

# The DISCERNER

" HEREBY KNOW WE THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH AND THE  
SPIRIT OF ERROR"

## AN INTERDENOMINATIONAL HERESY-EXPOSING QUARTERLY

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# The DISCERNER

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## EDITORIAL

by *Dr. William A. BeVier*

In the last issue of *The Discerner*, I presented an overview of some of the changes taking place in the "four major cults." In this issue, I would like to direct our attention to some of the changes taking place in a few of the lesser known, but still significant, cults.

One of the facts anyone studying the cults over a period of time learns is that the cults are not static. Change is one of their features, one primary reason being that most hold to the idea of "progressive revelation." New "revelations" can be received at any time and are to be accepted, even if they contradict earlier revelations. For example, in Mormonism, Joseph Smith received a "revelation" that polygamy was approved by God, and to be practiced. President Woodruff, also a "prophet, seer, and revelator," in 1890, had a "revelation" that Mormons were not to practice polygamy. Ellen White of the Seventh-day Adventists had a "revelation" that the Sabbath was to be kept from 6:00 p.m. Friday to 6:00 p.m. Saturday. It was pointed out to her that the Jews kept the Sabbath from sundown Friday to sundown Saturday, so she subsequently has a "revelation" that that is the way Seventh-day Adventists are to keep the Sabbath. (No one has yet figured out

how this is to be done around the Arctic and Antarctic circles, where at certain times of the year the sun does not rise or set.)

Many of the so-called minor cults continually undergo changes. We may consider them "minor," but during the course of their existence they may affect overall the lives of millions of people. Some of these cults are built around one person, and when he dies, the cult either disappears in a short time, splinters into more than one group, or if it continues, it is greatly changed.

To verify this, one has but to examine the Table of Contents of a frequently revised book on the cults, such as Walter Martin's *The Kingdom of the Cults*. For example, in his 1977 Revised Edition such presentations as "Father Divine's," The Peace Mission Movement, and The Black Muslim Cult were made. In the 1985 Revised and Expanded Edition, these cults have disappeared (their original leaders were dead and their followers no longer existed in significant numbers). But in the 1985 revision chapters on the Unification Church, Scientology, Eastern Religions, and Islam were added. The Church of the New Jerusalem—Swedenborgianism—was taken out of the main body

(1977) and relegated to an appendix (1985), as had also been done with Seventh-day Adventism in earlier editions of Dr. Martin's basic work, originally titled *The Rise of the Cults*.

Jim Jones and his People's Temple appeared and disappeared within a decade. Hobart Freeman and his Faith Assembly did about the same thing with the death of the founder (1985). However, I understand a small number of Freeman's followers still maintain their identity in Indiana as an organized group.

Other cults have in recent years lost their founders, and though they still exist affecting the lives of many thousands, they are not as visible as they once were. One thinks of The Way International and its now-dead founder, Victor Paul Wierwille (d. 1985). Craig Martindale was designated Wierwille's successor, but the movement has broken into at least three factions, though the basic group continues to exist in smaller numbers.

The death of L. Ron Hubbard (1986) and other problems have contributed to lessen the impact of Scientology, though it still has thousands of followers, and large financial resources.

Most everyone remembers the impact Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh had on a community in Oregon, and elsewhere, between his arrival in the U.S. in 1981 and his death, back in his native India in January 1990. But Antelope, Oregon has now returned to its previous name and the Rajneesh's ashram has disappeared along with his many Rolls-Royces.

Sun Myung Moon and the Unification Church are still with us.

But already **The Divine Principle** (Moon's revelation from God) has undergone revision and since Moon is now past 70 years of age, the peak of his strength and activities are past. It remains to be seen what changes follow his demise, but changes there will be.

Another cult, the Worldwide Church of God, founded by Herbert W. Armstrong (d. 1986), has undergone what Ruth Tucker terms: ". . . significant changes . . ." since the death of its founder (*Another Gospel*, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1989, p. 215). The movement continues under the leadership of Joseph W. Tkach. Tkach, though, does not personally conduct the weekly television program as did Armstrong. Some of Armstrong's books are no longer being distributed by the Worldwide Church of God, reportedly because some of the ideas of the organization's leaders have changed. It is to be remembered the Jehovah's Witnesses did this with the works of Charles Taze Russell after his death, but they are clearly still a cult. It also remains to be seen what other changes will take place in Armstrong's movement.

All of this leads me to make two points:

One is the thankfulness of Bible-believing Christians that Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever (Heb. 13:8); that God does not change (Mal. 3:6); and that God's Word is forever settled (Psa. 119:89).

The second is that with the continuing changes taking place in the cults we have a ministry such as Religion Analysis Service available to help us keep current. Weekly and almost daily I am in contact with or hear of someone needing to know

something about a cult, either one of the old well-established ones or a new one just coming to our attention. If I'm not prepared to help, I contact the office of Religion Analysis

Service in Brainerd, Minnesota. I hope you do the same thing. Our office manager, Rev. Ewald Eisele, is there to help.

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## WHY NOT OUIJA?

by Ewald Eisele

The "craze" evidently began in the dim past about 500 B.C. On page 113 in *Cults and the Occult*, Edmond C. Gruss quotes from *The Encyclopedia of Psychic Science*, "Psychical researcher, Nandor Fodor, indicated that an instrument like the Ouija board 'was in use in the days of Pythagoras, about 540 B.C.'" Pythagoras was a philosopher and mathematician, who had traveled to India and Egypt seeking wisdom. Having had no success in reaching the level of wisdom he desired, he turned to occultic methods. He was convinced that the secret could be found in whatever the dead could reveal to him. To this end he sought means to contact them, and one of those means was what we would call the Ouija board.

What he used was an "instrument," as yet not named. However, in his day the use of the "instrument" was not a "craze" and the "instrument" not as refined as the present-day items that are in use today, howbeit for the same purpose. It may have been more like the pendulum used by Dowsters and Diviners today without any fixed or stationary board or platform.

There are also references made to such instruments being in use in China even before the birth of Confucius. There were, evidently, many versions of the board throughout history. It seems to have been in evidence in the Roman Empire in

the early years of Christianity. The board as we know it today is really only another form of divining, which is thoroughly condemned in Scripture (Acts 19:11-17; Lev. 19:31; Isa. 8:19-20).

As to why it has had such a long history, and as to why it has always been popular with some people in every age, depends on who you might ask or whose book or report you might read. There are those who swear by it and say that it really "works." On the other hand, there are those who believe that it is merely a toy. After all, you can buy a board in almost any toy department. It is probably in good company, next to Scrabble or checkers, and so it must be just another game! Most parents today would think no more that the board is dangerous than they do of their children playing Dungeons and Dragons—until it is too late.

It should be of some interest to most, and especially to parents of teens, that a common dictionary gives some very good clues regarding the board's purpose. The *New World Dictionary* of 1968 says, "OUIJA, a trademark for a device consisting of a planchette and a board bearing the alphabet and various other symbols, used in spiritualistic seances, etc., supposedly to convey and record messages from the spirits." A dictionary is an educational tool, and it certainly doesn't

have any ulterior motives for warning about anything it defines. Probably most people would not recognize that definition as a warning. Thinking parents should.

The answer to any questions regarding its workability lie with the people who use it. There must also be a consideration regarding what the user expected and what he or she ultimately received. The testimony from most sources indicate that it has been recognized as a tool of the occult and one that can lead an individual from a seemingly "harmless game" into the very pit of hell. It captivates the mind and emotions much in the same way that our modern "Dungeons and Dragons" "game" does. That too, is a tool used to captivate the mind and eventually the soul of the "player." While some writers say that it is harmless, others warn of the Satanic background and the occultic ancestry from which it comes. Ouija and Dungeons have a common parent and his name is Satan. No Christian household should have either "game" in the home. No child of a Christian should be allowed to play with these and other occult "games." They are all dangerous and are certainly robbers of time which could be spent to greater profit. Also they lure the players away from the real source of knowledge, the Lord Jesus Christ, and profess to give knowledge from some other supernatural source. There is no doubt that the board does exactly that. Josh McDowell & Don Stewart, in the book, *Understanding The Occult*, quotes from *The Dictionary of Mysticism* and what it has to say about the Ouija Board: "An instrument for communication with the spirits of the dead." One or two can play or "work" the board, with

one of them being called a "Medium" in this dictionary.

The "mechanics" of the "game" are rather simple. There are two parts. One is the board itself and the other is a small triangle-shaped board about the size of a hand which slides around the board on three legs of about one-half inch in length. The board has several things painted on it. The alphabet, the numbers 0 to 9, and three words: yes, no, and good-bye. The ones who are "playing" the "game" or working the board, place their fingertips lightly on the movable part, called the planchette, and allow it to move around the board as it points to various letters which spell out the answer to the question that has been given to it orally. That this is a dangerous spiritistic tool can be seen in the way it gives the correct answer when it was not possible for a player to know it. Some have said that the player moves the planchette subconsciously because the answer is known. This has been proven to be a wrong diagnosis too many times to be taken as fact. The source of the information received has been tested and most of the time the information goes far beyond that which could come from the conscious or subconscious mind of the player. Also, in *Cults and The Occult*, Edmund C. Gruss, page 116, reports the finding of Sir William Barrett, as he reported in the September 1914 *Proceedings of the American Society for Psychical Research*, pages 381-394. Sir Barrett declares that the board "worked" even though the letters had been rearranged and the players blindfolded. Dr. Gruss, in another of his books, *The Ouija Board*, relates, "Gina Covina, in her book *The Ouija Book*, claimed, 'I've seen a pointer contin-

ue to make its way across the alphabet **after** both partners have taken their fingers away." In the same book the author reports, "Users of the board often ask for or are sometimes given a physical manifestation to verify the reality of their experience. In one case it was reported that the temperature in the room suddenly dropped twenty degrees, and a wind swept through it with such force that paperback books blew off the bookcase and pictures blew off the walls, although the windows and doors were shut."

Now how can any question just why it should be a concern if someone is involved in playing with this and other occult games? The evidence is so overwhelming against these "games" that no thinking person should allow their use. We have a half a dozen or so books that have something to say about Ouija and its victims. Teenagers have been led to suicide because of messages received from the demon behind the revelation given. Several have recorded murders committed because of orders received from the board. Experts who deal with mental problems have warned of the dangers involved with occult experimentation. While some will not agree that the source of the problems are demonic, all do agree that the danger is evident.

The Ouija board is NOT a toy! It is a dangerous tool of Satan. It has been introduced by him to deceive people into thinking that they may receive messages from spirit beings. It is enjoying a renaissance today because of the emphasis given to spiritism and related subjects. The youth are becoming involved because even in the classrooms of grade schools occult type exercises are being taught. Book-

stores and libraries offer many kinds of satanic books. Newspapers and magazines have numerology and horoscope columns, and there is almost a daily increase in the number of articles on reincarnation, ESP, witchcraft and other occult phenomenon.

Kurt Koch, in his book *Occult ABC*, quotes the manager of the firm in Massachusetts where the board is made. He says that they receive many letters of thanks from users. Also that many of the letters confirm that people have made contact with the dead. Only it is not the dead who send messages, but demons who have impersonated the dead. No one with any knowledge of the Scriptures should be surprised. The Bible declares in no uncertain terms that Satan is a liar and a deceiver. He is making it his business to deceive as many as he can reach, even the very elect, if that were possible (Matt. 24:24).

Why not Ouija? Very simply because it is a tool of Satan. With it he has caused suicides, murders and mental problems. With it he has broken homes and helped to fill prison cells. With it he intends to drag as many people as possible into the Lake of Fire and Brimstone, of Revelation 20:10, where they will be "tormented day and night forever." And for what? Playing a "game?" Not really. Rather, for denying the God of heaven. For denying the One True God of the Bible His rightful place. For refusing to give Him the honor, glory and worship due Him. For failing to recognize that He, and He alone, is the Sovereign of time and eternity and that all true wisdom resides in Him. For refusing His offer of salvation which is freely given to anyone who will accept it. For refusing the REAL wisdom that

is available, to every believer, from God's only begotten Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

It is really a matter of choice. A matter of understanding what one's priorities are. God's men in the Bible many times gave a choice to the Israelites. Whenever they did there was no opportunity to back out. Joshua put it straight to the people, "Choose you this day whom you will serve . . . as for me and my house we will serve the Lord" (Joshua 24:15). So did Elijah in I

Kings 18:21. He said, "How long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow Him: but if Baal, then follow him." They **had** to make a decision. There was no third option. Now in a real way this is the choice today. It is either Christ or Ouija. Christ or Satan. The Bible offers no third option. A choice must be made. There is a right way and a wrong way. God's and Satan's. No matter how appealing it may look, nor how often it **seems** to work, Satan's way is never right.

## ANTICHRIST, ARMAGEDDON, AND THE END OF THE WORLD

*Dr. William W. Orr*

### These are Stirring Days . . .

\* What a day to be alive . . .!

\* Strange things are happening today. World-affecting events are taking place before our very eyes. It is especially true that the world of science is advancing at a pace never before even imagined. We are seeing accomplishments never dreamed possible. There is progress in mechanical marvels, ease of living, spread of knowledge that positively dwarfs all previous attainments.

\* But underneath all this accomplishment there is ominous unrest. The hearts of people are fearful and uncertain. Some of the mechanical marvels are shown to be potential monsters. It is even possible that civilization is in danger. We have new power, but will this new power be used to utterly destroy? What lies ahead? Does anyone know? Where can we find out?

\* It should be no secret that the Bible has always claimed to look ahead. Without ostentation or fanfare, the Bible has calmly looked back and told of the very beginning

of things. In the same spirit of assurance, the Bible exhibits the breathless secrets of the coming new heaven and new earth. Insistently, the Bible exhibits the breathless secrets of the coming new heaven and new earth. Insistently, the Bible avows its ability to foretell the future. Not in the empty generalities of enigmatic, pagan-like oracles, but in sober, definite, minute predictions understandable by all.

\* If this be so, does the Bible then tell of **today's** crisis? Is there real danger ahead for civilization? Will fearfully destructive warfare ensue? Will our boasted age of scientific achievement bring on inevitable swift death? What lies ahead . . . what does our future hold?

\* The Bible gladly assumes its predictive task. Its ministry, among other matters is to acquaint sincere seekers after truth with the events of the future. Its pages, predictions and encouragements are offered to every sincere inquirer. No one with an honest heart and an open Bible need ever be ignorant of the future's

unfolding.

\* There are two stipulations for successful understanding, however. The first is that the seeker comes to know the real meaning of life as it is found in the finished work of Christ on the cross (John 14:6). The next is that one accept the gracious tutorage of the Master Teacher of the Age, even the Holy Spirit of God (John 16:13).

\* With these two relationships established, the binoculars of God are yours. Lift up your eyes, look . . . and understand.

### **What Do These Mean? . . .**

\* Antichrist, Armageddon, End of the World . . . what are these?

\* Let us define our terms here. Antichrist is first a quality of heart. It is the attitude of those who oppose the spread of the gospel, the knowledge of the grace of God, the heart-reign of the Son of God. It is just as the term implies . . . opposition to Christ.

*"And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is the spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world" (I John 4:3).*

\* The term "antichrist" is also used in a sense of persons who are given over to Satan in his nefarious work of opposing Christ. The philosophy of their lives is that of antagonism towards Him. They are of the world, and are under the rulership and direction of the Prince of this world. They may be educated, positioned and even refined, but the aim of their life is away from God, opposed to Christ, and toward the gratification of their fleshly selves.

*"Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now*

*are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time" (I John 2:18).*

\* But the main usage of the term in Scripture is that of one person, the Antichrist. This strange person will be a man wholly given over to the will and purpose of Satan. He will be the personal culmination of the age-long spirit of antichrist, and the many "antichrists" of the centuries. To a large degree, he will personify the climax of the conflict between good and evil, between God and the Devil.

\* He is called in Scripture by various names such as the Man of Sin, the Beast, the Son of Perdition, that Wicked One. But he is in every sense a man, although wholly imbued, given over, ruled and directed by the Devil himself.

*"Let no man deceive you by any means, for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition" (I Thess. 2:3).*

\* The time of his revelation is that of the Great Tribulation, immediately following the rapture of the Church. His period of destiny is that of approximately 7 years. His sphere of operation is the whole world. His doom, the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone.

\* By him shall be forever settled the question of good versus evil, right against wrong, God and the Devil.

\* The word "Armageddon" means the hill of Megiddo. In turn, Megiddo means slaughter. It is well named, for perhaps no other spot on the face of the earth has known so often the tread of marching armies and has been so often drenched with human blood.

\* Geographically, it is a spacious valley west of Jordan and in the northern section of Israel. Shaped



somewhat like a triangle, it is approximately 20 miles each way with ancient and modern highways leading north, south and east.

\* But for our consideration, Armageddon has come to stand for the great climactic battle of the Tribulation period. Let us think of the chain of events leading to it.

\* This age of Grace began with the death and resurrection of Christ and the advent of the Holy Spirit into the world at Pentecost. It has already run a course of over nineteen long, bitter centuries. It will end with the rapture or translation of the Church.

*"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air" (I Thess. 4:16, 17).*

\* Concurrently, the great Tribulation period shall be ushered in with the Antichrist swiftly advancing to a place of prominence and power. For a period of nearly 7 years he will lead the entire world from a worship of God into a worship of Satan using every means at his command.

\* The heavens will be strangely

silent for we know that this is Satan's hour and the power of darkness. Completely drunk with stolen power he will marshal the armies of the world, a stupendous host, to blatantly defy the God of heaven. The place will be Armageddon. The incident will be the wrathful determination on the part of the Antichrist to completely exterminate the Jewish nation.

\* But God has chosen Armageddon. This field of battle was ordained long before the world began. Here is the final showdown. This is the divinely decisive battle between right and wrong, between God and Satan.

*"And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue, Armageddon" (Rev. 16:16).*

\* The outcome of the battle is sure. God will triumph . . . Satan will be vanquished, right will be vindicated, God's chosen people will be delivered. And from that time forth, and throughout eternity's ages Armageddon will be a symbol of the power, strength and victory of God.

*(This article is taken from Dr. Orr's book of the same title. It is published by Glad Tidings, publishers of Christian books, P.O. Box 44, Great Bend, KS 67530. You may purchase this book from our office, Order #P1-3, \$1.50.)*

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## GOD'S ETERNAL WORD

*by Edward Mellott*

In our day and age, it is not uncommon to encounter those who malign and ridicule the Bible. It seems that the so-called "scientific age" has no room for a book which speaks of faith. For this reason, it is a real delight to find those who honor and revere what the Bible teaches.

In the January 5, 1991 issue of the *LDS Church News*, this statement was made: "We may soon be the only ones who believe in the divinity of the Bible" (pg. 3). Now we all appreciate the fact that there are many whose respect of the Bible is mere lip service, but this comment

must seem to many an exaggeration. Surely there will always be others who love God's Word! Actually, once all the facts are in, we will find that the statement in the *Church News* is not an overstatement—it is rather a blatant misstatement and perjuring of information.

Of course the LDS church professes to believe in the Bible. It says so in the eighth of their Articles of Faith. Even in that article, though, there is a reserved attitude. Belief in the Bible is only present ". . . as far as it is translated correctly." This attitude expressed here is only the tip of the iceberg.

From the very outset, the Mormon movement has attacked and belittled the Bible. In the Book of Mormon, one who believes in the Bible alone is called a fool (II Nephi 29:3ff). Orson Pratt, an early and able proponent of Mormonism, stated that the Bible was a corrupted patchwork of the apostles' writing, and that it was hard to trust it (*The Seer*, pg. 213). He said that one who rejected modern revelation was pleasing to the devil (op. cit., pg. 257). In more recent times, the Mormon Apostle, Bruce McConkie, stated that only a fanatic would hold to the verbal revelation of the Scriptures (*Mormon Doctrine*, pg. 82).

These attitudes hardly exemplify belief in the Bible. The Bible is only used when it is convenient, and if it seems to back up pet LDS teachings. This approach has always been necessary to divert attention away from the authority of the Bible as God's Word. God's Word is sought instead from a living human prophet. Once again, reverence for the Bible amounts to little more than lip service.

The Bible has withstood the test of the ages as God's Word to man. In

some cases, there have been men who have tried to manipulate its message to suit themselves, but such efforts have always proven futile. Today we have more texts to support the Bible than for any other ancient literature. The integrity of the text of Scripture is steadfast, and not surprisingly, since it is God's Word.

Still, some may ponder why it is that God does not choose to guide His church with living prophets. Why did written revelation cease with the close of the first century? Be assured that Mormons, among others, will insist that it did not. Why should Christianity maintain that the Bible is all of God's written Word? Is God thereby limited? Indeed not!

The Christian church has always recognized that God's Word is eternal (Isaiah 40:8). God's Word is effectual, in that what He decrees comes to pass (Isaiah 55:10-11). God's Word is edifying, given for the building up of His people so that they can walk in righteousness (II Timothy 3:16-17). God's Word is this and more, so why does it not continue?

The answer to this very important question is found in a name—Jesus Christ. With the advent of Jesus as God's promised Messiah, and the expounding work of His apostles in 27 New Testament books, God's plan of salvation was manifest and complete. That which had been promised and anticipated over the centuries was brought to fruition with Christ's ministry. The point is seen in the Lord's reply to John the Baptist when the latter asked him, "Are you the One, or do we seek another?" Jesus' response was to quote the Messianic passage written by Isaiah centuries earlier (Matthew 11:1-6; cf. Isaiah 35:4-6).

There is a parable which our Lord taught which very pointedly sets

forth the finality of His ministry. In the parable of the wicked husbandmen, recorded in the twelfth chapter of Mark's Gospel, the Lord speaks of a vineyard over which the master had set some husbandmen (tenants). When the master tried to communicate with these tenants by means of sending his servants or messengers, they replied with hostility. The master is, of course, God, the husbandmen are the wicked Israelites, and the messengers are the prophets. Note in particular that, after sending many messengers, i.e., prophets, it is said that the master sent his son ". . . last unto them." After him, there would be no others. Mohammed is no prophet and neither is Joseph Smith. Never mind Joseph Smith's dismal prophetic track record—God makes it clear by this parable that after Jesus, there would be no others.

The climactic nature of Jesus' ministry is also seen in the Epistle to the Hebrews. From the first verses, we see the impact and importance of Jesus' words. God spoke first by prophets, but in these last days, He has spoken by His Son. Again and again, the superiority of Jesus' work is attested, and it is apparent that there will not be another. There need not be! His name is superior to all others (Hebrews 1:4).

Christ's word and ministry is therefore final. Paul wrote to the Colossians, "*And He is the head of the body, the church; who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things He might have the pre-eminence*" (1:18). To say that he is merely one among a long, unending procession of prophets is to completely miss the meaning of Jesus' ministry.

God's people are not left without direction. His Word was committed to writing centuries ago, and it stands

firm today. Because it is a written Word, it is more like a legal document, whose validity endures, as opposed to a spoken word, which can be set forth today but changed tomorrow. Jesus does not change. He is the same yesterday, today, and forever (Hebrews 13:8). So His will for His people remains the same as well. If they honor and abide in the Word which God has given, they need never fear that they have been left without guidance.

*"Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away"* (Matthew 24:35).

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## **A NOTE TO OUR READERS FROM EWALD EISELE**

I want you to know that I really appreciate your notes and letters. I am especially grateful to those who write to point out my mistakes, misinformation, or the fact that I have recommended a book which may contain misinformation.

I try to read at least a portion of all new books we offer. Sometimes that is not possible because of lack of time. I have made mistakes and have pulled some books off of our shelves. I appreciate your concern for our ministry to continue to dispense only truth in this very sensitive area of exposing error. However, simply because we offer a book does not mean that we agree with it in its entirety. Be discerning, and compare what is written with the real

Authority, the Word of God.

Another concern of mine, and of many of our readers, is the use of a variety of translations of the Scriptures by our authors. We cannot control that. I personally am, as I have been called, a King James fanatic. So be it! My only advice to others in my clan is that you do not reject the good in books using other translations but keep your King James at hand for comparison with the translation used.

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## BOOK REVIEW

*"FROM NIRVANA TO THE NEW AGE"*—by Mary Ann Lind.  
Reviewed by Ewald Eisele.

This is not just another book on the New Age. This is so interesting and informative that it is hard to put down once started. It is all that Christians need to know about the spreading influence of Eastern religions in the world today.

The author doesn't mean the world "out there" somewhere, but the world in which we live every day.

She writes, "From Smalltown, USA, to sophisticated city circles, New Age influence can be discerned—sometimes in very subtle ways; other times in bold newspaper and magazine headlines. Corporate planners now include motivational seminars designed to restructure employees' thinking. Thousands of the curious flock to weekend retreats to hear ancient voices channeled through such instant celebrities as J. Z. Knight and Jach Pursel. Unsuspecting tourists wander into shops specializing in crystals. A full-page advertisement in a campus newspaper touts academic success

through transcendental meditation. Physical-fitness buffs faithfully practice yoga deep-breathing techniques" (page 14).

Also, "Quite simply, Christians must maintain an awareness of the New Age as we see the rapid fulfillment of Biblical prophecies which point to the return of the Lord Jesus Christ, the precious Bridegroom" (page 15).

On page 17, she gives her reason for the book, "This book is designed to present an easily readable, straightforward introduction to New Age thinking for the Christian reader who has little previous information concerning this timely subject."

In the chapter, "Defining Our Terms" an explanation of many of the concepts of the New Age, especially those with Eastern religious roots, are discussed. The chapter "Back To The Roots" traces, briefly, the background of four of the religious philosophies behind the New Age: The Babylonian Mystery Religion of Abraham's time, Hinduism, Buddhism and Gnosticism. As these religions migrated to America hints of their influence were seen in the "hippies or flower children in 1967" (page 47), "The Beatles' trip to India in 1968 . . ." (page 48), and, also in 1968, "the highly controversial musical HAIR opened on Broadway."

There are, in the chapter "Toward The Age of Aquarius," insights shared regarding "The Plan," "Lord Maitreya," "The Great Invocation" and "Networking."

In other chapters the author writes concerning Meditation, Yoga, Reincarnation, Channeling, Crystal Consciousness, Astrology, Holistic Health Care, New Age in the Classroom, Entertainment Field and the Business World.

This book is not an offering of personal experiences as some on the New Age are but is a presentation of factual information in an under-

standable manner. (154 pages—order by name. \$7.95)

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## BOOKS RECEIVED

**"WEB OF DARKNESS"**—Sean Sellers

The author writes from death row, in which is held for the murder of three people including his parents. Given over to Satan, who promised him personal freedom and supernatural powers, Sean was controlled by drugs, witchcraft and occult games. Having found the freedom he sought from Satan in a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, he writes to teens and their parents hoping to save lives marked for destruction by Satan. (172 pages—order by name. \$6.95)

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**"ROMAN CATHOLICISM: A contemporary Evangelical perspective"**—Edited by Paul G. Schrottenboer.

There are twelve contributors to this 99-page work. All are members of the World Evangelical Fellowship stationed in various countries around the world. The book is the result of changes in the Roman Catholic Church which caused "potentially divisive differences of opinion among evangelicals at the General Assembly of the World Evangelical Fellowship (WEF) in Hoddesdon, England, in 1980" (preface pg. 9). This is an important book for those who are concerned about the relationship of evangelical Christians to Roman Catholic faith and practice. Nine key areas of the

Roman Catholic position are compared with the teaching of the Word. (Order by name—\$5.95)

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**"GOD'S INSPIRATION OF THE SCRIPTURES"**—William Kelly.

Written in 1903 this important reprint of the subject is presented for our readers because of the amount of current controversy regarding inspiration and inerrancy. The introduction states, "Much of this volume is devoted to show the divine design in the structure and message of each book separately and of the whole." As such it contains much valuable information for the student which is never found in an ordinary commentary. (601 pages, hard cover—order by name. \$14.95)

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**"ARMAGEDDON AND THE NEW WORLD ORDER"**—Edgar C. James.

The author illuminates dozens of key prophetic messages of both the Old and New Testaments in a reader-friendly style that is sure to inspire and encourage. (120 pages—order by name. \$5.95)

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**"ONE WORLD: Prophecy and The New World Order"**—John Ankerberg and John Weldon with Dave Breese and Dave Hunt.

Part one of the book, 60 pages, is based on a telecast of "The John Ankerberg Show" as the host interviewed guests Dave Breese and Dave Hunt. The second part, 113 pages, contains excerpts from a private

interview with the guests after the telecast. These men are experts in the field of the subject, and present a host of valuable insights. (180 pages, order by name. \$7.95)

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## ONE NATION UNDER GOD

The above is the title of a rather pretentious mailing by the Sycamore Church of Christ in Cookeville, Tennessee. This Campbellism cult church is attempting to recruit members, or at least collect the names and addresses of those interested in Bible study, using a rather ornate, cartoon type, eight-page leaflet. They list a toll-free number at the bottom of five of the pages so that interested people can call in order to "learn more about Christ and His Church." They also claim to be able to supply the answer to any and all problems of life for those who will study with them.

They also claim that they alone are the "Church of Christ," and unless you are in that church you are not in Christ and so cannot be saved. They say since they alone wear the "Bible Name" that they only perform "Bible worship."

However, those who know their Bible will not be fooled into studying with this church which does not proclaim the very plain Gospel as stated by Paul and other Bible writers. Namely, it is "justification by faith alone" and not justification by faith and water. This "Church of Christ" makes baptism a prerequisite for receiving salvation, something that is not taught in the Word.

A rather revealing statement from their publication, "Extra on Remission of Sins," page 29, which is

quoted in *Campbellism, Its History and Heresies*, by Bob L. Ross, page 81:

"The only time the word regeneration occurs in the New Testament, with a reference to a personal change, it means, or is equivalent to, immersion. Regeneration and immersion, are, therefore, two names for the same thing . . . As regeneration is taught to be equivalent to "being born again," and understood to be the same import with a new-birth, we shall examine it under this metaphor. For if immersion be equivalent to regeneration, and regeneration be of the same import with being born again, then being born again, and being immersed are the same thing; for this plain reason, that things which are equal to the same thing, are equal to one another . . . Regeneration is, therefore, the act of being born. Hence its connection always with water. The Holy Spirit . . . calls nothing personal regeneration, except the act of immersion."

It has been said times without number, that you can prove anything from the Bible if you don't worry about taking verses out of their context. This is exactly what this so-called "Church of Christ" does. I have nothing against the individual members of this church. Rather, I have a concern for them, as I have for all those who are taken up with false doctrine. Would that they

could see their way clear to follow the example of the Bereans of Acts 17 and honestly study the Bible and compare Scripture with Scripture. They, as well as all Christians, need to follow the advice of Miles Coverdale, the translator of the first printed English Bible. In the preface of the Coverdale Bible he penned in the year 1535:

"It will greatly help ye to understand Scripture, if thou mark not only what is spoken or written, but of whom and to whom, with what words, at what time, where, to what intent, with what circumstances, considering what goeth before and what followeth."

—Ewald Eisele

## WHY I BELIEVE THESE ARE THE LAST DAYS

*Reviewed by Ewald Eisele*

The editor of this book is Rev. Noah Hutchings, for the past thirty-five years associated with The Southwest Radio Church in Oklahoma City, OK. He is the main researcher and writer for the radio program.

This book contains the thoughts of nine prophetic scholars regarding why they believe that we are living in the last days. Each of these men are recognized scholars on Bible prophecy.

In 1988 Edgar Whisenant wrote a book with the title **88 Reasons Why The Rapture Will Be in 1988**. Since the year passed without a rapture, he wrote another the next year and made the date 1989 instead. The result of these two books was not only that the author made money but that many folk had a good laugh at the Bible-believing Christians who do believe in the soon coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. One of the stated purposes of this book by these nine Bible-believing men is to restore credibility to the message of the Blessed Hope.

Without doubt there will be some things that will be new thoughts to many Bible-believers.

Certainly there will be new insights regarding our world-view and the things happening so fast that we can hardly keep up with it all.

The opening chapter by the editor, "Increase Of Knowledge and Communication," reveals some things about the common things around us that we never think would have any Biblical significance. Are these in prophecy: the automobile, airplane, space program, radio, television and computer? A very interesting and thought-provoking chapter.

So, too, is the one by J. R. Church, "Prophecies In The First One Hundred Psalms." Now we all know that there are prophecies in the Psalms. But to apply them to specific things in history and in the future? This one will make you think! Which is good.

Then there is Dave Breese. His chapter is on "Ten Critical Issues." What is a Critical Issue? "A critical issue is one that, if allowed to mature, would end civilization as we know it today," is how he defines the term. A most interesting contribution for our enlightenment.

There are eleven chapters in all with the last by William Sillings, "If

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184 pages—\$6.95.

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**THE DELICATE BALANCE**, by John Zajac. The sub-title is: Coming Catastrophic Changes on Planet Earth. The author is a scientist, and looks at all that is happening, and what could happen in the near future, and writes his observation from his background of years of study and investigation. He covers floods, famine and finances, as well as pyramids and population. So fascinating that you will not be able to put it down. 200 pages P1-18 \$8.95

**DEMONS - A BIBLICALLY BASED PERSPECTIVE**, by Alex Konya. This is about demon possession and related subjects. Not from a collection of "case studies," but from what the Bible has to say about the subject. The answers to many questions Christians ask are answered here from the Bible. There is no need to be confused any longer by those who claim that Christians can be demon possessed and who base their decisions on "case histories." Nor need there be confusion by others who go to the other extreme and deny the existence of demons. The Bible is THE authority and the answer to all questions are taken from its pages. 151 pages D1-66 \$10.95