

Gospel Truths

Standing
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Truth of
the Gospel



Volume I Number 9

September 2010

An Examination of the Jehovah's Witnesses Cult # 2 Part 2

by H. E. Phillips (Deceased)

The Beginning Of Jehovah's Witnesses

CHARLES TAZE RUSSELL, founder of the cult known as Jehovah's Witnesses, made some claims for himself equaled only by Joseph Smith of Mormonism, Ellen G. White of Seventh Day Adventism, and Mary Baker Eddy of Christian Science.

These are as different as can be, except for the materialism of Adventism, Mormonism, and Jehovah's Witnesses, yet they all make the same claim to a direct revelation from God. None of these systems are from God.

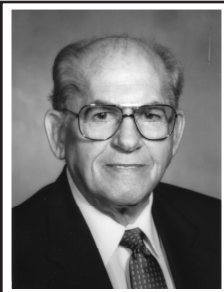
One of the claims made by Russell was

that he alone was the true prophet of God in his day. In *Watch Tower*, July 1, 1899, page 208, we read: "If any man does not hear that prophet he shall be cut off from among the peoples." This was said of Charles Russell. By 1912 Russell was called that "faithful and wise servant" of [Matthew 24:45](#). This he accepted willingly.

In *Studies In The Scriptures*, Vol. 7 (after Russell's death) the statement is found: "If you do not hear the prophet, Mr. Russell, then woe be upon you."

Of course, Rutherford and those who contributed to volume 7 of *Studies In The Scriptures* wrote what was taught and accepted by Russell before his death. In

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"Love . . . rejoices in the truth" I Corinthians 13:6

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**“Love . . . Rejoices in the truth”
I Corinthians 13:6**

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*Standing for
the Truth of
the Gospel*

**Volume I
Number 8
September 2010**



Editorial . . .

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Edification — What? And How?

WHAT does the word “edification” mean? The word “edification” comes from the Greek word “*Oikodomeo* –

1. TO BUILD A HOUSE – ERECT A BUILDING.

a. properly, to build (up from the foundation): absolutely as we read in Luke 11:48 “In fact, you bear witness that you approve the deeds of your fathers; for they indeed killed them, and you build their tombs.”

b. contextually equivalent to restore by building, to rebuild, repair: Matthew 23:29 “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! Because you build the tombs of the prophets and adorn the monuments of the righteous.”

2. METAPHORICALLY

a. equivalent to “found:” Matthew 16:18 “And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.”

b. to promote growth in Christians ~ wisdom, affection, grace, virtue, holiness, blessedness, truth: Acts 20:32 “So now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified.”

c. a builder, an architect: Acts 4:11 “This is the ‘stone which was rejected by you builders, which has become the chief cornerstone’.” (from *Thayer’s Greek Lexicon*)

oikodome denotes:

(a) “the act of building” (*oikos*, “a home,” and *demo*, “to build”); this is used only figuratively in the NT, in the sense of edification, the promotion of spiritual growth (lit., “the things of building up”),

Romans 14:19 “Therefore let us pursue the things which make for peace and the things by which one may edify another.”

Romans 15:2 “Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, leading to edification.”

I Corinthians 14:3 “But he who prophesies speaks edification and exhortation and comfort to men.”

(b) “a building, edifice,”

1) whether material,

Matthew 24:1 “Then Jesus went out and departed from the temple, and His disciples came up to show Him the buildings of the temple.” or figurative, of the future body of the believer, II Corinthians 5:1 “For we know that if our earthly house, this tent, is destroyed, we have a building

from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.”

or of a local church

I Corinthians 3:9 “For we are God’s fellow workers; you are God’s field, you are God’s building.”

2). or the whole church, “the body of Christ,”

Ephesians 2:21 “In whom the whole building, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord.” (from Vine’s Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words).

The apostle Paul explains how God made provisions for the church to be edified. Ephesians 4:12-16 “For the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, 13 till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; 14 that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, 15 but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head ~ Christ ~ 16 from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.”

Let’s look at verse 11. Ephesians 4:11 “And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers.” Notice Christ Gave Gifts!

1. APOSTLES

2. PROPHETS

The first to gifts that are mentioned are the apostles and prophets. We learn from reading Ephesians 2:20 that this was for the purpose of establishing the foundation for building the church. “Having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone.”

3. EVANGELISTS – PREACHING

Paul told Timothy, “Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching” (II Timothy 4:2).

4. PASTORS = BISHOPS, ELDERS

When Paul wrote to the church at Philippi, he identified the entire organization of the church. “Paul and Timothy, bondservants of Jesus Christ, To all the

saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, with the bishops and deacons” (Philippians 1:1). The local congregation with its saints, bishops and deacons is the sum total of God’s organization for His church. In Acts 20:28 we find what God expects of His elders or overseers. “Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.”

5. TEACHERS

Some have suggested that the fifth category mentioned (teachers) is a word used to describe the duty of the Pastors. This is certainly a part of their duties as explained in Titus 1:9, “Holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict.” Every Christian, however, is to equip himself/herself to teach others. “And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also” (II Timothy 2:2). The word “men” in this passage is from the Greek word aner which includes both male and female – or mankind.

Now, let’s go back and look at verse 12. “For the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.” A number of years ago, Ferrell Jenkins pointed out that there are two different Greek prepositions used in this passage of Scripture. The first “for the equipping of the saints” is from the Greek preposition pros. The basic meaning of the word “pros” is “with a view to.” So, all of these “gifts” would be “with a view to” equipping the saints.

The next two prepositions translated “for” are from the Greek word eis – which could be (and is in some translations) translated “unto.” It is also translated “in order to.” Thus, the “gifts” were given “with a view to” perfecting the saints “in order to” do the work of service (ministry) “in order to” the edification or the building up of the body of Christ. There are a number of other passages that so indicate this fact. I Corinthians 14:12 “Even so you, since you are zealous for spiritual gifts, let it be for the edification of the church that you seek to excel.” II Corinthians 10:8 “For even if I should boast somewhat more about our authority, which the Lord gave us for edification and not for your destruction, I shall not be ashamed.”

How Is It Accomplished?

Let's look at a number of passages that will answer the above question.

Acts 20:32 "So now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified."

I Corinthians 8:1 "Now concerning things offered to idols: We know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffs up, but love edifies."

Ephesians 4:15 "But, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head ~ Christ."

Jude 1:20-21 "But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, 21 keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life."

II Corinthians 12:19 "Again, do you think that we excuse ourselves to you? We speak before God in Christ. But we do all things, beloved, for your edification."

Ephesians 4:29 "Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers."

Acts 9:31 "Then the churches throughout all Judea, Galilee, and Samaria had peace and were edified. And walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, they were multiplied."

As you can see from the above passages, edification comes from following the word of God. The apostles denied that what they were teaching and writing were fables. What is a "fable"?

"FABLE ~ NOUN

2. A story about legendary persons and exploits.
3. A falsehood; a lie."

I Timothy 1:4 "Nor give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which cause disputes rather than godly edification which is in faith."

II Peter 1:16 "For we did not follow cunningly devised fables when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty."

I Timothy 4:7 "But reject profane and old wives' fables, and exercise yourself toward godliness."

II Timothy 4:4 "And they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables."

Titus 1:14 "Not giving heed to Jewish fables and commandments of men who turn from the truth."

Paul said those who teach fables deny God. Titus 1:16 "They profess to know God, but in works they deny Him, being abominable, disobedient, and disqualified for every good work."

Some have the idea that edification has to be done only with positive teaching. However, as the Lord pointed out to Jeremiah sometimes you have to "root out, pull down, destroy and throw down" before you can "build and plant." Jeremiah 1:6-10 "Then said I: 'Ah, Lord GOD! Behold, I cannot speak, for I am a youth.' 7 But the LORD said to me: 'Do not say, I am a youth, For you shall go to all to whom I send you, And whatever I command you, you shall speak. 8 Do not be afraid of their faces, For I am with you to deliver you,' says the LORD. 9 Then the LORD put forth His hand and touched my mouth, and the LORD said to me: 'Behold, I have put My words in your mouth. 10 See, I have this day set you over the nations and over the kingdoms, To root out and to pull down, To destroy and to throw down, To build and to plant'."

Let's all ask God for wisdom to know how to approach every situation so that all with whom we come in contact may be edified. 🙏📖

Smith - Hicks Debate

This debate between J. T. Smith and Olan Hicks focuses on a study of divorce and remarriage. Smith affirms that the Scriptures teach that only persons who have divorced their mates for fornication and those whose mates have died may, with God's approval, marry again. Hicks affirms that the Scriptures teach that all divorced people, including those whose former mates are still living, may, with God's approval, marry again.

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Continued from Front Page

Vol. 7, page 377: "In 1878 the stewardship of the things of God, the teaching of the Bible truths were taken from the clergy, unfaithful to their age-long stewardship, and given to Pastor Russell." This meant all the "things of God" including the "teaching of the Bible truths."

Russell condemned all organized churches as the "devil's" organizations. He claimed again and again that he was sent by God to show the world the truth. He taught that it was God's time for men to understand the Bible, and that he was sent to uncover the mystery of the Bible. He claimed that no man had understood the book of Revelation until he was sent by God to "reveal" its true meaning. And grown men and women believe that!

Russell claimed to have some special knowledge of the "times of the Gentiles." In 1872 he developed the doctrine of the "second chance." He prophesied that Christ and the apostles would come to earth in October 1874 and "The Consummation Of The Ages" would come in 1914. When Christ did not come in 1874, his followers were disappointed as was Russell.

In 1876 he obtained the services of a man by the name of Barbour of Philadelphia to help him revise his prophecies. They decided that Christ and the apostles DID COME in 1874, but were invisible to all but the "faithful." This is the idea that finally developed the term *Jehovah's Witnesses* in 1931. An interesting point is that Russell later charged Barbour with unfaithfulness and kicked him out.

In *Studies In The Scriptures*, Volume 2, pages 76-77 Russell said: "In this chapter we present the Bible evidence proving that the full end of the times of the Gentiles--- i.e., the full end of their lease of dominion--will be reached in A.D. 1914; and that date will be the farthest limit of the rule of imperfect men." Russell called this "the Consummation of the Ages." The end did not come in 1914 and Russell never recovered from this blow. He died two years later, October 31, 1916. Immediately upon his death a self-appointed successor, C. J. Woodworth (this was before J. F. Rutherford took the rule) and a George H. Fisher, tried to patch up Russell's prophecy by saying that he had made a slight error in time and that it would come in 1917. The seventh and last volume of *Studies In The Scriptures: "The Finished Mystery"* was written in 1917 and they claimed that the time would be in 1918 instead of 1914 (Volume 7, pages 58-62).

Russell's writings are to Jehovah's Witnesses what *Tradition* is to the Catholic Church, the *Book Of Mormon* is to Mormonism, *Great Controversy* and other writings of Ellen G. White are to Seventh Day Adventism, and *Key To The Scripture* is to Christian Science. They are all built upon the same sort of false claims to revelation.

"Judge" Rutherford took the place of Russell upon his death. This cult began with a "Pastor," followed by a "Judge" and now has a "President."

Joseph Franklin Rutherford

From 1870 when Charles Taze Russell organized a Bible Study group in Pittsburgh, Pa., and 1879 when he created the *Watch Tower Magazine*, later the *Watch Tower Bible And Tract Society*, until his death aboard a transcontinental train near Pampa, Texas, October 31, 1916, he ruled what was called "Russellism," "International Bible Students," and "Dawnism" with an iron hand. Upon his death J. F. Rutherford took the helm and directed the organization toward its present state.

In *Jehovah's Witnesses*, pages 12-13, Walter R. Martin gives this account: "With the death of Russell the Watch Tower Board of Directors scrambled for control of the now vacant throne and various splits ensued as the result of the 'election' of Judge J. F. Rutherford as successor to the 'Pastor.'"

"Joseph Franklin Rutherford took over the organization bequeathed to him by 'Pastor' Russell and with marvelous-business acumen, tremendous vitality, and an insatiable drive for accomplishment pyramided the 'Pastor's' heretofore limited operation into a multi-million dollar cult of zealous people who spend most of their time negating the beliefs of others and openly attacking the sacred truths of historic Christianity." Rutherford "preached the funeral" of Russell, and despite the doctrine of both Russell and Rutherford that the dead are unconscious in "sleep," he is quoted, as saying, "Our dear brother sleeps not in death, but was instantly changed from the human to the divine nature, and is now forever with the Lord." This was a special privilege granted to Russell that the rest of the dead do not enjoy. Rutherford became the president of The Watch Tower Bible And Tract Society on January 6, 1917, just two months and 6 days after the death of Russell.

Joseph Franklin Rutherford was born on a farm in Morgan County, Missouri, on November 8, 1869. His

father wanted him to become a farmer, but he wanted to attend college. At age sixteen he borrowed the money and took the regular college course plus law. He spent two years studying under Judge E. L. Edwards, a noted Missouri Judge. He became a court reporter at age twenty, and was admitted to the bar at age twenty-two and began practice in Boonville, Missouri with the firm of Draffen and Wright. He acquired the title "Judge" because he served occasionally as a special judge in the 8th Judicial Circuit Court in Missouri.

Rutherford had read some of Russell's books and was acquainted with some of his teaching. They met about the beginning of the twentieth century in a Kansas City hotel. Russell asked Rutherford to write a book on "*God's Plan From A Lawyer's Viewpoint.*" Writing this book changed the course of Rutherford's life. In 1907 Russell invited Rutherford to become a lecturer for him. By 1910 he was traveling all over country teaching the doctrine of Russell.

Russell used Rutherford as his attorney in a number of lawsuits in the courts. Rutherford was a fearless man who thrived on court cases; this helped him in gaining publicity for his cause. When the lives of the two men were finished, Rutherford wrote more than Russell.

In 1920, three years after becoming president of Watch Tower, he wrote a book called *Millions Now Living Will Never Die*. (I have this book in my library, together with many others works of Jehovah's Witnesses). On page 97 he said: "Heretofore set forth the old order of things, the old world is ending and is therefore passing away, that the new order is coming in, and that 1925 marks the resurrection of the faithful, worthy of old." This book was later taken off the market, and you can understand why. In 1926 he wrote a book on theology called *Deliverance*. During the twenty-five years he reigned as head of this cult he wrote about 100 books and pamphlets, translated into eighty languages. His broadcasts went out over the greatest radio networks of his day. He made a series of phonograph records which were used by the Witnesses in their door-to-door calls. This practice was discontinued under the reign of the president that followed Rutherford, Nathan H. Knorr.

In the late twenties a group who held fast to the prophecies of Russell, broke off to form the "Dawn Bible Students." Rutherford denounced the "Pyramid" prophecies which caused this splinter group. He reigned over the entire Board of Directors of Watch Tower with

an iron hand. To defy him was equal to defying Jehovah Himself.

Rutherford died of cancer on January 8, 1942, in his mansion, "Beth Sarim," in San Diego, California at the age of 72. Walter R. Martin says in *Jehovah's Witnesses*, page 14: "It is an easily verifiable fact that the Witnesses have heeded the counsel of the Judge who termed all religions 'a snare and a racket,' despite the fact that he occupied a mansion (Beth Sarim) outside San Diego, California (allegedly appraised at \$60,000) for some years and justified his occupancy of that palatial edifice on the grounds that he was taking care of the premises until Abraham, Isaac, David, etc., returned to earth to commence the millennial reign."

Nathan H. Knorr

The Watch Tower Bible And Tract Society of the Jehovah's Witnesses religion was started by "Pastor" Russell, who was succeeded by "Judge" Rutherford in 1917, and upon his death in 1942, "President" Nathan H. Knorr.

Nathan Homer Knorr was born in Bethlehem, Pa., on April 23, 1905. He first came in contact with Russell's and Rutherford's teaching at the age of sixteen while attending high school in Allentown, Pa. His family had obtained some Watch Tower literature and had accepted the "Home Book Study" group in their home. Knorr was a member of the Reformed Church, from which he withdrew to become a "Witness" for Watch Tower as a full time worker. He soon became a member of the "working family" at Bethel in Brooklyn, New York. This is the headquarters of the Jehovah's Witnesses Society. It had been moved here from Pittsburgh, Pa. in 1908.

Nathan Knorr began as shipping clerk in the Society's Printing Plant. Within nine years after entering the Watch Tower Society, in 1932 he was promoted to general manager of the printing office and plant at the age of twenty-seven. He soon became a director and within a year was elected Vice President. Upon Rutherford's death he was unanimously elected President. He directed the policies of Watch Tower Bible And Tract Society and supervised and edited all publications. He directed all the missionary policies and work.

Max Stilson says in *How To Deal With Jehovah's Witnesses*, pages 14-15: "Mr. Knorr added a doctrine to

“The Older Women Likewise . . . That They Admonish The Younger Women” (Titus 2:2-3)

Mothers - Daughters

by Geneva Brown Smith

The Mother

“This infamous woman was the daughter of Aristobulus and Berenice, and grand-daughter of Herod the Great. Her first marriage was to Herod Philip, her uncle, by whom she had a daughter, Salome. Some time after, she left her husband and lived openly with Herod Antipas, her brother-in-law.” This was the condition of Herodias during the life of John the baptist.

The Preacher

John had told Herod Antipas that he could not legally have Herodias, therefore, bringing down Herod’s wrath upon himself. John was thrown into prison. The Scripture says that Herod would have killed John, except he knew the people perceived him to be a prophet.

The Daughter

Salome was born to Herodias and her husband Herod Philip. She was obviously an obedient daughter but the influence of her unscrupulous mother left her without morals. Her dance was treated with contempt in some of the translations, and thought to be a lascivious one.

The Party

Now Herod Antipas was given a birthday celebration. Salome danced before them and pleased Herod. “Therefore, he promised with an oath to give her whatever she might ask” (Matthew 14:7). Being previously instructed by her mother, Salome asked for the head of John the baptist on a platter. Since these kings were accustomed to rejecting no petition that was referred to them during entertainment, Herod granted her request.

The Result

“The head was given to the damsel.” *Imagine the bloody head of the forerunner of Christ as a present for a young girl!* “She took it to her mother.” *How gratifying it must*

have been for this adulterous, incestuous woman! The disturber of her illicit pleasures was dead! One commentary said, “There is no person so revengeful as a lascivious woman when reproved and blamed.”

The Lesson

Psychologists tell us that the same-sex parent is the most influential in the development of the child. This writer believes that mothers influence daughters not only as long as both of them live, but often after the death of the mother. In life, she influences with her words as well as her behavior. It is unthinkable that she would dress or behave herself in a lascivious manner in front of her daughters. If she is one to involve herself in extra-marital affairs, fornication etc., her behavior will most likely cause her daughters to do the same thing. Could one live with the fact that she had caused her daughter to be lost in Hell?

Instead, it should be as it is in this parable, A Living Presence. “And the days went on and the days and the weeks and years, and the mother grew aged, and she was little and bent. But the children were tall and strong and walked with courage. And when the way was hard, they lifted her over the rough places. At last they came to a hill and beyond the hill they could see a shining road and the golden gates and they flung wide. And the mother said, “I have reached the end of my journey, and now I know the end is better than the beginning, for my children can walk alone, and their children after them.” And the children said, “You will always walk with us, Mother!” They stood and watched her walk through the golden gate; then the gates closed after her. And they said, “we cannot now see our mother, but she is with us still—she is a living presence.”

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Tolerance

by James P. Needham

THE USA is the most tolerant country in the world. Tolerance is a good thing in most cases but it should have limitations. Tolerance in the home which would allow minor children to make their own decisions would be disastrous.

Tolerance in the work place that would allow employees to come and go as they please would lead to chaos, and result in nothing getting done.

Tolerance in the school room that would allow students to come and go as they please, and tolerate their not doing their assigned work would lead to confusion and failure.

Tolerance in our country is one of its attractive points; it is one of the things that means America. However, unlimited tolerance can lead to disaster, which it is doing in our country at present.

We are giving people tolerance to thumb their noses at our laws, and giving people tolerance to destroy the basic principles and values that made our country the greatest in history. How can we sit idly by and watch this happen?



I am concerned about all tolerance of destructive acts, but I am mainly concerned about what's happening to religious tolerance.

I believe our constitution guarantees freedom of religion. The difficulty is deciding what is religion. Should we tolerate a system called a religion that extends no tolerance to any other religion but uses our tolerance to destroy our tolerance? I have reference to the Muslim religio/political ideology which immigrates to our country by millions, takes advantage of our tolerance of their religion which includes an agenda that aims to destroy all religions but their own. And yet, the countries from which they come extends tolerance to no religion but their own.

Those who want to tolerate the Muslim religion try to portray it as a loving peaceful religion. These people are abysmally ignorant, or just stuck on stupid. It is said, "you can't fix stupid" and I believe it. How on earth can anybody with half a brain not see what is happening with Islam in the United States and throughout the world? Don't they read the paper, or watch the news? These people not only murder "infidels" (non-Muslims), they murder Muslims with suicide bombs, and by other methods.

The day before I wrote this a suicide bomber killed 60 military recruits in Bagdad and wounded over a hundred more. Uninformed people or "politically correct" disciples like to say such is done by "radical" Muslims, which is pure nonsense. These people are practicing the tenants of their "holy book." How can they rightly be called "radical Muslims" when they are acting like their "holy book" says they should?

When it comes to tolerance, I am all for it, if it is for the good, but when it is designed to harm (murder) others, I am dead-set against tolerance. If I had my way, not one Muslim would be allowed to immigrate to this country. There are millions here now, and one wonders

Continued from Page 6

the Jehovah's Witnesses list of errors which has caused the cult a great deal of trouble with the courts. "

He decided that several Old Testament verses which he picked out of context proved that it was unscriptural to allow blood transfusions, even to save life. This 'finding' of President Knorr's was presented to the Jehovah's Witnesses on July 1, 1945, in an article in *Awake* entitled, 'Sanctity of Blood.'

"Mr. Knorr claims that his new doctrine is based upon the Bible, but human blood transfusions were unknown in Biblical times. If this is a Bible doctrine, why didn't someone see it before 1945?"

"Another accomplishment under President Knorr's 'reign' has been the introduction of the *Jehovah's Witnesses Bible. The New World Translation Of Christian Greek Scriptures* (New Testament) was completed in 1950. The Old Testament was completed ten years later. The Witnesses have added articles and changed the punctuation marks in many verses to conform to their teaching. Until 1950 they used the King James Version." Continued Next Month

Run...Looking Unto Jesus

by Bobby K. Thompson

THE life of a Christian is portrayed by various figures. Among the figures mentioned, the scriptures speak of Christians being engaged in a spiritual fight, walk and race. The Hebrew writer vividly uses the race figure in Hebrews 12:1-2, "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us. Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." To scripturally run this race, one must look unto Jesus for all things which pertain unto the proper features of a legitimate race. As in material races, no one has the right to manufacture



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how so many got here when there are long lines of people trying to immigrate legally.

While so much is said about illegal aliens, what about millions of Muslims? How did so many get here legally so quickly? The time is rapidly approaching when there will be enough Muslims in this country to tip elections their way, and then they will have their way in this country. Already there is much talk about sharia law (Muslim law) influencing our judicial system.

If you keep up with the news you know of the case where a woman in Iran who is sentenced to be stoned to death for committing adultery. What about the man? This week I received an item on the internet where a little boy, maybe 7 years old, was caught stealing bread from a grocery store. They laid him down on the pavement and ran over his right arm with a car. There was even a picture of the dastardly deed and people gathered around watching it!

Is it possible that America has sinned away its day of grace? Is God putting our nation through something similar to the Babylonian captivity to punish us for departing from His law? Has He given us up to uncleanness through the lusts of our own hearts, to honor our bodies between ourselves: for changing the truth of God into a lie, and worshiping the creature more than the Creator ?

his own features by which the race is to be governed. People usually acknowledge this in physical affairs, yet they seem to have untold difficulties when it comes to recognizing the same in spiritual matters. By their actions, they seem to think they can run the race in whatever way pleases them! We are to "run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith;" For what things are we to look unto Jesus? **Look unto Jesus for race:**

Entrance requirements. There are requirements to be met to enter physical races. In like manner, there are requirements to enter the spiritual race set before us. One must be obedient to the commands of Jesus Christ. "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;" (Hebrews 5:8-9). We must be obedient to Christ to enter the race set before us. "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." (John 14:6). When Jesus gave the great commission to His apostles, He was giving the race requirements to be preached to all men. "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." (Mark 16:15-16). When the penitent believer confesses the name of Christ and is baptized for the remission of sins, he enters the race that is set before him, "looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith". Paul speaks of entering the race by saying, "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus, For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." (Galatians 3:26-27). When one puts on Christ, he enters the race! It is a shame that so many people talk about being in the race when they have never obeyed Christ to have entered the race. They recognize requirements of physical races, but scoff at the spiritual requirements, and attempt to run the race without having truly obeyed the gospel of Christ. **Look unto Jesus for race:**

Rules. After one enters a race, he must abide by the rules as a lawful participant. As we have mentioned, he has no right to invent the rules by which he will run. The great commission recorded by Matthew, reads like


this: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen." (Matthew 28:18-20). There is the second part of the commission which involves, "Teaching them all things whatsoever I have commanded you". As the race is entered, there are commands to be obeyed in lawfully running the race set before us. There is something more than the reality of entrance. We must lawfully and faithfully run the race that is set before us. "And also if anyone competes in athletics, he is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules." (I Timothy 2:5). (NKJV). Rules involve abiding by the doctrine of Christ. "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." (II John 9). It is pitiful when people will not meet Christ's requirements to enter the race by obeying His gospel. It is equally pitiful to see those who have entered the race become disobedient to the rules required in faithfully running the race. We are to be obedient from start to finish, if we have hope of eternal life. "See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven." (Hebrews 12:25). **Look unto Jesus for race:**

Example. Jesus ran the race! Jesus did not give up! Jesus was not a quitter! "Let us run with patience the race that is set before us. Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." Jesus finished the work which His father had given him to do. (John 17:4). "For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps:" (I Peter 2:21). We need to keep looking to Jesus for our example. ✠

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"Big bang" or "Big Crunch"?

by Bert Thompson, Ph.D.

 **HE** origin and destiny of the Universe always have been important topics in the creation/evolution controversy. In the past, evolutionists went to great extremes to avoid scenarios that suggested a Universe with a beginning or ending, because such scenarios posed bothersome philosophical questions (.What came before the beginning?. or "What will come after the ending?"). Only theories that guaranteed an eternal Universe were worthy of consideration.

Background

One theory offered in an attempt to establish the eternity of the Universe was the Steady State model of Sir Fred Hoyle and his colleagues. Even before he offered this unusual theory, however, scientific evidence had been discovered which indicated that the Universe was expanding. Hoyle set forth the Steady State model to: (a) erase any possibility of a beginning; (b) bolster the idea of an eternal Universe; and (c) explain why the Universe was expanding. His idea was that at certain points in the Universe (which he labeled "irtrons"), matter was being created spontaneously **from nothing**. Since this new matter had to "go" somewhere, and since two objects cannot occupy the same space at the same time, it pushed the matter that already existed further into distant space. Hoyle asserted that this process of matter continually being created (the idea even came to be known as the "continuous creation" theory) avoided any beginning or ending, and simultaneously accounted for the expansion of the Universe.

For a time, Hoyle's Steady State hypothesis was quite popular. Eventually, however, it was discarded for several reasons. Cosmologist John Barrow suggested that the Steady State theory sprang "from a belief that the universe did not have a beginning.... The specific theory they proposed fell into conflict with observation long ago" (1991, page 46). Indeed, the Steady State theory did fall "into conflict with observation" for a number of reasons. First, new theoretical concepts being proposed at the time were completely at odds with the Steady State model. Second, empirical observations no longer agreed with the model (see

Gribbin, 1986). And third, it violated the First Law of Thermodynamics, which states that neither matter nor energy may be **created** or destroyed in nature. Therefore, the Steady State model was abandoned.

The Big Bang model replaced the Steady State theory by postulating that all the matter energy in the observable Universe was condensed into a particle smaller than a single proton (the famous “cosmic egg”). The Big Bang model, however, suffered from at least two major problems. First, it required that the “cosmic egg” be eternal a concept clearly at odds with the Second Law of Thermodynamics. John Gribbin, a highly regarded evolutionary cosmologist, voiced the opinion of many when he said: “The biggest problem with the Big Bang theory of the origin of the Universe is philosophical perhaps even theological. What was there before the bang?” (1976, Pages 15-16).

Second, the expansion of the Universe could not go on forever; it had to end somewhere. The Universe had a beginning, and would have an ending. Robert Jastrow has addressed both of these points: “And concurrently there was a great deal of discussion about the fact that the second law of thermodynamics, applied to the Cosmos, indicates the Universe is running down like a clock. If it is running down, there must have been a time when it was fully wound up”. (1978, Pages 48-49). Matter could not be eternal, because eternal things do not run down. Furthermore, there was going to be an end at some point in the future.

Such a scenario is unacceptable to evolutionists. Jastrow himself admitted: “Astronomers try not to be influenced by philosophical considerations. However, the idea of a Universe that has both a beginning and an end is distasteful to the scientific mind” (1977, page 31). To avoid any vestige of a beginning, or any hint of an ending, evolutionists invented the Oscillating Universe model (also known as the Big Bang/Big Crunch model, the Expansion Collapse model, etc.). Dr. Gribbin suggested: “[T]he best way around this initial difficulty is provided by a model in which the Universe expands from a singularity, collapses back again, and repeats the cycle indefinitely” (1976, Pages 15-16).

That is to say, there was a Big Bang; but there also will be a Big Crunch, at which time the matter of the Universe will collapse back onto itself. There will be a “bounce,” followed by another Big Bang, which will be followed by another Big Crunch, and this process will

be repeated *ad infinitum*. In the Big Bang model, there is a permanent end; not so in the Oscillating Universe model, as Dr. Jastrow explained:

But many astronomers reject this picture of a dying Universe. They believe that the expansion of the Universe will not continue forever because gravity, pulling back on the outward-moving galaxies, must slow their retreat. If the pull of gravity is sufficiently strong, it may bring the expansion to a halt at some point in the future.

What will happen then? The answer is the crux of this theory. The elements of the Universe, held in a balance between the outward momentum of the primordial explosion and the inward force of gravity, stand momentarily at rest; but after the briefest instant, always drawn together by gravity, they commence to move toward one another. Slowly at first, and then with increasing momentum, the Universe collapses under the relentless pull of gravity. Soon the galaxies of the Cosmos rush toward one another with an inward movement as violent as the outward movement of their expansion when the Universe exploded earlier. After a sufficient time, they come into contact; their gases mix; their atoms are heated by compression; and the Universe returns to the heat and chaos from which it emerged many billions of years ago (1978, page 118).

The description provided by Dr. Jastrow is that commonly referred to in the literature as the Big Crunch. But the obvious question is after that, then what? Again, Jastrow explained:

No one knows. Some astronomers say the Universe will never come out of this collapsed state. Others speculate that the Universe will rebound from the collapse in a new explosion, and experience a new moment of Creation. According to this view, our Universe will be melted down and remade in the caldron of the second Creation. It will become an entirely new world, in which no trace of the existing Universe remains....

This theory envisages a Cosmos that oscillates forever, passing through an infinite number of moments of creation in a never-ending cycle of birth, death and rebirth. It unites the scientific evidence for an explosive moment of creation with the concept of an eternal Universe. It also has the advantage of being able to answer the question: What preceded the explosion? (1978, Pages 119- 120).

Comments

Several questions arise. First, of what benefit would such events be? Second, is such a concept testable scientifically? Third, does current scientific evidence support such an idea?

Of what benefit would a Big Bang Big Crunch Big Bang scenario be? **Theoretically**, as I have noted already, the benefit to evolutionists is that they do not have to explain a Universe with absolute beginnings or endings. A cyclical Universe that expands and contracts infinitely is much more acceptable than one that demands explanations for both its origin and destiny. **Practically**, there is no benefit that derives from such a scenario. Astronomer Carl Sagan of Cornell University noted:

...information from our universe would not trickle into that next one and, from our vantage point, such an oscillating cosmology is as definitive and depressing an end as the expansion that never stops (1979, Pages 13-14).

Could the Oscillating Universe model be tested scientifically? Gribbin felt that it could.

The key factors which determine the ultimate fate of the Universe are the amount of matter it contains and the rate at which it is expanding.... In simple terms, the Universe can only expand forever if it is exploding faster than the .escape velocity, from itself.... If the density of matter across the visible Universe we see today is sufficient to halt the expansion we can observe today, then the Universe has always been exploding at less than its own escape velocity, and must eventually be slowed down so much that the expansion is first halted and then converted into collapse. On the other hand, if the expansion we observe today is proceeding fast enough to escape from the gravitational clutches of the matter we observe today, then the Universe is and always was .open. and will expand forever (1981, page 313).

Does scientific evidence support the theory of an “oscillating” Universe? The success or failure of this theory depends, in part, on the amount of matter contained in the Universe, since there must be enough matter for gravity to .pull back. to cause the Big Crunch. This is one reason why cold dark matter is so important. Dr. Gribbin has said: “This, in a nutshell, is one of the biggest problems in cosmology today, the puzzle of the so-called missing mass” (1981, Pages 315-316). In discussing the Oscillating Universe model, astronomers speak of a “closed” or an “open” Universe. If the Universe is **closed**, theoretically the Big Crunch could occur, and an oscillating Universe becomes a viable possibility. If the Universe is **open**, the expansion of the Universe will continue and the Big Crunch will not occur, making an oscillating Universe impossible. Joseph Silk remarked: “The balance of evidence does point to an **open** model

of the universe” (1980, page 309, emp. added). Gribbin commented: “The consensus among astronomers today is that the universe is **open**” (1981, page 316, emp. added). Jastrow observed: “Thus, the facts indicate that **the universe will expand forever**” (1978, page 123, emp. added). Recent evidence seems to indicate that an oscillating Universe is a physical impossibility (see Chaisson, 1992).

Evolutionary cosmologist John Wheeler has drawn the following conclusion based on the scientific evidence: “With gravitational collapse we come to the end of time. Never out of the equations of general relativity has one been able to find the slightest argument for a .re-expansion of a ‘cyclic universe’ or anything other than an end” (1977, page 15). As Ross has admitted: “Attempts ...to use oscillation to avoid a theistic beginning for the universe all fail” (1991, page 105). No one yet has improved on Genesis 1 “In the beginning, God created...”

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Studies In Biblical History

The Dead Sea Scrolls Part 1 — The Discovery

by Bob Price

THE Dead Sea is a body of salt water whose surface is 1,292 feet below sea level. Its northern end lies 16 miles due east of Jerusalem. Jerusalem is situated about 2,600 feet above sea level, and the territory east of Jerusalem, called the wilderness of Judea, is a rolling, arid region cut by numerous valleys and wadis (a wadi is a dry valley or seasonal river, usually dry). The elevation of the wilderness drops gradually to about 300 feet below sea level, and then ends abruptly in a line of cliffs running almost north and south near the western shore of the Dead Sea. At this point the elevation drops quickly to the shore, which then slopes gradually to the level of the sea. Cliffs of marl, and numerous natural caves, so completely obscured by the rugged terrain that they cannot readily be seen except by climbing, dot the landscape. The cliffs are unbroken except for two places: approximately opposite the northern end of the sea a valley leads westward to Jerusalem: and at a distance of about three miles a very noticeable wadi known as Wadi Qumran slices its way through the cliffs.

The waters of Wadi Qumran eroded the region above the cliffs, and form a plateau. On the eastern part of this plateau, located nearly a mile from the shore of the sea, about 200 feet above the surface of the sea, are the ruins of a building compound, known by the Arabic name Khirbet Qumran (“ruins of Qumran”). This was the building used by the people whom we call, for want of a better name, the Qumranians. In the cliffs behind Khirbet Qumran are the storehouse caves of the Qumranians, and the repository of the “Dead Sea Scrolls.”

The Story Of The Scrolls

In 1947 or 48 (the date is uncertain) two shepherds of the Ta’amira tribe, Muhammed ed-Di’b and Ahman Muhammed, sought shelter in, or near, a Qumran cave or threw a stone into the cave (again the exact events are obscured by time) to chase out a straying goat. In the cave the Bedouin shepherds found a number of clay jars, and in or near the jars a number of bundles of what appeared to be rags (but turned out to be manuscripts)

were found. The two Bedouin attempted to sell or trade the find and, by what ever means, the manuscripts passed through the hands of Kahlin Iskan-dar Shabin, a merchant, and Mar Athanasius Y. Samuel, then Metropolitan of St. Mark’s Syrian Orthodox Convent in Jerusalem, where they were sold to Eleazar L Sukenik of the Hebrew University on November 29, 1947. A second group was photographed by John C. Trevor at the American School of Oriental Research in Jerusalem, this second group ultimately came into the possession of the Hebrew University in 1954, thus all of the original find of scrolls (to the best of our knowledge) are in the Shrine of the Book in the Hebrew University, Jerusalem. These are the documents we know today as the “Dead Sea Scrolls.”

The Problem

In late 1947 and early 1948 the Dead Sea Scrolls came to the attention of the “scholarly world.” At first the scrolls created more skepticism than excitement. But in a short time all was changed. Scholars who are usually reticent in making sensational statements issued announcements that startled the world.

William F. Albright (the dean of American archaeologists) called it “the greatest manuscript discovery of modern times.” He ventured that it would “revolutionize our approach to the beginnings of Christianity,” and that it would “be necessary to rewrite all our New Testament background material.”

The French professor Andre Dupont-Sommer, wrote “It is not a single revolution in the study of biblical exegesis...it is...a whole cascade of revolutions. From there on, the statements become more and more startling. Scholars permitted themselves to publish their convictions as steeled conclusions and their feelings as established facts. Journalists and sensationalists jumped into the act, and by quoting extreme statement of some scholars they gave an air of authority to writings that should have been dismissed without being taken seriously.

Of all the questions raised by the Dead Sea Scrolls wrote Professor H. H. Rowley of Manchester

in England, The most controversial is... the significance of the scrolls for the understanding of Christian origins.”

It is precisely in this area that the most extreme statements appeared. Dupont-Sommer first expressed his view in a French edition in 1950 where he said, “At the outset of Christianity there was a new prophet, a new messiah, whose existence or originality I, for one, have never dreamt of denying. But, the documents from Qumran make it plain that the primitive Christian Church was rooted in the Jewish sect of the New Covenant, the Essene sect, to a degree none would have suspected, and that it borrowed from it a large part of its organization, rites, doctrines, patterns of thought and its mystical and ethical ideals.” Finally, in the August 1966 issue of Harper’s Magazine an article written by John Marco Allegro appeared in which he spun a story of falsifications, distortions, and innuendoes, the total effect of which was to belittle Jesus Christ, to discredit the New Testament. He said, “Scholars are afraid of what the scrolls reveal,” and claimed that “the main message of the scrolls remain hidden nearly twenty years after their discovery.” He further maintained that scholars working on the scrolls had “taken orders or been trained in the rabbinical tradition.” In effect suggesting that he alone was capable of giving an unbiased report, since he had “No religious commitment.” He further plead for money that “A new generation of uncommitted scholars” might have “the means of probing the significance [of the scrolls] without fear or favor, undeterred by religious or academic pressure.” The controversy continues to rage today as to the meaning and place the Dead Sea Scrolls should have in our understanding of both the Old and New Testament, the problem is of no less importance now than in 1947. Truly, what are the “Dead Sea Scrolls,” how many are there, what do they consist of and what do they mean? I hope to answer these and

Dealing With God’s Divine Providence

by Harold Hancock

If one believes the Bible, he must believe in providence. Providence is divine care, and the Bible teaches that God cares for us. Jesus called the attention of His disciples to the fowl of the air— how they sow not, neither reap, nor gather into barns and yet God feeds them. He asked, “Are not ye much better than they” (Matthew 6:26)? If God cares for the birds, does He not much more care for man who is created in His image (Genesis 1:26)? Peter told us to cast all our troubles upon the Lord, saying, “He careth for us” (I Peter 5:7).

God in His wisdom has provided food for man by furnishing the earth with animals and fruit bearing trees (Genesis 9:3; 1:29). He makes the sun to shine and the rain to fall on both the just and the unjust (Matthew 5:45). He gives us fruitful seasons (Acts 14:17), and in Him we “live and move and have our being” (Acts 17:28). He has also provided great spiritual blessings for us in Christ Jesus, including salvation (Ephesians 1:3; Titus 2:11). He is longsuffering not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance (II Peter 3:9). All of these things manifest God’s great care for man and are a part of God’s providence.

But does God intervene in the lives of men today to make things happen or to work His plans? He has in times past. After Joseph had been sold by his brothers, had been cast into prison by Potiphar, and had interpreted the Pharaoh’s dreams, he was made second in Egypt. He revealed himself to his brothers when they came to Egypt for grain, and said to them, “Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life. God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth and to save your lives by a great deliverance. So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God” (Genesis 45:5,7,8). Modecai suggests that God may have made Esther queen to Ahasuerus, king of the Medes and Persians, just so she could deliver the Jews from destruction. Modecai asked Esther, “Who knows whether thou art come into the kingdom for such a time as this” (Esther 4:14). I see nothing in the Scriptures that teaches that God cannot work this way in the lives of men today. It seems to me that Scriptures such as “Ask, and it shall be given you; seek and ye shall find; knock and it shall be opened unto you” (Matthew 7:7), and “Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your request be made known unto God” (Philippians 4:6), assures us that God is active today in the affairs of men. Some are quick to deny “special providence.” They say that such makes the laws

of nature less than perfect. Were the laws of nature less than perfect when God worked in the life of Joseph? No! And neither must they be less than perfect for God to work in our lives today.

Providence does not demand miracles as some suppose. James tells us “The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on earth by the space of three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit” (James 5:16-18). On this latter occasion Elijah “went up to the top of Carmel; and he cast himself down upon the earth, and put his face between his knees, and said to his servant, ‘Go up now, look toward the sea.’ And he went up and looked, and said, ‘There is nothing.’ And he said, ‘Go again’ seven times. And it came to pass at the seventh time, that he said, ‘Behold, there ariseth a little cloud out of the sea, like a man’s hand...’ And it came to pass ... that the heaven was black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain” (I Kings 18:42- 45). Clearly God answered Elijah’s prayer on this occasion. But He did not answer it with a miracle. A miracle is something that is supernatural. It is not supernatural for clouds to arise from the sea and for rain to fall from them. Without working a miracle today God can answer our prayer and give us our daily bread (Matthew 6:11) or open doors for us to preach the gospel of Christ (Colossians 4:3). Do not limit God. All of nature is at His command, and He may use it to work His will in the lives of men today.

Even though God may work in this manner in the lives of persons today, this does not mean that we will know just how or when God is doing it. Mordecai’s words to Esther were, “And who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this” (Esther 4:14). Mordecai did not know for certain that God had made Esther queen for this purpose. Paul wrote to Philemon and encouraged him to accept back Onesimus, a runaway slave whom Paul had converted to Christ. He said, “For perhaps he therefore departed for a season, that thou should receive him for ever; Not now as a servant, but above a servant, a brother beloved” (Philemon 4:15,16). “Perhaps” suggests only the possibility of the thing spoken of by Paul and not the certainty of it. If these people could not discern with certainty the workings of God in the lives of people, how can we?

There are several reasons why we cannot know how

and when God is working through providence in the lives of people today. God does not speak to men today separate and apart from the Bible (II Timothy 3:16,17). He is not going to thunder down special instructions to men today from heaven, nor speak to us today by a “small still voice from within us” and reveal to us the “specific plans” He may have. We can know to-day only what the Bible reveals to us.

Things happen also for reasons other than God’s intervention. We know that through the evil Joseph suffered, God preserved a posterity for Israel. But why did Cain kill Abel (Genesis 4)? We are told of no “special plan” of God’s that was worked by Abel’s death. As far as we know, Abel’s earthly life was wasted because of the envy and jealousy of Cain. It was Satan that caused Job to suffer, not God (Job 12; 2:6). One hundred and eighty-five thousand men of Sennacherib’s army were destroyed in one night by an angel of the Lord. But many men die because of the laws of nature. “Man that is born of a woman is of few days...” (Job 14:1). We cannot distinguish God’s workings through providence.

The reason we know that God was working in the life of Joseph to make certain things happen is because of the side of the story on which we stand, and because God has told us so in the Bible. We sometimes sing “Farther Along we’ll understand.” We may have to wait until we get to the other side of life to understand all of God’s workings, and even then, I do not know for sure that we will be told why all things happened as they did.

The secret of dealing with God’s providence is not to ponder “the why” of every situation, but it is to always do what is right in each situation. When Joseph was sold into slavery, he did not whine and cry and say, “why me?”; he was the best slave he could be. When he was pursued by Potiphar’s wife and resisted the temptation, he was cast into prison, but Joseph did not give up with despair; he was the best prisoner he could be, and God made him second in Egypt and worked a great work by him. If we too will always do what is right, no matter what happens in this life and no matter whether it occurs by the design of God or by happenstance, we will be judged faithful by a Lord who cares.

God cares for man and is active in the lives of men today. If I will work with God by doing those things God has declared in the Bible as right, all things will work to the good of my soul. I must trust God and obey Him (Job 13:15; Hebrews 5:9). ❏

I Cannot Change the Bible

by Shelby C. Smith

The Bible is an inspired book and I am an uninspired man. There are many things that point to the inspiration of the Bible. It is complete and cannot be changed because it is from God. Since the close of the New Testament Scriptures no religious leader, no matter how many PHDs he may have, has been able to bring forth a single new truth which is not already set forth in the Bible. There are some who claim to have done so, but what they claim is already in the Bible, or it is condemned by the Bible.

I am not responsible for what the Bible teaches. But it is my responsibility to *study* the Word of God. “Be diligent to present yourself approved to God. a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth” (II Timothy 2:15). It is also my responsibility to *follow* it and *teach it to others*. “But you continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them, and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus” (II Timothy 3:14-15). “And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also” (II Timothy 2:2). If anyone wants to praise the Word he must praise Him who gave it. Also those who want to criticize the doctrine of the Bible will not be criticizing me, but will be criticizing its author who is God. If I misrepresent the Word of God, one has a right to point out my error. Yea, even more it is their responsibility to do so. But if what I teach is taught in God’s Word, no one has a right to criticize me, because it comes from God.”

If, for example, I teach that baptism is a burial and a resurrection, I can read in Romans 6:2-4 that this is true. If I teach that baptism puts us into Christ, I can read that in Galatians 3:27. And if I teach that baptism saves us, that it is for the remission of sins, I can read that in I Peter 3:21 and Acts 2:38. Men do not like this teaching concerning baptism. To them it is a hard doctrine. Nevertheless, it is what the Bible. God’s Word. says. I must teach it even though those in the denominational world may think I am narrow-minded.”

What does the Bible teach about denominationalism? The Bible teaches that Jesus prayed for unity of believers on the earth (John 17:20ff).

Denominationalism contributes to unbelief and thus hinders unity. It takes time, talents and money to build up denominational groups when it could be used to evangelize the world. The Bible does not support many different doctrines. There is only one doctrine of faith— the New Testament (Ephesians 4:5). The denominational world twists the Bible to make it support their doctrine. Some fail to believe the Bible. As a result those who profess to believe it are so divided. Thus we see that denominationalism is a curse. Paul said, “Now I plead with you. brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment” (I Corinthians 1:10). I did not write the Bible, therefore I cannot change it. So, before you criticize it or try to change it, remember that God is its author and some day we will all be judged by the Words of Christ. “He who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him — the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day” (John 12:48).

Does the Bible suit you? Do you find fault with those who preach it? Do you call on them to revise it? Remember this, the last word man has from God is written for us in the New Testament. We have no new revelation from God today as some claim. Also remember that revisions will face us in judgment.

Let us strive to be Christians and to serve God in the things that are pleasing to Him. Man did not write the Bible, and man cannot change it. ✠

Bennie Johns is in the business of copying out of print books, debates and sermons and putting them on CDs. He also has some Periodicals on CD including Torch Magazine, with various editors. \$19:95

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The Work Of The Church And Legalism

by Larry H. Fain

From a study of the New Testament it is rather easily discerned that the local congregation is limited to three areas of work. i.e.. evangelism, edification, and internal benevolence. It can also be shown that the financing of these works is limited to the free will offerings of the members of each local church. By that I simply mean that we do not solicit money from non-Christians nor do we solicit from members of other congregations to finance our work. The authorized exceptions to this principle are: (1) in benevolence, when disaster strikes one church so that the physical needs of the members exceed the ability of the church to handle them, other churches can send relief to the needy church for distribution under the oversight of the elders of the receiving church; and (2) in evangelism, a preacher can receive support directly from a church in a different place from the site of his labors. This is the Lord's system of operations, and regardless of what men may think about it, it works, and has worked for nearly 2,000 years. (For substantiation of these facts, please study Ephesians 4:1-16; I Corinthians 8:9- 9:15; Philippians 4:15; II Corinthians 11:5-9; I Corinthians 9:1-18).

From authority based on the command to assemble (Hebrews 10:25 et. al) and from the charge to evangelize the world and edify the saints in the most expedient manner, most churches maintain a building for the accomplishment of these works. This building is paid for and maintained through the treasuries of each local church. Some churches pay rent for a place to meet, and still others have not the economic capacity to either own or rent, so they meet in member's houses or some other place provided by Christians for their brethren to come together to worship. The Bible is not specific concerning the place of worship, so we act on general authority to provide for such an expedient place. Our authority, based on the same generic principle, also allows us to furnish that building with utilities, furniture, carpet, drinking fountains, chalk boards, song books, pew Bibles, a preacher's office, tape recorders, overhead projectors, public address systems, photostatic copiers, etc, all acquired and maintained through funds derived from the same free will offerings of the local members. If a church cannot afford an overhead

projector, it would be an unauthorized act to solicit or to accept a contribution from an outside source to finance the acquisition of that teaching tool. We understand the principle from the perspective of the overhead projector since that tool is not necessary to successful teaching.

Why then can we not see the same principle when it is applied to the construction and maintenance of a building? Does the immensity of the project or the perceived severity of the need justify going beyond the authority of that which is written? Sure, it would be nice if the Lord's people could all meet in appealing structures on Main Street where all the town's people knew where we met and would be proud to call that "OUR" meeting house, but we know that such is impractical. And to spend His money on a perceived need rather than on the real object of the place is not only impractical, but borders on the outright sinful. But the real issue that needs to be addressed here is the outside financing of the preacher while a local church spends all its efforts and money on the construction of a nice meeting house. Is that the spirit of the authority? It appears to me that we found a loophole for inter-congregational cooperation that never was intended. Some take the attitude, "We can't use the other church's money for the building, so we will let them pay our preacher, while we pay for the building." Paul's robbing of other churches to work in Corinth was for a totally different purpose with a totally different attitude, and his is the example we use to authorize what we do. To give you an example of the problem, we recently received a request for funds from a preacher who had made plans to go to a place to do a very good work. Included in his request was a letter from the men of the church to commend the efforts of the preacher and to substantiate the need. In the letter from the men there was this statement, "Payments on a photocopier preclude us from making a larger commitment (to the preacher's support, LHF) at this time, but it is our desire to take an increasing part of the support as ability allows." Also included was a financial statement from the church which reflected a 4.5 to 1 ratio between building expenditures and preacher support. Yet, the request was made for outside churches to provide twice the amount being paid on the building to the preacher. I know that the area of the world where

this letter originated needs the gospel. My question is, “Will they get the true gospel while organized in this unauthorized way?” You can find no example like this one I have cited in the scriptures. I firmly believe that the preacher is operating from the purest of motives. And I further believe the same thing about a great number of preachers around the country and around the world receiving outside support in similar situations. But do my feelings, or theirs, justify the bending of the authority of God? Is that what is happening?

To add balance to this thing, and maybe a disclaimer, autonomy as an overriding principle must be considered. Maybe when I question the actions of a church which seemingly cares more for their building than they do for the preaching of the gospel, I am exercising judgment that is none of my business since I am not a member of the church involved in the request. I give that possibility serious consideration. Preacher support is just that, **PREACHER** support. Maybe the men of the church used poor wisdom in the past, and this is the only way out. Do we turn our backs on brethren just because they made a mistake in the past? My premise is that we carefully consider our motivation when we set out to finance any portion of our work with someone else’s money. A church does not have to have a located preacher. A church does not have to have a building. A church does not have to have song books. A church does not have to have their building remodeled. The acquisition of these things is good for the growth of any local church, but we need to exercise extreme caution when we go out to finance these works. Our authority is limited. Motive and attitude are the keys, just like they are to so many other areas of our relationship with the Lord. Outside support of a local preacher is not a loophole for the church to use. It is a divinely authorized system to supply the needs of a man away from home doing the work God has charged him to do. May their tribe increase. 𐄂

Who Are The Campbellites?

by Grover Stevens

I have been called a “Campbellite” many times since having become a Christian. Of course, I deny being any such thing, but in spite of such denials, and even refutation of the charge, members of the Church of Christ are still maliciously called “Campbellite.” The very people who become so wonderfully hurt when they are called by the name they own and wear religiously, are the ones who so freely and maliciously call us by this name — which we deny and repudiate.

A Challenge

I challenge anybody to name one thing — **just ONE** — that I was *taught*, or that I *believed*, or that I *did*, in becoming a member of the Church of Christ, or that is taught or practiced by the Church of Christ of which I am a member, *that originated with Alexander Campbell!! Or, that even originated in the days that Alexander Campbell lived!!* Such proof will NEVER be given for the simple reason that EVERYTHING that we teach and practice at the Church of Christ of which I am a member originated in the 1st century with our Lord Jesus Christ and His inspired apostles and prophets (Galatians 1:11-12; 11 Timothy 2:2; 3:16,17; 11 Peter 3:1-2; 11 John 9-11). Therefore, all who resort to such baseless name calling only blaspheme the worthy name by which God’s people are called (James 2:7sd; Acts 11:26; Romans 16:16; Acts 4:12).

Green or Mean

The person who calls members of the Church of Christ by this blasphemous name does so for one of two reasons: (1) they are ignorant of the facts and therefore don’t know any better, or (2) they *do* know better, but refuse to abide by the truth and therefore call us by this name out of heart full of prejudice and malice. See Matthew 15:18-20. So they are either “*green*” (ignorant) or “*mean*.” Anyone therefore who knows that we deny that we are followers of Alexander Campbell and repudiate this human name as being unscriptural and also inapplicable, and who fails to give such proof as called for above — **by showing something — at least ONE thing** — that we teach or practice that originated with Alexander Campbell, but *persists* in calling us a “Campbellite” anyway, is nothing short of **MEAN; and is surely blaspheming that worthy name as those of whom James speaks in James 2:7.**

The Hit Dog

Many times such blasphemers attempt to escape their responsibility to give the proof or else retract their baseless charge by **saying that “the hit dog is the one that hollers.”** By this method of proof (?) I could easily prove you to be a thief. All I would need to do would be to *call* you a thief; then if you deny

it; then all I would need to do would be to say, ***“the hit dog is the one that hollers,”*** so therefore you are guilty. Yes, I suppose the hit dog is the one that hollers all right, but the dog that is hit is not always the right dog.

Mr. Bob L. Ross

Mr. Bob L. Ross, Box 66, Pasadena, Texas 77501 is one of the many Baptist preachers, and others, who show their hate for the simple New “Testament name that God has given His church (Isaiah 62:2; Acts 11:19-20,26; 1 Peter 4:16; James 2:7; Romans 16:16; Revelation 2:13.) by regularly and maliciously calling it ***“Campbellite.”*** Now we would like to call upon Mr. Ross to prove that the members of the Church of Christ of which I am a member, the Caprock Church of Christ in Lubbock, Texas, whom he calls ***“Campbellites,”*** are followers of A. Campbell. If *he fails* to produce **something — at least ONE thing** — that we teach or practice that originated with Alexander **Campbell, then will he be honorable enough to retract his charge which blasphemes that worthy name by which the people of God are called??!! WILL HE??** (James 2:7). If he does **NEITHER, then there is no alternative** but to *appraise* him as being MEAN, PREJUDICIAL, and MALICIOUS. Mr. Ross evidently feels the force of the fact that the ***“Missionary Baptist Church”*** cannot be found in the Bible, and he shows his contempt for the ***“churches of Christ”*** because **they are found in the Bible** (Romans 16:16; I Corinthians 12:27; Ephesians 1:22-23), and he seeks to bring it *down* to the same **human level as the Missionary Baptist Church** by calling it by the *human* name “Campbellite.” And, in so doing, he blasphemes the name of Christ. “Neither is there salvation in ANY OTHER: for THERE IS NONE OTHER NAME UNDER HEAVEN given among men, whereby we must be saved” (Acts 4:12). And again, “Do not they blaspheme that worthy NAME by the which ye are called?” (James 2:7).

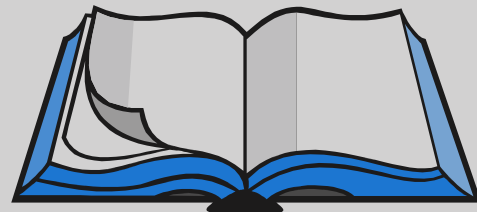
Christ’s True Church Exists Today

Beloved friends, does it seem unreasonable that the same church that Jesus established in Jerusalem in 33 A.D., as recorded in Acts 2:37-47, (Matthew 16:18) is still in the world today **UNCHANGED in NAME, WORSHIP, and DOCTRINE**, in spite of the many denominational divisions that have ***“departed from the faith”*** and broken away in the intervening years??? Read: 1 Timothy 4:1; Acts 20:29-30; Matthew 7:15-16; II Thessalonians 2:3-4; I Corinthians 11:13-15; Galatians 1:6-9; I Peter 2:1-3; etc. Make an honest

investigation. And, remember that even Mohammedans, Buddhists, and all heathen and idolatrous religions have religious experiences, but this is no proof that they are right in the sight of God. We will be judged by the **WORD OF GOD**, and not by our religious experiences or feelings. ***“Try the spirits...”*** (I John 4:1; I Timothy 3:16-17; I Timothy 1:3; John 12:48; Revelation 20:12).

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Reconciliation



by

Maurice Barnett

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Writings From Yesteryear

The Deity of Jesus Christ

The foundation of all faith is evidence. There are various and sundry sorts of evidence, such as the senses, reason and testimony, but faith in any realm must rest upon some sort of evidence. Religious faith is based on revelation. "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Religious guesses may be made without any evidence at all; and opinions may be formed by human interpretations; but faith rests on the solid evidence of God's word.

From Moses to Malachi the old testament foretells the deity of the Son of God, and from the manger of Bethlehem to the cross of Calvary these prophecies find their fulfillment. The evidence is preponderant. Of the old scriptures Jesus said: "These are they which testify of me," and "beginning at Moses and all the prophets" he "expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself."

The list of old testament references to Christ cited in the new testament by various quotations and allusions number more than three hundred. The prophetic preview of him sets forth that he would be of the Hebrew race, of the Jewish nation, of the Davidic family; he would be the seed of woman, of virgin birth, in a Bethlehem manger, a child of peasantry; a Galilean ministry, an ignominious death, a glorious resurrection, an exalted throne not on the earth and a spiritual kingdom not of the world. Such a delineation is impossible on any other explanation than divine origination in the minds of the messianic seers, "who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you," when by "the Spirit of Christ which was in them" they "testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow," and "unto whom it was revealed that not unto themselves but unto us they did minister these things."

*The foundation fact of the deity of Jesus Christ is in the new testament words: Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." As an oracle, it is the most potent utterance ever to fall from human lips. As a confession, the declaration contains more than any other ten words possible to select. As a creed, these words declare that he is Lord, Jesus, Christ, Saviour and King, covering the entire volume of the **spiritual** realm, **without** which the Bible itself would be an empty hull and reduced to a blank page. As lawgiver, it means he is greater than all, superseding Moses (Matthew 17) and above all earth's potentates (I Timothy 6:12). As the Son of God, he was born, but he existed before. In man's existence he must reason from step to step in life from the cradle to the grave, from childhood to manhood, hence from birth to death—and he can do so only by regarding the intervening years: his years as a child, then the same child as a man, and only by the process of **growth** and **development** in natural life. Not so of Christ. He was born of woman, but existed **before** his birth. He was **nourished** in the **ordinary** way of human beings, but he had life and glory with the Father before time. All of this is not **human**.*