

"... Hereby know we the spirit of truth and the spirit of error"

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RIGHT AND WRONG METHODOLOGY IN COMBATING THE CULTS

Prof. John E. Dahlin, Editor

We have witnessed recently a changing pattern in dealing with the present-day cults. A few decades ago the general practice was to stay clear from all groups which were known as propagandists of false teachings. The literature published at that time against those false systems followed a hard-line approach. Dr. Edward Biederwolf may serve as a good example of those who published pamphlets on the cults. The anti-cultic groups adhered to a line of complete rejection of all deviation from the Biblical path.

PAST METHODS CONTRASTED WITH THE NEW APPROACH

Perhaps the most common method followed in the earlier period was to ignore completely the presence of these off-center groups. In fact, they were treated as being non-existent. Obviously such a method was ineffective in dealing with those who had departed from the Scriptural truth. Actually no practical steps were taken to combat error. The so-called hands-off policy had to be abandoned, however, as the false systems continued to expand all over the country.

Another method nearly in total contrast became popular later as an attempt to counteract the cultists. Special classes were held within the various churches which arranged courses that studied a number of the well-known cults. At times Sunday school classes among the adults devoted periods to the study of the false systems of religion. At other times men's organizations as well as women's groups carried on these studies. Informative literature was made available to those who were present to enlighten them regarding the cults. In more recent years, this methodology has been widely used in providing up-to-date teachings on the activities of the cults of today.

A completely different experiment has been introduced in various churches. It involves inviting certain representatives of the cults in order to brief the church audiences on the cultic teachings. The theory is that it is logical to hear directly from the bona fide representatives of the cults with regard to their teachings. These services do not allow any questions nor do they offer any form of dialog. The arrangement simply allows the

invited speaker to appear and offering him the opportunity to present the case for the cult being represented by that person. Usually this is held during the main service of the church. After the message has been presented by the cultic representative, the speaker leaves the platform and the auditorium. This is done by mutual agreement made in advance during the arrangement of the discussions.

I am convinced that the whole arrangement is faulty as it provides a kind of respectability to that cult and the person who is invited to speak. No cultic group deserves this public recognition. The arrangement generally leaves a side-effect which is not good. A number of people get confused and befuddled through such an arrangement within an evangelical church. Dr. Paul Smith, pastor of the largest Protestant Church in Canada, is a minister who has experimented with this method. Following the appearance of the cultic representative, Dr. Smith comes to the podium, and he does his best to repudiate that which the representative of the cult has just presented. Since Dr. Smith is an able and very skillful preacher, it is possible that he may be helpful to the audience on some points of the discussion. It is a method, however, which I cannot recommend. The main thrust of the cult is to achieve recognition, and this is being achieved by the arrangement made. The leader of the Moonies, Dr. Sun Myung Moon, who still is in a federal prison on fraud, has led his organization to mail costly books and literature which has reached a sum of ten million dollars. This material has been sent to thousands of ministers

and other public leaders. Without a doubt it is a great propaganda effort to reduce the criticism of the program of the cult, and with the possibility of gaining some support of the movement. Any method that gives a false system encouragement and status is wrong according to the Second Letter of John.

Some years ago I spoke in a local church, and this I often do. This was a service by the young people. The leader proceeded to announce the program of a series of discussions for a number of Sundays, with a cultic representative appearing to brief the gathering each week on a different cult. I took it upon myself to recommend a cancellation of that series. Fortunately, the leader listened to me and the cancellation was made of the whole plan. This incident took place in an evangelical church.

THE RIGHT WAY IN COMBATING THE CULTS

The distribution of carefully selected literature, which expose the errors of the cults, has no substitute with regard to methodology. People often will read for curiosity, and somehow the reading will have an impact on the reader. We have a number of letters on file in our office which tell of people who have been turned around by reading this type of literature. Not so few of them have come to Christ and are now active in Bible-believing groups. And, some of these have written articles for our magazine, *The Discerner*. These people are some of our most effective writers.

The Scriptural method should be given the priority. In dealing with false systems of religion we find that

the Bible points out clearly how to meet the deviation by such groups from the Scriptural Truth. In II Timothy, chapter 3, Paul provides a review of the characteristics of those who spread false doctrines. He identifies such apostates by those teachings as being "doctrines of demons." Peter also does not mince words in identifying the latter-day apostates. He classifies their teachings as "damnable heresies." In his brief Letter the apostle Jude brings forth a graphic description of these peddlers of false doctrines. In Matthew's Gospel, chapter 24, our Lord predicted the appearance of many such apostates during the end-times. In his letter to the Ephesians, Paul outlines for us how to meet the onslaughts of these deceptions; first of all, a total committal to God is an essential step, and, the apostle points out how we may experience full victory over our adversary.

Unfortunately there is a present tendency to soft-pedal the activities of some of the false systems. A mistaken position is to extend the hand of fellowship with the least objectionable ones among the cults. Before he passed off the arena, the famous Bible teacher, Dr. Barnhouse, felt that the Seventh Day Adventists should no longer be classified among the cults. He was convinced that this group had embraced enough of sound Biblical doctrines to qualify them for fellowship with the general company of believers. Some of us discovered that this well-known Bible teacher had erred. The Adventist group still

holds tenaciously onto their original positions. Recently a group of Adventist scholars decided to investigate the writings of Ellen White, the most revered person in the Adventist movement. These honorable scholars discovered that Mrs. White had incorporated a great deal of material from other authors, and that no credit was given for using this borrowed material. It simply was allowed to pass for her own writing. She had been regarded widely as a person having a special inspiration from God in her writings. When leaders among the Adventists realized that this development might divide the movement, they went ahead quickly and disfellowshipped these scholars, and dismissed them from the Adventist organization without giving them a trial. This ruthless treatment of the scholars was taken in order to end a serious crisis brought about by the findings of these trained investigators. Ellen White was discredited for her improper use of the material by other authors. This is known as **plagiarism** (one guilty of literary or artistic theft). The leaders of the Adventists chose to sweep the matter under the rug in order to save the reputation of Ellen White. It is a long time since a religious group has dealt so unfairly with reputable scholars. Without a doubt this matter will surface again and plague the Seventh Day Adventists. The matter should have been dealt with on merit even when it involved the founder of the movement.

NEW SUBSCRIPTIONS TO THE DISCERNER

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MARTIAL ARTS

By Rev. Ewald Eisele

In this particular class the ages of the pupils include ages 8 to 35 or 40. They are here to learn Karate. The children are concentrating just as much as the older "students." They are led through the various kicks, punches and jumps by an oriental man, who at the beginning of the class, led the entire group in bowing to the two flags at the front of the long, rather narrow, hall. One was an American flag and the other an oriental flag with some kind of oriental configuration on it.

What this group, and thousands of others like it around the country, is doing, is learning a system which was born two centuries before the birth of the Christian era and developed in various eastern countries. It is called a Martial Art because it is part of a group of similar systems that were originally considered a form of weaponless warfare. An encyclopedia definition states that Martial Arts are methods of self-defense based on Eastern philosophies or religion.

There are 56 varieties of Martial Arts, some violent and others more passive. All are disciplines designed to harmonize the body with the energy forces of the universe in order to achieve religious enlightenment. There are six to eight major disciplines.

KUNG FU was the original term describing the Martial Arts. Later specific names were given to variations: Karate, Tai Chi, Judo, Jujitsu and Aikido. The original religious philosophy of Kung Fu dates back to 2696 BC. This discipline is the "hard school," emphasizing kicking, strik-

ing and punching. Its appeal to the average person lies in its offensive character, although it can be used to improve health. Advanced Kung Fu is used for striking vital points, causing delayed action of some sort that is known as a "death touch," and the use of psychic powers. Most practitioners do not consider Kung Fu to be a religion but rather a way of life. However, since many of its philosophies are adapted to everyday life, it then becomes, for all practical purposes, the personal religion of the adherent. Most "sifu," or Kung Fu teachers, will admit that anyone can learn the perfect physical aspects of the art but that the inner teachings are much more important.

TAI CHI is that form of Martial Arts in which the ultimate goal is readily admitted to become an immortal. This is supposedly accomplished by putting the body in harmony with the laws of nature. This form of the art can produce supernatural strength and devastating power in combat. This is brought about by concentrating on the KI or CH'I, known in the occult arts as the "life-energy-creative force" of the universe. This is the source of power for all that is done in the Martial Arts. In a practitioner, this center of power, or KI, is located in the body's psychic center just below the navel.

KI is developed by meditation, concentration and the fundamental exercise of abdominal breathing. This doctrine was the main source of metaphysical and intellectual speculation for Indian, Chinese,

Tibetan and Japanese philosophers and religious leaders. It was ultimately adopted by almost all the important schools of Martial Arts. It is not considered mysterious or magical but rather a common property of every human being. The difficult part is learning how to master it and release it profitably. It can produce effects not only within the body but also at a distance from the practitioner. It is claimed that this KI energy can be used to turn the hand into a powerful weapon, to heal wounds and diseases or break bricks and boards without even touching them. It can be used as a shield to keep the individual from being injured. A Martial Artist can so direct the KI power that no matter how many blows he might receive, whether from fists, staves or even swords, he will not even show a bruise or scratch on his body.

One who has mastered the art is able to strike a pile of bricks, for instance, with just a slap, and break only one pre-selected brick in the pile. This energy, it is claimed, can be used to concentrate all available KI into a loud shout which, if so desired, can actually kill an opponent. On the defensive side, a man knowledgeable in the techniques of KI, can, through concentration and meditation, be completely indifferent to physical discomfort, pain, and even death.

Without doubt, if these things really do take place, and there is no reason to doubt the claims made for KI, the power is not of God but of the occult and Satan who is behind all occult phenomenon.

KARATE is that form best known to westerners. To be successful, one must first empty the mind of wickedness in order to react in an ac-

ceptable way to the "internalized god." Because of the nature of the development of Karate in its background of Buddhism, even when it is not stressed by the instructor, the art is saturated with Zen philosophy.

Zen is a Buddhist discipline that stresses meditation and direct teaching from master to student. It was introduced to China by a Buddhist monk who had studied Buddhism in India. While Buddhism teaches that it takes a lifetime to "arrive" at an "awakening," Zen teaches that the goal may be reached immediately. The aim of Zen is complete control of the mind to attain a state of enlightenment and a sense of detachment from the physical world. This is the one essential of Zen: the direct experience of enlightenment. Encouraging, deepening, and expressing that experience in all of life is its sole purpose. In Zen there is no past nor future because the most important thing is the experience of the "now" or present moment. Zen has no concept of sin, has no god, and so needs no deliverance. It is generally acknowledged that Zen was the foundation of the Martial Arts in Japan and that it reputedly provides the Martial Artist with the disciplines for developing strong character and personality. Zen Buddhists say, "When sitting correctly in Za-Zen one is not practicing towards becoming the Buddha; while sitting correctly, one IS the Buddha."

According to THE OFFICIAL MANUAL OF THE JAPAN KARATE ASSN., which was written by their Chief Instructor, M. Nakayama, "Karate is, and always has been, a method of self-defense,

never a technique of aggression. But it is much more than that. To the sincere student, it is a form of combined physical and mental discipline from which he can learn the value of personal attributes such as kindness and sincerity." Gichin Funakoshi, the man who introduced karate into Japan, often told his students, "The spirit of karate is lost without courtesy."

JUDO and JUJITSU. Jujitsu is a blend of Kung Fu and Japanese martial arts. Judo is basically Jujitsu minus the killing aspects. It was the first, according to **THE COMPLETE MARTIAL ARTS CATALOGUE**, to reach outside the Orient to the Western world, where it became at first a fascinating, secretive fighting art and later an internationally recognized sport. By the beginning of World War II, there were judo schools in almost every major country, and following the war, it became a recognized Olympic sport.

Devotees are warned in some judo manuals that the art should not be learned without the inclusion of meditation exercises. The "Catalogue" quoted above states that the founder of judo, Jigoro Kano, taught that the ultimate goal of judo was, "The harmonious development and eventual perfection of human character."

These are some of the different forms of Martial Arts but all have similar religious backgrounds and goals. Since their roots are in Taoism and Buddhism, they view the universe as an interplay of opposites—expressed in eastern philosophy and religions as the YIN and YANG. The goal is to arrive at the Zen goal of stilled senses where

one is able to merge with the "Universal Consciousness."

Almost without exception those involved in some kind of Martial Arts training complain about anyone finding fault with the Arts because all they want to do is learn self-defense or physical prowess. Matsutatsu Oyama, who in 1947 won the All-Japan Karate Championship, came to the United States in 1952 to represent the Karate world of Japan. He wrote in his book, **MASTERING KARATE**, "Always more vital to karate than techniques or strength is the spiritual element that lets you move and act with complete freedom. In striving to enter the proper frame of mind, Zen meditation is of great importance. Though we say that this meditation involves a state of impassivity and complete lack of thought, we mean that through meditation we can overcome emotion and thinking and give freer reign to our innate abilities than ever before. The Zen state of selfishness is the same condition of disregard for selfish thoughts and concern for personal welfare that the artist experiences in the heart of creation. The man who wants to walk the way of karate cannot afford to neglect Zen and spiritual training."

A few would argue that a person does not study the philosophical or religious aspects of the Martial Arts but only the physical. People that argue that way must hear American 5th Dan Master Instructor Bob Miller who initiates boys as young as five years old into his own free-style version of Hapkido, which is a Korean Martial Art similar to "soft-style" karate. He said (and this is

quoted in **MARTIAL ARTS — ARE THEY HARMFUL**, by Mike R. Taylor [available from Religion Analysis Service]), "While I teach them on the physical level, I throw philosophy at them." It would take an unusual individual, who possessed a great amount of discernment to try

to sift the physical benefits out of a Martial Arts program and not be affected in any way by the philosophical, occult or spiritual. After all, the power for KI is not of God so it must be of Satan and is not something with which a Christian should have anything to do.

APOSTASY

R. Alan Streett, Dallas, Texas

Dr. George Sweeting, President of the Moody Bible Institute, once wrote how the rebel leader, General Mola, successfully attacked and captured the capital city of Madrid in the Spanish Civil War. When asked which of his four columns would be the first to enter the besieged city, the General gave his world-famous response, "The fifth column." He was referring to a band of rebel sympathizers who were already within the city fighting behind the loyalist lines.

General Mola's "fifth column" remark is universally recognized to mean a traitor who helps the enemy from within. The Church of Jesus Christ has its own "fifth column," those who outwardly profess allegiance to its causes and doctrines, but who, in reality, await the right opportunity to turncoat. They are traitors to the cause of Christ. The Bible word used to describe such traitorous activity is **APOSTASY**.

Originally, apostasy referred to the act of a soldier deserting his post. He professed allegiance to his country, but his actions betrayed him. Apostasy, in the religious sense, means a defection or a falling away

from the faith. Dr. C. I. Scofield says, "Apostasy occurs when a professed Christian knowingly rejects the revealed truth regarding the deity of Jesus Christ and redemption through his atoning sacrifice."

The individual who participates in an act of apostasy is known as an apostate. Dr. F. F. Bruce, the distinguished Rylands' Professor at the University of Manchester writes, "From the Christian point of view, an apostate is one who, having once deliberately professed the Christian faith, later as deliberately repudiates it altogether."

Dr. Merrill F. Unger adds, "Apostates apparently can only be professors and not actual possessors of true salvation, otherwise their defection would incur severe chastening, or if this failed to restore them, untimely . . . death."

The Apostle John writes, "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us" (I John 2:19).

Hebrews 3:6, 14 says, "But Christ as a son over his own house, whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope

firm unto the end. . . . For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end."

The perseverance of the saints is the prime characteristic of a true believer. "Professors only" will eventually fall away; apostatize.

Apostates do not always leave the institutionalized church. They may remain within its structure as unbelievers, spreading their false doctrines to all who will listen. In his article, "The Nature of Apostasy," Dr. Ernest Pickering describes apostates as, "Those who professed the Christian faith, then repudiated its vital doctrines while outwardly remaining within its fold."

Dr. Sweeting, likewise, notes, "Apostasy is opposition to the faith from within. People who once professed the faith, and still call themselves believers, become its enemies, saying to the Church and the world, 'The things the Bible teaches aren't what them seem to be.'"

The Apostle Paul indicates that these apostates "have a form of godliness" (II Tim. 3:5). They are religious, church-oriented, but they deny the power which lies behind the Church. He further characterizes these apostates as following seducing spirits, embracing demonic doctrines, practicing hypocritical lying, possessing a seared conscience and propagating a false asceticism (I Tim. 4:1-4).

The source of all apostasy is Satan. In the parable of the wheat and the tares, Jesus says, "The enemy that sowed them is the devil. . . ." (Matt. 13:39). Apostates are the devil's

agents, his fifth column within the Church.

It is interesting to note that less than a century ago scoffers and Christ deniers were for the most part outside the Church. Consistently they made their onslaught against the Church as outsiders. But in our day, infidels seek to remain on the inside where they strive to gain positions of power and influence. Most of the major denominations are being commandeered by liberals who reject the great tenets of the faith. From their chairs of influence as bishops, presbyters, general supervisors, editors of periodicals and seminary deans and professors, they manipulate the minds of God's people with the deadly doctrines of demons. Jesus called them wolves in sheep's clothing. They are in the Church, but they are enemy agents.

Jesus said, "The enemy that sowed them is the devil and the harvest is the end of the age" (Matt. 13:39). As the Church progresses toward the end of the age, apostasy will increase. While many Christian leaders are calling for an end-time revival, the Bible predicts end-time apostasy.

The parable of the leaven illustrates the progress of evil doctrine in the professing Church. It clearly shows that evil doctrine will finally permeate all of Christendom, till it is "all leavened" (Matt. 13:33). From its inauspicious beginning in the apostolic age it will work its way throughout the entire structure of Christendom until it finally produces the great Harlot Church (Rev. 17) which aligns itself with the Man of Sin. Once the believers are raptured, only the apostates will be left within the organized Church. Jesus asked,

“ . . . When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth” (Luke 18:8). The Apostle Paul writes, “For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine. . . . And they shall turn away their ears from the

truth, and shall be turned unto fables” (II Tim. 4:3, 4).

The clear teaching of scripture is that our age will not culminate in world conversion, but world perversion.

Are we returning to paganism of an ancient day?

SWORDS, SORCERY AND A NEW AGE OF BARBARISM

by Daniel K. Corbett, pastor

First Baptist Church, Freeland, Wash.

Imagine the surprise of hearing a television announcer inform you that within fifteen miles of your home, scores of FBI agents are surrounding a house that contains a dangerous escaped neo-Nazi!

That is exactly what happened to my wife and me. In an exchange of gunfire and a raging inferno accidentally started by an illumination flare, this heavily armed criminal finally met his death the next night and our rural island made the national news.

Such an event is no less surprising than what many of us have observed in recent years in shopping centers, bookstores, toy and grocery stores across our country. A phenomenon is upon all of us. It is connected to the neo-Nazi movement and the religious climate of our great land.

The most modern nation on earth is being changed into a land of barbaric occultism. Call it the sword and sorcery phenomenon.

It can be seen everywhere. The most apparent evidence is literature. Bookshelves are crammed with books

of a sword and sorcery theme. This does not mean fairy stories designed for children, such a *Jack and the Beanstalk* or *Cinderella*. It refers to works whose plot contains at least three basic elements: the occult (magic, sorcery), graphic violence (the sword) and a morality that can only be termed “situation ethics.” If you can’t find at least a dozen books of this class in your local supermarket, yours is a rare store. The popularity of such literature is illustrated by the fact that Time-Life offers a series of works entitled *The Enchanted World*.

The first book in this series is *Wizards and Witches*. The promotional brochure for this volume describes it this way: “You’ll learn, too, how wizards and witches worked their wonders and discover their most guarded instruments of power; talismans, charms, runes, riddles . . . spells and signs, pentacles and magic wands . . . and so much more!”

“So much more” is indeed correct. So popular is this literary trend that

there are now magazines of comic book design, but with a definite adult theme, that deal exclusively with the sword and sorcery. Paperbacks, magazines and comic books seem to be majoring on this current fad.

However, that is only the beginning. There are also animated video games, movies, rock music videos and even toys, coloring books and cartoons based on the pagan, occult, violent sword and sorcery theme.

Even science and medicine seem to have taken a plunge in this direction. In an article in the *Seattle Times/Seattle Post Intelligencer* (May 13, 1984), Dr. Stanley Dean, an adjunct professor of psychiatry at the University of Miami School of Medicine, is on record as promoting "The study of psychic phenomena, mysticism and the supernatural. . . ." Dr. Dean believes these three topics should become part of the curriculum of medical schools. His own definition of mysticism is "knowledge or awareness that reaches consciousness through channels other than those known to us at present."

A promoter of sword and sorcery that supersedes the areas mentioned is the fantasy role-playing game, of which "Dungeons and Dragons" is the most popular.

A fantasy role-playing game involves assuming the identity of a character and trying to use the "abilities" of this character to keep him alive as you explore an unknown castle or dungeon in search of treasure. This all sounds harmless enough until you find out what the "abilities" of this character are and with whom he has to ally himself in order to battle his foes. The books

that give the rules for this game clearly state: "Serving a deity is a significant part of D&D, and all player characters should have a patron god."¹ The rulebooks also give detailed descriptions and illustrations of "monsters, gods, demons, spirits, and powers from at least 17 different ethnic mythologies—Babylonian, Egyptian, Celtic, Indian, Chinese, Japanese, to name a few."²

The Bible clearly teaches that these heathen gods were in reality demons (I Cor. 10:20; Rev. 9:20), and were not to be worshiped or associated with in any way. Contact with demons has always brought certain reactions, and their age-old influence can be seen in the list of activities that take place in "Dungeons and Dragons," i.e., human sacrifice, murder, cannibalism, sexual perversions.

As strange as it may seem, some Christians have attempted to defend the use of this game. However, Scripture has a clear instruction for us: *Leave it alone* (Deut. 18:9-12; Lev. 19:26; Isa. 47:12-14)!

The personal testimony of a sixteen-year-old "D&D" fanatic sums up the dangerous effect that not only this game but all sword and sorcery influences we have mentioned can have.

"Ever since I was ten I've wanted to drop out of this world. There are so many flaws. A lot of things are unfair. When I'm in my world, I control my own world order. . . . The more time you spend in your fantasy world, the more you want to walk away from the burdensome decisions of life."³

The sword and sorcery phenomenon is unbreakably linked to a worldwide occult movement known

as the New Age. This movement, which is connected with thousands of organizations and individuals in the United States and Canada alone, is a philosophical, religious and political movement for a one-world order based upon supernatural humanism, occultism, para-psychology, Eastern mysticism and old paganism.

The New Age movement is directly related to old occult movements such as theosophy. It claims that the "Christ" is already here on earth. On April 25, 1982, an advertisement announcing that the "Christ" was on earth and would soon bring an end to political, economic and social problems was published in newspapers around the world.

Leaders in this movement scoff at the idea that there is a common plan among the separate groups, but their writings and actions do not coincide with this statement. Many Christians have noted the rise of this movement and much documentation is available.

New Agers believe that before the Flood, one specific racial group, the Aryans, were the leaders over all the other groups in the city of Atlantis. They also believe the Aryans had special knowledge and must keep their race pure in order to secure their privileges and make contact with the "masters," who will reveal more knowledge to them at the proper time.

To students of history and those who were of a mature age during World War II, the connection to Adolf Hitler's Nazis is immediately apparent. As a matter of fact, Hitler and the majority of the Nazi leaders were actively involved in the occult. Hitler had been accepted as the awaited "Christ" by the predecessors

of the modern New Age movement. No wonder the neo-Nazis are in agreement with many ideals of the New Age movement.

Not all who work with the New Age movement are in sympathy with the occult teachings it espouses or approve of its strong connection to Nazi racism. However, aware or not, they are guilty of promoting an evil and satanic system.

But what does this mean to fundamental, separated Baptists?

First, we must recognize the dangers of the occult influence of sword and sorcery paganism as it exists around us today.

Some have pointed to the New Age movement and claimed it will be the one-world church of the last days. But nice-fitting schemes like this have fallen apart before. A pre-1945 book on eschatology showed that Hitler was the Antichrist and Mussolini the beast. I remember thinking how nicely it fit together; the only problem was it didn't happen!

However, the New Age movement is powerful and active. On our island we have a large learning center for adults and a private school for children directly related to the New Age people.

The sword and sorcery influence must be recognized not only in its political-economic form, but primarily as a dangerous influence in our homes. Toys, cartoons, games, literature, posters and the like that convey this theme should not be allowed. There will be some debate over which things are connected with this evil and which are not. For instance, if we refused all literature

with any supernatural of fantasy-type theme, we would have to remove many classics of Western literature such as *Beowulf*, *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, and many works of Shakespeare. Also the question arises concerning books of a fantasy theme but with a Christian allegory as their message. A simple reading of a few chapters will make the choice of "yes" or "no" much clearer. If it involves a glorifying of sorcery, demonic forces, murder and immorality, it can hardly be considered suitable for a Christian home. The world around us seems enchanted by this fad and willing to return to the old paganism of our ancient ancestors. But we have not lost our command to be the salt of the earth.

Second, as we witness to friends

and neighbors, we must remember that many ideas totally foreign to us are being implanted in the minds of the unsaved. Remember, also, that we have the good news of the gospel. All the talk about mind expansion and consciousness levels can't forgive sin. Only Christ can do that! As the lost see a life that is free from the pagan quest for power, glory and sensual satisfaction, we will find ourselves doing the work our Master intends us to do. We will be a light for Him in an ever-darkening age!

Be aware, Christian, and beware!

¹*Dungeons and Dragons Only a Game?* (Fort Worth: Pro Family Forum).

²Stanley Dojupil, *Dungeons and Dragons Fantasy Role Playing and the Occult* (Berkeley: Scriptural Counterfeits Project, Inc.), p. 3, col. 2.

³Dokupil, p. 2, col. 2.

—from *Baptist Bulletin*, June 1985 issue. Used with permission.

MORMONISM'S PHANTASM

Arthur Budvarson

An article appeared in the Latter-Day Sentinel of March 9, 1985, informing and urging Mormons to tour the Book of Mormon land with BYU professors and professional guides conducting the tours.

The so-called "Book of Mormon land tours" are conducted to the ancient lands of the Maya. The Mayan civilization flourished and was well established by the sixth century B.C. This great civilization once reached through southwest Mexico, the Yucatan Peninsula, Chiapas, Campeche and Quintana Roo, also into Guatemala, Belize and Honduras. Some of their cities such as Chichen-Itza were densely populated with possibly half a million people. They built massive buildings whose ruins

stand today declaring the greatness and glory of the Maya civilization. These ancient cities and ruins are objects of the so-called "Book of Mormon land tours."

The Mayan people occupied this land from 600 B.C. to 1141 A.D. Book of Mormon people were supposed to occupy the same land from 589 B.C. to 421 A.D. However, historical and anthropological sciences have established the fact that the Mayan civilization occupied the land in question, not Book of Mormon people! The Book of Mormon stories are astonishing, claiming: "and it came to pass that they (Book of Mormon people) did multiply and spread, and did go forth from the land southward to the land northward and did spread insomuch that they began to cover the face of the whole earth, from the sea south to the sea north, from the

sea west to the sea east . . . And thus they did enable the people on the land northward that they might build many cities, both of wood and cement." (see Helaman 3:8 and 11) Yet nothing has ever been bound to substantiate Book of Mormon claims. As a matter of fact, the Smithsonian Institution has declared: "It can be stated definitely that there is no connection between the archaeology of the New World and the subject matter of the Book of Mormon."

For decades a number of well-known Mormon authors have been writing mythical Book of Mormon archaeological reports, also the "Book of Mormon land tour" guides, seeking to appeal to, and tickling the ears of the Mormon membership, skillfully insinuating that the Book of Mormon has been proven true by archaeology. The reason for this awkward situation in trying to establish Book of Mormon archaeology, is the statement made by their prophet Joseph Smith in his history that the Book of Mormon gave "an account of the former inhabitants of this continent, and the source from whence they sprang." True historical evidence however, is totally against Joseph Smith and his Book of Mormon. Yet, even to this day, the majority of the Mormon membership have been led to believe that archaeology has proven the Book of Mormon to be true! The following reports, from recognized Mormon scientists, will reveal how terribly deceived the Mormon people are!

Dr. John L. Sorenson, in "Dialogue" Spring 1966, commented: "Few of the writings they have produced are of genuine consequence in archaeological times. Some are clear-

ly on the odd-ball fringe. Two of the most prolific are Professor Hugh Nibley and Milton R. Hunter; however, they are not qualified to handle the archaeological materials their work involves."

Dr. Ross T. Christensen declared: "The statement that the Book of Mormon has already been proved by archaeology is misleading . . . that such an idea could exist indicates the ignorance of many of our people with what is going on in the historical and anthropological sciences." (See BYU University Archaeological Society Newsletter, No. 64.)

Dr. Dee F. Green, in "Dialogue" Summer 1969 stated: "Those volumes which most flagrantly distort, misinterpret, or ignore positions of archaeological evidence are the popular Fransworth volumes. Also inadequate from a professional archaeologist's point of view are the well-intentioned volumes of Milton R. Hunter and a number of smaller pamphlets. The first myth we need to eliminate is that Book of Mormon archaeology exists."

Mormonism's fantasy is a delusion that is leading men and women, boys and girls into a hopeless eternity without the true Jesus Christ of the Bible. Who alone is the true Way to eternal life!

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

We sincerely believe that many people desire to know the truth concerning the Book of Mormon archaeological claims). And since archaeology is an exact science, it is comparatively easy to obtain true archaeological data from honest and reliable sources.

The Smithsonian is the foremost reliable source on American

Ethnology. "Since 1879 the Smithsonian's Bureau of American Ethnology has been gathering, recording, and publishing information on the American Indians—their relationships, language, material culture, history, customs and myths. In addition, it acts as a clearinghouse for American ethnology and archaeology, answering hundreds of inquiries each year. Cooperating with other agencies working in these fields, and serving in an advisory

capacity on archaeological projects throughout the country."

For information concerning "Book of Mormon archaeology" write: Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. 20560.

Please pray for the enlightenment of the dear Mormon people, and for us and this ministry of reaching them with the true Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ!

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EDITOR JOHN DAHLIN HONORED ON HIS 85th BIRTHDAY



Sunday afternoon on June 9th, friends, relatives and long-time acquaintances of John Dahlin had arranged a recognition meeting at the First Evangelical Free Church of Minneapolis, where the Dahlins are members. The honor was not limited to his birthday; it also involved his 60th year in the Gospel ministry, 36 years on Northwestern College Network of radio stations, 16 years as a teacher at Northwestern College, 25 years as teacher in Northwestern Evening School of the Bible, 30 years as President of Religion Analysis Service and Editor of **The Discerner**, and 40 years as a lecturer on Bible prophecy.

Speaking at the program was Dr. Don Ericksen, President of Northwestern College; Mr. Wayne Pedersen, director of radio station KTIS; Dr. Northley Bragg, a friend of the honored guest for 60 years; Verne Johnson (his nephew), consultant at General Mills, formerly Vice President; and two vocal numbers by Alice Oakes, whose beautiful renditions were appreciated by everyone. The M.C. was Pastor H. Bruce Chapman. John Dahlin responded in appropriate words to all who made possible this service. A special committee was in charge of the arrangement with beautiful flowers for the table and a fine decorated birthday cake as the center piece. Dainty refreshments were served. Mrs. Dahlin had a vital part in all the planning. A large crowd assembled for the occasion with people who had come from near and far and from many church groups. Prof. Dahlin is still involved in many activities. During past years he has been interim pastor and Bible teacher in 14 churches. He has now concluded his radio ministry, however, as of June 15th. Congratulations are extended to Editor Dahlin who has had an active leadership in many spheres of a spiritual ministry during a number of decades.

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PERTINENT QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

John E. Dahlin, Editor

QUESTION . . . What Scriptural passages point to the expansion of the false systems of religion during the Latter Days?

ANSWER . . . False teachings of religion have been a reality during all past generations. The Scriptures reveal, however, that as we approach the end time the evil teachings will experience a phenomenal expansion. Actually the climactic period will come as the age is being terminated. Paul, Peter, John and Jude all state this clearly in their New Testament writings. Our Lord also verifies other predictions for the end times in His Olivet Discourse and during many other occasions. We are safe in reaching the conclusion that we have been ushered into the Latter Days.

QUESTION . . . Is it possible that the strength of all the Bible-believing groups will overpower these false systems before the return of Christ?

ANSWER . . . Paul writes that "evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived." Christian groups and individuals may be victorious in their limited spheres of activity. But so far as the end-time apostasy and deceptions go, these will reach their greatest expansion during the concluding period of this age. Our Lord refers to the coming repetition of Lot's days as well as the days of Noah, as a verification of the Scriptural predictions. Again and again the Scriptures reveal that the greatest expansion of satanic power will come during the conclusion of the age. It seems entirely clear that we are moving into this prophetic fulfillment of the Scriptures.