdom) over the world can only date from A.D. 1914—when the times of the Gentiles have expired." Page 99: "We consider it an established truth that the final end of the kingdoms of this world and the full establishment of the kingdom of God, will be accomplished at the end of 1915." Page 170: "The 'times of the Gentiles' will fully run out with the year A.D. 1914...and Christ's kingdom fully established." Page 242: "The present governments must all be overturned about the close of A.D. 1914." Page 245: "The gospel age harvest will end October 1914...and likewise the overthrow of 'Christendom' so-called must be expected to immediately follow."

Thus, it was prophesied that Christ would come, set up His Kingdom, the Gentile kingdoms would be destroyed, the governments overturned, and the organized churches overthrown—all in the month of October, 1914. Obviously, this did not happen. Here is an amazing statement that appeared in the *Watch Tower*, October 1, 1907: "But let us suppose a case far from our expectation. Suppose A.D. 1914 should pass, with the world's affairs all serene, and with evidence that the 'very elect' had not been 'changed,' and without the restoration of natural Israel to favor under the new covenant. What then? Would that prove our chronology wrong? Yes, assuredly." In spite of this admission, the successor to Russell, so-called Judge Joseph Franklin Rutherford, in the book *Prophecy*, page 73, offered a revision: "In 1914 Jehovah set His Anointed One upon His throne. Therefore, at that time, Christ Jesus took His authority as King. Three and one-half years thereafter, to wit, in 1918, the Lord came to His temple, which is the temple of God." It becomes obvious, as Edmond Gruss suggests, that the "secret presence" theory originated because of a consistent failure of one after another of the dates set for the visible coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. In direct disobedience to our Lord's own words, with respect to the time of His coming, the

dates were retained and revised in a manner that becomes ludicrous. The followers of William Miller (the man largely responsible for the indoctrination of Ellen G. White), set the date October 22, 1844 for the visible, bodily return of our Lord Jesus Christ in the translation of the Church, and the bringing of judgment upon the world. When Christ did not return, Hiram Edson found a way out of the dilemma by saying that our Lord actually entered into the second compartment of the heavenly sanctuary. O. R. L. Crosier, Edson's friend, presented this new view in 1846, and it is accepted to this present time by Seventh-Day Adventists.

The editor of a Seventh-Day Adventist journal, *Herald of the Morning*, N. H. Barbour and his associate J. H. Patton, had predicted Christ would visibly return in the autumn of 1874. Interestingly, this date was accepted by Russell, and proof became unnecessary because Russell claimed it was an invisible return, but made the further claim the invisible Christ would come to translate the living saints, bring judgment to the earth, and establish His kingdom in the autumn of 1914. When that prediction failed—never at a loss—he simply said the kingdom was established in heaven and not on earth, and His invisible "second presence" was re-explained as beginning not in 1874, but in 1914. This method of "deceitfully handling the Word of God" is characteristic of the movement.

In 1886, Russell published his most popular book, *The Divine Plan of the Ages*. This became the first in a series known as *Studies in the Scriptures*, which included seven volumes. The sixth volume was published in 1904, the seventh volume, *The finished Mystery*, after his death. This last book caused a cleavage in the organization, with the larger group following J. F. Rutherford, and the smaller group becoming known as the "Dawn Bible Students Association."

The name "Jehovah's Witnesses" was adopted in Columbus, Ohio in 1931. The cult had been known by various names: "Russellism," "The People's Pulpit Association," "The Watch Tower and Tract Society," and "The International Bible Students." All were based upon *Studies in the Scriptures* by Russell. Russell claimed these books were the seven trumpets of Revelation 8 and 9. But before the seventh angel could blow the trumpet,

Russell died. So Rutherford wrote the seventh book. Russell is honored as the human agent responsible for the beginning of this work. After his death in 1916, the leadership passed to the much more vigorous J. F. Rutherford. He was a prolific writer, and turned out a veritable deluge of books. For many years he was the sole author of all the "Watch Tower Society" propaganda. And although Jehovah's Witnesses deny it, everything Rutherford wrote was based on the Scripture studies of Russell.

Dr. Walter R. Martin, in his book, *The Kingdom of the Cults,* states that he has been considerably disturbed by Jehovah's Witnesses' constant denial of any theological connection whatsoever with "Pastor" Charles T. Russell. Undoubtedly, the reason for this is that Russell proved to be a perjurer under oath, a sworn adversary of historic Christianity, and a scholastic fraud. However, Dr. Martin contends, with excellent documentation, that Jehovah's Witnesses are following the basis teaching of Russell in relation to many biblical doctrines which he denied. Writes Martin: "After a thorough examination of the doctrines of the Society and the lengthy comparison with the teachings of 'Pastor' Russell its founder, the author is convinced that the two systems are basically the same, and whatever differences do exist are minute, and affect in no major way the cardinal beliefs of the organization."

Following this statement, Dr. Martin lists a careful comparison of the teachings of Charles Taze Russell, or "Russellism," and the doctrines of Jehovah's Witnesses. The similarity is undeniable and incontrovertible. The facts speak for themselves. Without the Scripture studies of Russell there would be no Jehovah's Witnesses. Though the Jehovah's Witnesses deny it, the *Watch Tower* publications consistently follow Russell's heretical theology.

In 1942, J. F. Rutherford died, and Nathan Homer Knorr, 37 years of age, was elected president of the Watch Tower Societies of Pennsylvania and New York, and the International Bible Students' Association of England. Born in Allentown, Pennsylvania, his formal education ended with high school. He has not become known through writing, because, with the death of Rutherford, all the publications of the Watch Tower Society have been issued anonymously. All materials, even articles in their magazines, are

anonymously published so there is no danger of any "cult personality" challenging the complete domination of the group by the small clique in charge of its destiny. The directors of the local groups of Witnesses were at one time elected by these groups, but now the leaders are all appointed by the ruling authorities at 107 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, New York.

In 1950 the Witnesses published their own private "translation" of the Bible entitled *New World Translation of the Christian Greek Scriptures*. However, there is not an authenticated, valid, known scholar among the translators. It is based largely upon the notoriously inaccurate interlinear 1806 translation of Griesbach's *Greek Text of the New Testament* by Benjamin Wilson, called the *Diaglott*. In both these volumes liberties and license have been taken with the Greek and English, and fearful distortions of the truth have resulted in their wicked effort to discredit the deity of the Lord Jesus Christ. A careful study of the original text and some Greek grammar will refute their claims in short order. No wonder the seven translators of the NWTB asked not to have their names disclosed, even after their death.

In 1923 Judge Rutherford wrote a booklet entitled *World Distress—Why, and the Remedy*. He quoted "Pastor" Russell sixteen times, referred to his book, *Studies in the Scriptures* over twelve times and devoted six pages at the end of the booklet to the advertising of these same volumes. In 1925 he published a pamphlet entitled *Comfort for the People*, in which his animosity toward organized Christianity is seen in his definition of clergymen as "Dumb Dogs (D.D.)." In this pamphlet he also quoted Russell's dubious prophetical chronology, to which we have already referred. It is referred to again in the July 15, 1950 edition of the *Watch Tower*, page 216. In the words of Dr. Walter Martin: "To make it an even more hopeless contradiction, they lifted as their source the *Watch Tower* of 1880, of which 'Pastor' Russell was editor-in-chief." Martin correctly concludes that if Jehovah's Witnesses, to use their own words, "do not consider his [Russell's] writings authoritative, and do not circulate them" (*Awake!*, May 8, 1951, page 26), why (1) publish his chronology; (2) use his publications as evidence and, (3) admit his teachings on this vital point in their theology?

Much insight can be gained into the fallacious system of Jehovah's Witnesses by an examination of its founder, Charles Taze Russell, whom we have briefly considered. The unwary, ungrounded, untaught people of God can be trapped—taken in—by his ardent defense of the inspiration of the Bible, his denunciation of the higher critics and New Thought theologians, his constant appeal to the Word of God, his declared loyalty to the Lord Jesus Christ, and his use of pious language. But even a cursory examination reveals a fantastic hostility toward what is called "organized religion." This bitter animosity has been a principal characteristic of the movement. A chief watchword is "religion is a racket, religion is a snare."

The Jehovah's Witnesses cult is anti-Christ, anti-Church, and anti-government. Its members refuse to bear arms in defense of their country. Their children are taught to refuse to salute the flag of the United States. Over the years they have had many brushes with the law. They have allowed members to die whose lives, according to physicians, could have been saved by blood transfusions, which they condemned as "eating blood." Their so-called Bible study is but a slavish devotion to *Watch Tower* lessons, and their people are "brainwashed by an exclusivism that permits them to read only Jehovah's Witness literature, earning their salvation by peddling literature on the streets, and rendering a complete, unquestioning obedience to the heads of the system who exercise an absolute controlling power from their headquarters in Brooklyn, New York.

Russell was not only responsible for false doctrine later promoted by Rutherford; he was also responsible for the paranoia that manifests itself in the attitude Jehovah's Witnesses have toward everyone except those who embrace the false dogmas of their group. Russell makes much in his voluminous study of what he calls "due time," saying that God did not reveal to the disciples what He later revealed to Russell, because the time was not ready. Undoubtedly the greatest minds that ever graced the earth—Polycarp, Ignacus, Alexander, Jerome, Salvian, and all of the great early church fathers—did not, in the language of Russell, "know anything." They were all ignorant. Men like Luther and the other great reformers who captured the doctrine of justification by faith;

men like Wesley, Spurgeon, Finney, Moody, and a multitude of great men of God too numerous to mention, were all in darkness. But now, in the "due time," in the light of his shining brightness, Russell is the first man for two thousand years to receive the true interpretation of the Word of God. This form of egocentricity belongs to the leaders of every cult movement.

According to Russell, the Word of God was never a lamp to anyone's feet or a light to anyone's path until it was properly interpreted by him. His presumption can only be described as fantastic. He put his own writing not only on an equality with the Scripture in regard to divine inspiration, but more than that, claimed it was capable of replacing the Word of God itself! On page 298 of the September 15, 1910 issue of the *Watch Tower* appeared this startling statement: "If the six volumes of Scripture Studies are practically the Bible, topically arranged with Bible proof texts given, we might not improperly name the volumes 'the Bible in an arranged form.' That is to say, they are not mere comments on the Bible, but they are practically the Bible itself. Furthermore, not only do we find that people cannot see the divine plan in studying the Bible itself, but we also see that if anyone lays the Scripture Studies aside, even after he has used them, after he has become familiar with them, after he has read them for ten years—if he then lays them aside and ignores them and goes to the Bible alone, though he has understood his Bible for ten years, our experience shows that within two years he goes into darkness. On the other hand, if he had merely read the Scripture Studies with their references and had not read a page of the Bible as such, he would be in the light at the end of two years, because he would then have the light of the Scriptures."

If you sincerely believe that the Bible is the revelation of God—infallible, inerrant and complete—you must repudiate this system immediately. When a man like Russell puts a black eye on all the scholarship of two thousand years past, juggles the Greek as though he were a student of the classics, and claims to be the only true interpreter of the Word of God, it is natural to ask for his credential. His formal training went only as far as the seventh grade. This is not said disparagingly, because some men have never had the privilege of formal education and have certainly been wise

men. Though this lack of education is only relatively significant, it is a fact. He uses many Greek words in his books, but he could not read the Greek alphabet in court.

The Rev. J. J. Ross, pastor of the James Street Baptist Church, Hamilton, Ohio, published a pamphlet entitled *Some Facts About the Self-styled 'Pastor' Charles T. Russell* in June, 1912. Russell promptly sued Ross for "defamatory libel," but lost the case. The high court of Ontario, in session March, 1913, ruled that there were no grounds for libel, and "the case was thrown out of court by the evidence furnished by 'Pastor' Russell himself."

Among other charges, he was declared to be "...totally ignorant of the dead languages." On March 17, 1930 he was asked under a court oath, "Do you know the Greek?" He replied, "Oh, yes." He was then handed a copy of the New Testament in Greek by Westcott and Hort, and when asked to read the letters of the alphabet on the top of the page in Greek, he could not do so. Queried the attorney, "Now are you familiar with the Greek language?" "No." replied Russell without a brush. It is understandable that Jehovah's Witnesses want to repudiate him.

The Brooklyn Daily Eagle, November 1, 1916, describes in detail some of his embarrassing activities, including an attempt to defraud his wife, and his indictment for selling miracle wheat. In fact, *The Brooklyn Eagle* thoroughly exposed the hypocrisy of "Pastor" Russell. It is history that he secured enormous funds to carry on his propaganda by persuading people that this age was soon to end, and that they should dispose of their property to him for the furtherance of the true Gospel.

At the age of 65, Charles Taze Russell died November 9, 1916. Officiating at this funeral was Judge Rutherford, then special judge of the eighth judicial court of Boonville, Missouri. He now assumed the leadership of the cult. Interestingly, he served time in prison in Atlanta for violation of the Espionage Act of 1918. This made him a hero to the Witnesses. He continued to lead the attack upon the doctrines of "organized religion" with a fervor, determination, "Madison Avenue" technique that would have amazed Russell himself. He died with cancer January 8, 1942 at his palatial mansion, "Beth Sarim" in San Diego, California, at the age of 72. If anything, his egoism exceeded that of Russell. His authority be-

came ultimate and final. He claimed to be the veritable mouthpiece of Jehovah, denounced his predecessor's pyramid prophecy scheme as an attempt to find God's will outside the Scriptures, and wrote the seventh book of the Scripture studies, *The Finished Mystery*. This split the Society and the promise of wrath fell upon the new group.

Rutherford continued to write voluminously, or rather, rewrite what Russell had written. Undoubtedly the reason for his repudiation of Russell was because of the unsavory facts about his life which could not be denied. With the death of Rutherford the board of directors unanimously elected Nathan H. Knoor as president. He has continued to follow diligently the footsteps of Russell and Rutherford, though enigmatically denying that Jehovah's Witnesses follow Russell's teaching. As suggested previously, a careful comparison of the teachings of Russell and the present doctrines of Jehovah's Witnesses gives undeniable evidence that Russell is the author of both, and so we will proceed on that basis.

The Jehovah's Witnesses Bible, the *New World Translation* of the entire Bible was completed and published in 1961. Careful scholarship reveals a fantastic tampering with the text in order to slant it whenever possible to the false doctrines of the cult. In the Foreword the anonymous translators, in direct contradiction of their own statement on page 9, proceed to devote fifteen pages in word and photographic illustration to the justification of the insertion of the Tetragrammaton (*Jhvh*, translated "Jehovah") 230 times into the text and 72 times in the margin of the translation. Their claim will not stand up under scholarly investigation. Dr. Martin has stated that it can be shown from literally thousands of copies of the Greek New Testament that not once does the Tetragrammaton appear. Its appearance can be found only in Aqilaa's Greek version, written approximately A.D. 128, and in Origen's *Hexapla,* written approximately A.D. 245. The fact that Jerome mentions its presence in some of the Greek texts of his day, only goes to prove that the injection of the Hebrew Tetragrammaton in copies of the Greek translation of the Old Testament, called the Septuagint, was not the rule. In fact, consistent with the Greek text, in the Septuagint, the words *kurios* or *theos* were used in place of the divine name. Even Aquilaa uses the Hebrew form

Jhvh only once, and he uses archaic Hebrew letters. After inserting the divine name in the text so many times in the *New World Translation*, the committee neglected to insert that name in Romans 14:9-11 and Philippians 2:10,11. Both of these passages are based on Isaiah 45:22-25, where the name Jehovah could be appropriately used.

The reason for all this concern with the Tetragrammaton is that the Jehovah's Witnesses claim it has remained for them, as God's true witnesses, to restore the divine name "Jehovah" to the text of the New Testament. Among a multitude of similar perversions is the futile attempt to deny the uniqueness of our Lord in His deity by translating John 1:1: *Originally the Word was, and the Word was with God, and the Word was a god.* A footnote on page 776 gives a long list of texts to prove that the translation of the predicate nominative in the *New World Translation* is justified. There is, however, a rule of Greek grammar established by E. C. Colwell, a New Testament Greek scholar: "A definite predicate nominative has the article, when it follows the verb. In the last clause of John 1:1, the predicate nominative 'God' precedes the verb 'was.' The order of the Greek text is 'God was the Word'" (*Journal of Biblical Literature*, January, 1933).

The word for God (*Theos*) without the definite article (the) is often used for Jehovah God. Even the *New World Translation* of the word *Theos* is translated by giving it a capital "G" and without the article in John 1:6,12,13, and in chapter 3:2,21. If the Witness translate John 1:1, "The Word was a god," then why do they not translate John 1:18, "No man hath seen a god?" The same might be asked concerning Romans 8:8, Philippians 2:6 and 11. If Christ is "god" with a little "g" why does the *New World Translation* translate Thomas' words in John 20:28, "My master and my God." using a capital "G?" Also, our Lord accepts Thomas' worship, and did not correct him, but instead said, "...because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed; blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." Our Lord accepted his worship because He was the incarnate God.

All this effort of Jehovah's Witnesses in their *New World Translation* is an attempt to discredit the Greek text on this point, because they realize that if Jesus and Jehovah are "one" in na-

ture, their theology is destroyed. The reason so much contorting and twisting is done of this one verse is to deny the equality of our Lord Jesus Christ with the Father in the unity and essence of deity. Jehovah's Witnesses deny the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ. They teach, "He is a creature; he was not co-eternal with God" (*New Heavens and a New Earth,* page 24). They teach that Christ is "a god," a mighty one, but not God (*Let God Be True,* pages 32, 33, 106).

Anthony Hoekema points out that "in order to understand Jehovah's Witnesses teaching on the person of Christ, we have to distinguish between a pre-human, a human, and a posthuman state." The following presentation uses these three categories. (1) The prehuman state. "Jesus the Christ, the created individual, is the second greatest personage of the universe." (*Make Sure of All Things,* page 207). Co-equality with the Father is denied in the statement: "Prior to coming to earth, this only begotten son of God did not think himself to be co-equal with Jehovah God. He did not view himself as 'equal in power and glory' with almighty God..." (*Let God Be True,* page 34). Christ, as the archangel Michael, was "'a god,' a mighty one, but not God" (*Let God Be True,* pages 32,33,106). Further, Christ did not possess immortality. "Did this first born son possess immortality, that is, deathlessness? That he did not have this quality and was not immortal at that time is proved by later facts, as well as plainly stated in the Bible....The time came, however, that Jehovah God opened up to His son the opportunity to gain immortality" (*The Truth Shall Make You Free,* page 44).

(2) The human state. Witnesses do accept the doctrine of the virgin birth. "...God miraculously transferred His life from heaven to the womb of a Jewish virgin, Mary of Bethlehem" (*New Heavens and a New Earth,* page 150). Yet, enigmatically, the incarnation—the human and divine natures of Christ—are denied, and it is taught that Jesus, during His earthly ministry, was a perfect man, nothing more, nothing else, and nothing less. "A divine miracle occurred when Jesus was 'made flesh.' He was not an incarnation in flesh, but was flesh, a human son of God, a perfect man, no longer a spirit, although having a spiritual or heavenly past and background" (*The Kingdom Is at Hand,* page 49). In the

book, *Make Sure of All Things,* a definition is given of "incarnation" as "...a clothing or state of being clothed with flesh, taking on or being manifested in a body of flesh. Scripturally it describes the condition of angels appearing to mankind on earth. False religions claim it is the 'union of Christ's divinity with his humanity.'" The Witnesses teach that at His birth, the Son of God became a man—Jesus—and He became "the Christ" or Messiah only at His baptism. "By pouring out His Holy Spirit upon the baptized Jesus, God anointed him with the Spirit to be the long promised king.... Jesus became the Messiah..." (*Let God Be True,* page 38).

(3) The posthuman state. The bodily resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ is rejected. He "was resurrected as a spirit creature" (*From Paradise Lost to Paradise Regained,* page 144). Concerning what happened to the body of Christ, as far as the latest books are concerned, there is only silence. Russell wrote, "Whether it was dissolved into gases, or whether it is still preserved somewhere as the grand memorial of God's love, of Christ's obedience, and of our redemption, no one knows..." (*Studies in the Scriptures,* Vol. 2, page 129).

The writer of the *Awake!* (June 8, 1955) article, "In What Body Did Jesus oppear?" explains: "His human body, the one in which he was impaled, was removed from the tomb by the power of God. Had it remained there, it would have been an obstacle in the way of faith of his disciples who were not instructed in spiritual things until the giving of the Holy Spirit later at Pentecost." The following reasons were given for the resurrection of Christ: "One reason was to reward Jesus for his faithfulness.... Jesus Christ was also raised from the dead so that he could turnover to God the right to human life that he had kept by dying faith.... Jesus was also raised from the dead that he might restore paradise...and above all Jesus was raised from the dead that he might uphold God's rulership by destroying all the wicked in God's due time" (*From Paradise Lost to Paradise Regained,* pages 144,145). Since the "resurrection" of Christ was a spiritual one (actually, no resurrection at all), His postresurrection appearances were accomplished by materializing bodies for the occasion. "Usually they could not at first tell it was Jesus, for he appeared in different bodies. He appeared and disappeared just as angels had done, because he was resurrected as a

spirit creature. Only because Thomas would not believe did Jesus appear in a body like that in which he had died" (*From Paradise Lost to Paradise Regained,* page 144). Because none but God had immortality, it was given to Christ at His resurrection. "Christ Jesus was first to receive immortality as a reward for his faithful course on earth..." (*Let God Be True,* page 74). His ascension is viewed as that of a spirit creature; as He ascended in the presence of His disciples He disappeared from sight. In His exaltation, "God exalted His son Jesus to be higher than he was before he lived and died as a man." In this new state of exaltation "Jesus is made the head under Jehovah God's capital organization over the entire universe" (*Let God Be True,* page 40).

Edmond Gruss suggests that Hoekema's conclusion to the study of the person of Christ as viewed by the Witnesses, is helpful. "I conclude that what the three states of Christ's existence in *Watch Tower* theology really amount to is this: angel-man-angel, with no real continuity between the three. A little reflection will reveal how devastating this view is of the Christology of the Scriptures. The individual who laid down His life at Calvary was not the individual who existed previously in heaven and was God's agent in creation: the individual who is now ruling over His heavenly kingdom is not the individual who died on the cross for us. Really, Jehovah's Witnesses have three Christs, none of whom is equal to Jehovah, and none of whom is the Christ of the Scriptures" (*The Four Major Cults,* page 275,276, by Anthony A. Hoekema, Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1963).

Throughout the entire content of Scripture the identity of our Lord Jesus Christ, as the revelation of Jehovah God in human form, is clearly taught (Isaiah 9:6; Micah 5:2; Isaiah 7:14; John 1:1; 8:58; 17:5; compare Exodus 3:14, Hebrews 1:3, Philippians 2:11, Colossians 2:9, and Revelation 1:8,17,18, etc.). The uniqueness of our Lord Jesus Christ in His deity is one of the cornerstones of Christian revelation, and as such, has been attacked more vigorously throughout the ages than any other single doctrine of the Christian faith.

We have seen that Jehovah's Witnesses deny the uniqueness of our Lord Jesus Christ in His deity, adhering to the old Arian heresy that Athanasius, the great Church father, refuted in his

famous essay, "On the Incarnation of the Word." Characteristically, cults deny the equality of our Lord Jesus Christ with God the Father and thus deny the triunity of God. If the Lord Jesus Christ of the New Testament are one and the same, then, of course, the whole cult system collapses.

It would be impossible to study the Old Testament scriptures and not come to the conclusion that an incarnation of God was promised. God was to appear in human form. We see this clearly, for example, in Isaiah 7:14: *Therefore the Lord* [Jehovah] *himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.* (Literally, God or Jehovah with us, since Jehovah is the only God.) Writes Dr. Martin: "The key to Isaiah 7:14 is the divine name 'Immanuel,' which can only be rightly rendered 'God with us.' And since there is no other God but Jehovah by His own declaration (Isaiah 43:10,11), therefore, Jesus Christ and Jehovah God are of the same substance in power and eternity, hence equal. This prophecy was fulfilled in Matthew 1:22,23. Thus, there can be no doubt that Jesus Christ is the 'Son of the virgin' so distinctly portrayed in Isaiah 7:14.Jehovah's Witnesses can present no argument to refute this plain declaration of Scripture, namely that Jehovah and Christ are 'one' and the same, since the very term 'Immanuel' (God or Jehovah with us) belies any other interpretation."

Isaiah 9:6: *For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.* No verse could be found in all the Old Testament to demonstrate more dramatically the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ than this particular verse. The obvious declaration is that Jehovah Himself is going to enter the stream of human history—in human form. The entire responsibility of government will be His, as the "child born," and the "son given." the superlatives used to describe His attributes include the phrase "The Everlasting Father," more correctly translated in the Hebrew, "The Father of Eternity."

According to Isaiah 43:10,11, *Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, and my servant whom I have chosen, that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he; before me there was no*

God formed, neither shall there be after me. I, even I, am the Lord, and beside me there is no savior. He is the only God; therefore the "child born," the "son given" is Jehovah God incarnate. Jehovah's Witnesses attempt to get around this verse by claiming that our Lord Jesus Christ is "a mighty god." Since there is no article in the Hebrew text, "mighty," therefore, does not mean Jehovah. This, then, offers the absurd argument that there are two "mighty gods." Isaiah 45:22 takes care of this argument forever, for there we read, *Look unto me, and be saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else.*

The prophet said in Micah 5:2, *But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel, whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.* Here we have the exact birthplace of our Lord Jesus Christ identified, and this One is none other than God in human form. According to the Hebrew lexicon of the Old Testament, the term "goings forth" can be translated "origin"; thus reading, "whose origin is from everlasting to everlasting." This must of necessity refer exclusively to God Himself, for He alone is the eternally existing One (Isaiah 44:6).

It becomes obvious, on the basis of these three verses alone, that Jehovah of the Old Testament became incarnate in the Lord Jesus Christ of the New Testament, and His coming was for a great redemptive purpose, that He might "die the just for the unjust in order to reconcile us to God." He came, as He said, "not to be ministered unto, but to minister and to give his life a ransom for many." The pre-existence of our Lord Jesus Christ is declared openly and unmistakably. He is the everlasting, the self-caused One, the One who alone is the fulness of the Eternal Being. Our Lord Himself said, *Before Abraham was, I am* (John 8:58). In comparing this with the Septuagint translation of Exodus 3:14 and Isaiah 43:10-13, we find the translation is identical. In Exodus 3:14, Jehovah, speaking to Moses, said "I AM." Scholarship demands the recognition of the two "I am's" referring to the same God. Our Lord literally said to them, "I am Jehovah"; and it is clear that they understood Him to mean just exactly that, for they attempted, as the next verse reveals, to stone Him. And when our

Lord asked them why they wanted to stone Him, they said, *Because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God* (John 10:33). When we ask why was the Lord Jesus Christ crucified, the answer is because He claimed He was the only begotten Son of God...claimed He was God!

Jehovah's Witnesses declare that the Greek rendering of *ego eimi* (I am) is "properly rendered in the 'perfect indefinite sense' (I have been), not 'I am'" (*New World Translation*, page 312, footnote "c"). Dr. Martin points out that this is a bold perversion of the Greek text. The Greek will not allow such an imposition as "I have been." The correct translation is "I am." And since Jehovah is the only "I am" (Exodus 3:14; Isaiah 44:6), He and the Lord Jesus Christ are "one" in nature, truly the fulness of "deity" in the flesh. The Word of God further says, in Colossians 2:9, *In him* [our Lord Jesus Christ] *dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily* [corporeally].

The writer of the book of Hebrews also portrays our Lord Jesus Christ as Jehovah. In this respect, the NWT underscores the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ. Hebrews 1:3: *He* [Christ] *is the reflection of his* [Jehovah's] *glory, and the image imprinted by his* [Jehovah's] *substance, and he* [Christ] *sustains all things by the word of his power....* No creation is ever declared in Scripture to be of God's very "substance" or "essence." Therefore, the Lord Jesus Christ cannot be a creation or a created being. It was the clear intention of the writer of Hebrews to portray the Lord Jesus Christ as the incarnate Jehovah, or he never would have used such explicit language as "the image imprinted by his substance."

In Philippians 2:11 we are told *...that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God, the Father.* Comparing this verse with Isaiah 45:22-25, it speaks of a universal worship, which one day all mankind will render unto Jehovah. Philippians 2:9-11 obviously applies this Isaiah passage to our Lord Jesus Christ.

Jehovah's Witnesses use Colossians 1:15-17 to support their teaching that our Lord Jesus Christ was created by Jehovah (*Let God Be True*, page 35). This is based primarily on the words: "the first-born of all creation" in verse 15. If this verse were teaching that the Lord Jesus Christ is the first being created by Jehovah,

the word "first-created" would have been used of our Lord—not the word "first-born." These are two different words in the Greek with two entirely different meanings. "First-created" is *protoktistos*, "first-created." Instead, it uses *prototokos*. This latter word means an heir, a begotten one, the first in rank. The obvious teaching is that the Lord Jesus Christ is first in rank above all creation. He is the heir of all things. He is prior to all creation, and, as Lord, is superior over it. It refers to priority of position, not origin.

This meaning is clear in Psalm 89:27: *Also I will make him my first-born, higher than the kings of the earth.* The assertion in Colossians 1:15 is that the Lord Jesus Christ, as the eternal Son, holds the position of priority in relation to all creation, in that He was before all things. Verse 17: *And he is before all things, and by him all things consist...* that is, "hold together." He created all things. Verse 16: *For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers—all things were created by him, and for him.*

The NWT adds "other" four times in Colossians 1:15-17, so the passage states that Christ created "all other things," or, everything except Himself. However, there is no basis whatsoever for adding the word "other." It does not occur in the Greek manuscripts. The translators of the NWT admit this by putting the word "other" in brackets. Obviously, this is done in order to comply with the assumption that first-born means first-created. It does not. Consequently, there is no warrant whatsoever for adding the word "other." In the entire revelation of God there is not a single verse stating that Christ was created by Jehovah. Our Lord said in John 5:23, *...all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father.* The triune God is specifically revealed in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is "the true God, and eternal life" (I John 5:20).

Comparing Matthew 24:30 with Revelation 1:7, it is inescapably evident that the Lord Jesus Christ is the "one coming with clouds" in both references. In Isaiah 44:6, Jehovah declares that He alone is the first, and the last, and the only God. Many times Jehovah declares His existence as "the only God and Savior" (Isaiah 41:4;

43:11-13; 44:6; 45:5; 48:12, etc.). Here is irrefutable proof. If our Lord Jesus Christ is not Jehovah, then He is not the Savior. Since Jehovah is the only first and last, and our Lord Jesus Christ is referred to in Revelation 1:8 as "Alpha and Omega," "the first and the last" (also in revelation 21:6 and 22:13), then Jehovah's Witnesses must either deny the authority of Scripture or admit that the Lord Jesus Christ and Jehovah are "one." And that's exactly what Jesus said in John 10:30: *I and my Father are one.*

To add further weight to the evidence for the deity of Christ, Revelation 1:17,18 and 2:8 reveal our Lord Jesus Christ as the first and the last, who was dead, and yet lives forever. This specifically designates our Lord Jesus Christ as the incarnate God who died, who was buried, who rose again. Furthermore, *kurios* is the Greek word for "Jehovah" in the Greek version of the Old Testament. When Thomas touched the wounds of the risen Lord he exclaimed, "My Lord and my God" (John 20:28). There is no basis whatsoever for saying, as some Jehovah's Witnesses do, that Thomas was referring to Christ when he said, "My Lord," but was referring to God the father when he said, "my God." Thomas called the Lord Jesus Christ both his Lord and his God, and our Lord did not correct him. Stephen called Jesus "Lord" (Acts 7:59,60). If we are to experience the saving grace of Jesus Christ, we have to confess Him as Lord (Rom. 10:9; I Cor. 12:3).

Attributes of the Lord Jesus Christ show that He is God: He has unlimited knowledge (John 1:48; 2:25; 6:64; 16:30; 21:17); He is eternal (Micah 5:2); all-powerful (Matt. 28:18; Heb. 1:3); sinless (John 8:46); and unchanging (Heb. 13:8). Only God possesses these attributes.

The works of our Lord Jesus Christ show that He is God. He had the power to forgive sins (Mark 2:5-7; Eph. 1:7); to exercise control over nature (Matt. 8:26); to give eternal life (John 10:28; 17:2); and to judge the world at the end of time (John 5:22 and 27). Since only God has the power to do these things, Jesus Christ is God.

The Lord Jesus Christ received worship, and only Jehovah is to be worshiped. He is worshiped by the angels (Heb. 1:6), and by man (Matt. 14:33). He declared that worship should be given to God alone, and then accepted worship (Matt. 4:10). Angels were not allowed to receive worship (Rev. 19:10; 22:8,9). He prayed, "O

Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was."

If Jehovah's Witnesses do not believe in the uniqueness of our Lord Jesus Christ in His deity, then they are wrong about every doctrine revealed in the Word of God. For example, the great redemptive work of our Lord Jesus Christ was not, as Scripture says, the eternal Son giving Himself a ransom for us all. There was no Deity on the cross, there was only a human savior. He was just a man who died there. That is a lie from hell. Over and over again the book of Hebrews is careful to point out that the whole importance of the redemptive work was in the person who died, the fusion of humanity and deity into indivisible oneness, the Son of God suffering as the Savior of the world. The ransom teaching of Jehovah's Witnesses bears not the slightest resemblance to the Bible doctrine of the atonement. As their Jehovah is but a counterfeit god, not the holy eternal God taught in Scripture, and their Christ a false Michael-man redeemer, so their ransom, too, is spurious.

Wrote Russell (*Studies in the Scriptures*, Vol. 1, pg. 140): "The 'ransom for all' given by Christ Jesus does not give or guarantee everlasting life or blessing to any man, but it does guarantee to every man another opportunity or trial for life everlasting." The Jehovah's Witnesses' teaching is based upon the false premise that the penalty God imposed upon the race because of Adam's disobedience was death in the absolute sense—end of existence, cessation of being, whereas God's Word shows physical death to be but one of the results of man's fall in sin. The ransom price required, according to Jehovah's Witnesses, was not only the death of the perfect man, Christ Jesus, but the blotting out of His existence. This gruesome and terrifying view of Christ leads naturally to the denial of the resurrection. Russell wrote of Christ, "The man Jesus is dead, forever dead" (*Studies in the Scriptures*, Vol. 5, pg. 454).

It is our purpose in this series, in the interest of brevity, not necessarily to explore all the apparent doctrinal errors, but simply to uncover enough to reveal its malignancy and its satanic origin. We have devoted our time to the single doctrine of the deity of Christ, which the Witnesses deny. I remind you of the warning of II John

7:11: *For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ cometh in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist. Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward. Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him Godspeed; For he that biddeth him Godspeed is partaker of his evil deeds.*

By this John meant that we are not to establish intimate friendships with those who teach false doctrines. Fellowship must be avoided, for the word of God denounces fraternization with the workers of evil. This, however, is not the same as witnessing to them in the name of Christ. We have a responsibility to correct those who are in error, but we are not to continue having fellowship with them if they refuse to give up error in view of the plain truth of God's Word.