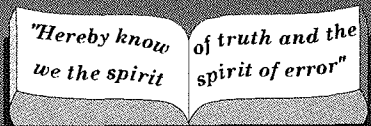


The Discerner



Volume 19, Number 4

October • November • December 1999

AN INTERDENOMINATIONAL HERESY-EXPOSING QUARTERLY

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Editorial Committee

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Published Quarterly
Price \$4.00 for 4 issues
Foreign subscriptions extra

P.O. Box 22098
Robbinsdale, MN 55422-0098
Printed in the United States
1-612-535-8715 / 1-800-562-9153
FAX 612-537-5825

EDITORIAL

By William A. BeVier

We are pleased to bring you another issue of The Discerner, the last for this year and the last for this century.

Two of our articles in this issue feature Mormonism, one of the fastest growing and certainly the largest and wealthiest of the cults produced in this country. Many people, including evangelical Christians, do not seem to know or to understand the basic beliefs of this group. We have attempted to present their concept of the "temple" and some of their basic differences with Biblical Christianity. The differences documented in Sandra Tanner's article aren't "minor" doctrinal differences. These differences affect a person's eternal destiny.

The many temples the Mormons are building throughout the world is an indication of their enormous financial wealth. These temples cost millions of dollars to construct. If you have opportunity, you might want to attend one of their "open houses" for Gentiles, i.e., non-Mormons, at a temple. The open house is something they offer before a temple is "dedicated." With careful observation you will see the affluence of this group. It should also be remembered that the Mormons at the present time are making a concerted effort through media advertising and personal contacts to be accepted as "Christians." After all, they have the name "Jesus Christ" in their official title, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. They call their temples "The House of the Lord." They accept the King James Version of the Bible ("as far as it is translated correctly," Mormon The Articles of Faith). I am reminded of 2 Corinthians 11:13-15. Especially v. 14, "For such are false apos-

bles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ,” when the Mormons claim to themselves twelve “apostles” today in their leadership.

I invite your special attention to Sandra Tanner’s article “Terminology Differences Between Mormons and Christians.” The Tanners, Sandra and her husband, Gerald, are former Mormons. After their conversion to the Christ of the Bible, they chose to remain in Salt Lake City. There they have maintained a ministry exposing the falsities of Mormonism and making available by literature, the Internet, and personal contacts the truths of the Bible.

Anyone following current happenings in our society is aware of the word “Pokemon.” My Wife has written an article calling attention to some of the phenomenon’s dangers, especially for children – at whom most of the “hype” is aimed. Increasingly this craze is involving violence and other harms to children. The very meaning of the word Pokemon, “pocket monsters,” should say something to us.

As we approach the end of this century, many people are concerned that dreadful things are about to happen. Rev. Ervin Ingebretson, our Vice President, has written a short article about how we as Christians should approach and react to this time. I trust his article will provide any assurance which might be needed.

We have included one book review in this issue; a new edition of Walter Martin’s The Kingdom of the Cults.

If you received our Fall Letter, and I am assuming you did, you know of our needs in the R.A.S. office. Our greatest current need is for a full-time office manager. (we currently operate six hours a day, four days a week with volunteer help). Unfortunately, we cannot provide a guaranteed salary for a person. We can pay for moving a person or couple to the Twin Cities area.

If you or you know of someone who can meet this need, please contact us. At least, join us in continuing prayer about this matter. The ministry of R.A.S. is reaching and helping many people; we believe the Lord wants it to continue in the future as it has in the past (over 50 years now).

As you can understand, our financial needs also are on-going. We are grateful for so many of you who regularly remember us in this area. 2 Cor. 8:12-15.

Mormon Temples

By William A. BeVier

Why does the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons) need so many temples? A recent report states they now have 61 in operation and 54 more either under construction or being planned, for a total of 115 ("The Evangelist," vol. XLVI, Nr. 5, Sept/Oct 1999, p. 2). These include both "larger" and "smaller" temples. Currently there is a "smaller" temple under construction in Oakdale, Minnesota, a suburb of the Twin Cities (see photograph). A smaller one was recently dedicated in Bismarck, North Dakota and one is to be dedicated in December in Raleigh, North Carolina. The Twin Cities, Bismarck, and Raleigh are hardly Mormon centers. Why the temples? At last report there are seven in Utah alone. (Your writer attended the "open house" for the temple in Oakdale.)

We read in the Old Testament that God decreed one Tabernacle/Temple for the nation Israel and all true worshippers were to come to that one location. There the Aaronic priesthood (Aaron and his physical descendants) were to offer the sacrifices and offerings brought by the nation. The sacrifices involved the placing of the offerer's hands on the head of the innocent animal (substitution), the animal was killed and its blood poured out to make an atonement ("covering") for the sin of the offerer. See Leviticus 1-7; 16-17. The Tabernacle was to exist until the Temple was built in Jerusalem. The Tabernacle ("tent of meeting") and the Temple never existed at the same time. The Mormons, along with their 61 temples, have a "Tabernacle" (permanent building, not a tent) in Salt Lake City. The "Tabernacle" is located in what the Mormons call "Temple Square," where they also have one of their large temples.

It should be noted, the temple in Salt Lake City, Utah is not the Mormon's first temple. When the Mormons moved from upstate New York to Kirkland, Ohio in the early 1830s they built their first temple, a wooden structure. It was later destroyed by fire. The site in Kirkland is now owned by the Reorganized Church of Jesus

Christ of Latter-day Saints. When the Mormons were forced out of Kirkland (first evidence of polygamy and other problems became known), most of them moved to near Independence, Missouri. Joseph Smith, Jr., their "Prophet, Seer, and Revelator" had a message from God that the Mormons were to build a permanent temple in Independence and to remain there until the Lord returned to earth. He, of course, would come to Missouri, the "New Jerusalem" (said Smith). A plot of land was purchased, but before the temple could be built the Mormons were driven out of Missouri. The site in Missouri is now in the hands of a break-off group known as Church of Christ (Temple Lot).

After the group of Mormons led by Joseph Smith moved to Nauvoo, Illinois a new temple was begun (a stone one). But this temple was never completed because of the death of Joseph Smith at the hands of a mob (after he had shot three individuals while he was a prisoner in jail in Carthage, Illinois). The Mormons were then forced out of Nauvoo under the leadership of Brigham Young. The Salt lake City Mormons have made several attempts to purchase the site of the original temples in Kirkland, Independence and Nauvoo without success. One of their new planned temples will be in Nauvoo, but not at the location of the original one there.



After moving to Utah, the Mormons built their first permanent temple.

The Mormons have two priesthoods (Aaronic and Melchizedec), but neither function at an altar offering blood sacrifices for sins and transgressions. Of course, the Aaronic or Levitical priesthood in Mormonism are not physical descendants of Aaron (boys at age 12 can become Aaronic priests in Mormonism). The Melchizedec priesthood is open to Mormon men who “qualify” at age 18. This is in spite of the fact that the Lord Jesus Christ is the only High Priest in the “order of Melchizedec” and there is no need for another (Heb. 7; 9:11-28). Their understanding of the Old Testament priesthood as well as the New Testament priesthood (1 Pet. 2:5, 9; Rev. 1:6; 5:10; 20:6) is another area in which the Mormons are in error. It also is a documented fact of Mormon history that until June 1, 1978 Negroes were excluded from the Mormon priesthood. In fact, Joseph Smith, Jr., and Brigham Young both stated the Negroes are “black” because they are under the curse of Cain. As late as 1966, the Mormon Apostle Bruce R. McConkie, one of their “theologians,” repeated this position (“Opps – There Goes The Priesthood”). It is generally understood that social pressure caused this change in Mormon doctrine (until 1978 Negroes could play on the Brigham Young University football team, but the couldn’t be Mormon priests).

If the Mormons do not offer sacrifices in their temples, there are no Biblical altars, and the Mormon priesthood doesn’t function as priests there, why the temples?

We need to understand the purposes for temples among the Mormons. Incidentally, Mormon temples are open to the public (“Gentiles,” any non-Mormon) until a temple is dedicated. After that they are open only to Mormons and then only to Mormons who meet certain standards. Many years ago we had next door neighbors who were Mormons. They could not enter a Mormon temple because he smoked cigarettes and she drank cokes. Tobacco and caffeine are two items forbidden to “temple Mormons.” Of course, “Gentiles” can purchase cigarettes, cokes, and coffee in Salt Lake City, sold to them by Mormons. I recently heard a Mormon leader state only about 50% of Mormons are “temple Mormons,” that is they have a “recommend” which allows them to enter a Mormon temple.

So what goes on in Mormon temples? Here again, changes have taken place in recent years because the “secret” activities conducted there have been made public, usually by former Mormons. Some of the rites and ceremonies formerly conducted are the same as conducted in the rites of Free Masonry. Joseph Smith and some of his early associates were Free Masons and they adapted some of the Masonic rituals to Mormonism. Some of the crass element of the rituals have been eliminated, e.g., a Mormon no longer has to take an oath that his throat be cut if he reveals any of the secret temple rites.

One brief statement is that the Mormons build temples so that “...Mormon men can become Gods – just like the God who made this world” (“What’s The Temple All About?”).

The little tract “What’s The Temple All About?” describes what goes on in each room of Mormon temples. None of which is found in the New Testament.

One room is the “Sealing Room.” Here Mormon couples are sealed in their marriage for eternity. This helps them in their “exaltation,” the right to become gods and goddesses and have their own planet in eternity to come (and be privileged to continue to have children). A tithe of 10% of income is expected for the right of “sealing.” A Mormon man can be “sealed” to any number of women who will be his wives in eternity. He can be sealed to the wife of another man in this life if she has not been sealed to another Mormon. The hypothetical question can be asked, what if two Mormon men are “sealed” to the same woman in two different temples on the same day? “Whose wife will she be in the resurrection?”

According to Mormon doctrine, a woman has to be “sealed” to a Mormon man or she won’t be a goddess in eternity. She can only be an angel, even if she were a “good” Mormon.

Another set of rooms in Mormon temples are the “Dressing Rooms,” separate for men and women. Street clothes are removed, bodies are washed and anointed with oil. Then special temple underwear is put on that Mormons are to wear day and night for protection. It is considered important that they are wearing this garment when they die. Women are expected to be wearing this garment when they give birth.

In the “Dressing Rooms” special temple clothing is put on over the under garment and individuals then enter the “Ordinance Room.” Instruction is given in Mormon doctrines in this room, e.g., Mormon view of creation, the fall, and man’s final exaltation to godhood. Certain special secret signs are learned (shades of Free Masonry), then they proceed to the “Celestial Room.”

To enter the “Celestial Room” a “veil” or curtain must be passed. At the veil a person representing God has the initiate repeat the secret signs learned in the “Ordinance Room” and give a secret handshake (again, a feature of Free Masonry). Then permission is granted to enter. In the case of married couples, the husband must go in first for Mormons believe if the wife goes first she will rule over her husband eternally. This is a room for meditation. Talking is not usually done in this room.

The “Celestial Room” represents the highest heaven (one of three in Mormon teaching), which Mormons enter after their resurrection. Will we talk in heaven?

Mormon temples also have a “Baptistery” room. Here Mormons can be baptized for dead relatives so that they too can become Mormons, regardless of the relative’s beliefs or lack of them while on earth. The Mormons base this baptism on a misunderstanding of 1 Corinthians 15:29 (which refers to living Christians taking the places of Christians who have died – not to being baptized in their behalf). If one’s spouse was not a Mormon, a Mormon can be baptized for them (guaranteeing them Mormon salvation), then if so desiring, the Mormon can go to the “Sealing Room” and be married to the dead spouse for eternity. The two can then progress together to godhood (and have their own planet and produce children for eternity).

God only gave one temple to Israel, and it didn’t have a “Sealing Room,” “Dressing Rooms,” “Ordinance Room,” “Celestial Room,” or a Baptistery.”

When most of the Mormons were located in the area of Salt Lake City, Utah, they only needed one temple. However, because of the various Mormon rites that can be conducted only in a Mormon temple, as Mormonism grew and Mormons spread geographically, it became an impossible burden to go to only one loca-

tion. Muslims today make a once-in-a-lifetime pilgrimage to Mecca, so one location can serve them. However, Mormons need to make various visits to a temple, e.g., every time they want to be baptized for a dead person, or be united to a spouse for eternity, or even to meditate in the Celestial Room. For this reason a multiplicity of temples are needed by the Mormons. Further, as the number of Mormons increased worldwide, one location could not serve the many who desired to be involved in Mormon rites.

Worship in the traditional sense is not performed in a Mormon temple, as indicated, only ordinances and ceremonies are performed – these are human-centered, not God-centered.

Maybe you don't have a Mormon temple in your area yet, but if the number of Mormons around you increase, they will want a temple.

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The Pokemon Craze

By Jo Ann BeVier

The latest craze, Pokemon, which originated in Japan, is evoking an intense reaction, both for and against the game. Since many parents and grandparents will be buying gifts and we have received inquiries about it, we felt it important to stress the examination of this very popular game and its accompanying aspects.

There is an advertising blitz on to capture the attention of young children and to exploit the parents through the children. It is a mixture of toys, videos, game trading cards, clothing, music, and a movie. Interestingly the company that produces Pokemon, and Wizards of the Coast, also, owns the company that distributes Magic: the Gathering and Dungeons and Dragons.

According to "God's World News," Nov. 5, 1999, the Pokemon craze began in Japan four years ago as a Nintendo Game Boy game. It became a large screen video game and a Japanese TV cartoon show, then a card game. In 1997 it caused 600 Japanese viewers to have seizures because of a strobing effect on the TV screen. This setback was short-lived and Pokemon arrived in the U.S. in September 1998.

The name Pokemon (pronounced poh-keh-mon) stands for "pocket monsters." There are at least 150 "little monsters" with the point being for the player to become a "master" and to find and capture all 150 which will give the player "all" power. These pocket monsters use their magic powers to do whatever you tell them to do. This role playing is on the same plane as Dungeons and Dragons without the bad reputation. The trading cards are causing quite a stir. The battles to get the cards have even parents entering into the game.

It has also become a news item in the secular, as well as in the Christian, publications and on the Internet with the alarming violence that has resulted. Just to cite a few: from Florida... a 13-year-old is charged with burglarizing a neighbor's home and stealing 419 Pokemon cards; a county firefighter in Charlotte is accused of shooting at a neighbor in a fight over their children's cards; in Quebec, a clash over a \$45 box of cards ended with a 14-year-old

boy suffering a knife wound to the shoulder; in St. Petersburg, a nine-year-old grabbed a carving knife and stabbed a 13-year-old in the leg; in Ocala, Florida, a group of teenage boys beat up an 11-year-old boy and stole his valuable Pokemon cards; a 7th grader got expelled for attacking a teacher who took away his cards. Public schools are banning the cards because of the trouble it causes and Christian schools are issuing statements against having the cards or anything connected on the premises (St. Petersburg Times, Nov. 24, 1999; UPI, Nov. 14, 1999).

You may want to look at the website: <http://www.pokemon.com> on which is an article by Berit Kjos on Pokemon. You should read what responses she received. Some of these are filled with hate and threats. You will find it a good article geared for Christians, especially parents.

The following are some observations and background to this dilemma. This is not a new problem that has surfaced. We find references to magic, demon possession, and sorcery in: Mt. 7:22-28; 8:28-33; Mk. 1:23-27; Acts 8:9-13; 13:6-11; 16:16-18; 1 Cor. 10:21.

Many of the sources of mysticism and magical practices come from the Far and Near East in countries as China, India, Tibet, Egypt, Greece, and Rome. They are found in ancient forms and have been in existence in various forms over the years. Some people are fascinated with the mystical, things hidden or secret which are all definitions of the word "occult."

Cards have been used in a number of instances in the past. The Tarot cards were initiated at the close of the 18th century, cartouche cards were patterned after symbols of Egyptian religious beliefs.

In the 1970's Magic: The Gathering was the "in" game; in the 80's, it was Dungeons and Dragons, and now in the 90's the latest phenomenon is Pokemon. You need only to read some of the books written by those affected by these FRG (Fantasy Role-playing Games), such as: The Devil's Web by Sean Seller, a teenager who murdered three people, including his own parents, as a result of his involvement with FRG and drugs; Like Lambs to the Slaughter and The Beautiful Side of Evil both written by Johanna Michaelson, who was involved with a physic and she gives an urgent appeal to parents for awareness of what is going on today. There are many other books on the subject of the dangers of becoming involved with powers of darkness, fantasy, and the mysterious.

To get back to the subject of Pokemon, no it isn't as violent as some other things on the scene today, BUT how harmless is it to children, for this is a game for children. Do they know where to draw the line between fantasy and reality? Do they know where to place their trust and do they understand what lessons are taught? What is good and what is bad? Some of the questions to ask your child: What does this game teach about God, you, power, and magic? Does it have anything to do with power? Who or what is the source of that power? Does it oppose God's Word? Does it teach any violence or other evil? Does it build godly character?

- Observing e-mail comments to Berit Kjos' article, most of those who strongly opposed her comments on the danger and character of Pokemon were adults. Their opinions were that there wasn't any harm in the game and that morals or lessons are taught. One has to but read the message put forth or watch a video to catch the dark side. With all the tragedies that have taken place in schools in the past year or so and the involvement of the teens who caused them had with TV and the Internet we dare not downplay the "innocent fun-filled, harmless" game.

We Christians know that Satan is the prince of the power of the air and that "our struggle is not against flesh and blood but against principalities, against powers, against rulers of darkness... against spiritual wickedness in heavenly places" (Eph. 6:12).

The course of action would be:

1. To make sure that we and our children know the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior and that there is salvation in no one else,... "for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved" Acts 4:12. Apart from Him there is no hope. We know that "the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us it is the power of God" 1 Cor. 1:18.
2. We must teach our young people how to be "strong in the Lord and in the power of His might" by putting on the "whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil" Eph. 6:11.
3. Make wise choices that would be in accordance with the Lord's will and His Word. Be discerning. Is it edifying? Is it something you think the Lord would want us to be a part of?

4. Talk to your child/children so they understand why you feel as you do and that you want them to understand why there is a danger in some of the things that seem “fun and harmless.”

There is much now written on this subject of fantasy/role playing games from personal experience. Be concerned and inform yourselves.

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Web of Darkness by Sean Sellers.

These are all available from R.A.S. – with the exception of the one that is out-of-print; they are on hand for reference.

The Millennium Mood Change

By Ervin D. Ingebretson

For anyone living today there never has or never will be a more important calendar event than the ushering in of the year 2000 – the millennium change. With this change one would expect gala celebrations that far surpass any of the past or anticipated for the future.

However, survey agencies are telling us just the opposite. According to their polling data they are reporting unusual findings. Great celebrations, i.e., programs with popular musicians, ritzy restaurants and other places where people gather to usher in a new year, are canceling plans for lack of reservations. One survey agency reports that over fifty percent of those surveyed are planning to spend a quiet evening with family and friends. Is there some genuine apprehension about the year 2000 even among non-Christians?

People were asked if the Y2K factor had anything to do with plans. Were they affected by possible computer glitches resulting in air traffic control mishaps, hotel elevator malfunctions, or failure of any public service, etc.? There have been sufficient warnings from organizations that being unprepared for non-compliant systems would be foolhardy. Worst case scenarios could have loss of services such as heat, water, traffic control, communications, banking institutions, etc. The survey did not reveal great fear by the general population.

An interesting and favorable result of the findings was that an unusual number of people were planning to spend the eve of the new millennium in their churches. Does this portend a new interest in the practice of religious faith?

We are led to ponder and ask: “Is this the year that God will initiate the future events beginning with the Rapture followed by the Tribulation and then usher in the millennium of all millenniums?”

If we have been cautioned to be prepared for this calendar millennium change, how much more we should be prepared for the series of events preparing for the Great Millennium when Christ

will rule and reign over all the earth. Read again Matthew chapters 24 and 25, and note the warnings the Lord gives about being prepared for His return to earth.

The most important resolve we can make for this millennial change is to pray expectantly for the imminent return of our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. Let us join with the Apostle John who in the final words of Revelation welcomes the soon coming of our Lord, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

Terminology Differences Between Mormons and Christians

By Sandra Tanners

Reprinted from *THE EVANGEL*, UMI Ministries, with permission

Whenever an evangelical Christian and a Latter-day Saint engage in a doctrinal discussion they encounter the problem of terminology. LDS leaders use the standard vocabulary of Christianity but with radically different definitions. A Christian should never take for granted that his/her friend understands common Christian terms in the biblical way.

Because the Bible has many warnings about false prophets (Matthew 24:11, 24; 2 Corinthians 11:4, 13; 1 John 4:1) and people teaching strange doctrines (2 Peter 2:12; Galatians 1:6-8; Hebrews 13:9), it is essential that we understand what the Bible says on various doctrines.

The references below will demonstrate that the LDS Church is indeed teaching a different god and a counterfeit gospel, thus offering a false hope.

The following list of Christian terms will be defined by LDS sources and then by biblical quotations. While this is not a complete list of terminology differences, it will cover the most basic ones.

For a more detailed look at terminology differences, see *The Counterfeit Gospel of Mormonism*.

GODHEAD

LDS: Father & Son are resurrected men with physical bodies. Holy Ghost is a separate man with a spiritual body. Three totally separate Gods. God is married. Other Gods for other worlds (D&C 130:22; *Teachings*, pp. 345-346, pp. 370-373; *Doctrines of Salvation*, 1:10-12).

BIBLE: God is not a man (Num. 23:19). Only one God (Isa. 43:10-1; 44:6; 45:21-22). God is Spirit and invisible (John 4:24; 1 Tim. 1:17).

JESUS CHRIST

LDS: Literally our elder brother, born of Heavenly Parents in the Pre-existence. Jesus, Lucifer and humans are all the same species and are brothers and sisters (*Gospel Principles*, pp. 11, 17, 18).

BIBLE: Fully God, not a subordinate deity. Eternal. (Isa. 9:6; John 8:58; 1 Tim. 3:16; Heb. 13:8; John 1:1-4, 14; Col. 1:16-17).

PRE-MORTAL LIFE

LDS: Teach that everyone existed in heaven before they were born on earth. We have existed eternally (D&C 93:29; PGP: Bk of Abr 3:21-22; *Teachings*, pp. 352-354).

BIBLE: Only Christ pre-existed, not man (John 8:58; Col. 1:17). Our existence started on earth (Zech. 12:1; 1 Cor. 15:46).

THE FALL

LDS: Fall was a blessing. It brought mortality, ability to have children and physical death. Adam was given conflicting commandments and was supposed to fall (*Doctrines of Salvation*, 1:111-116; *Gospel Principles*, pp. 31-33; 2 Nephi 2:25; *Mormon Doctrine*, pp. 268-269).

BIBLE: God intended obedience (Gen. 1:28). God tempts no one (James 1:13-14). Man is sinful (Rom. 5:12; 8:5-8; 1 Cor. 2:14).

VIRGIN BIRTH

LDS: Believe God, as a resurrected physical man, is literal Father of Jesus – same manner in which men are conceived on earth. Believe Matt. 1:18 is in error. (*Mormon Doctrine*, pp. 546-547, 742).

BIBLE: Mary was “with child of the Holy Ghost” (Matt. 1:18; Luke 1:30-35).

SIN

LDS: Specific acts, not man’s basic nature. Must know act is wrong to be a sin. (*Mormon Doctrine*, pp. 550, 735-736).

BIBLE: We are in spiritual rebellion until conversion (Eph. 2:3; Rom. 5:6). We do not just commit sins, we are basically sinful (Matt. 1:21; Jer. 17:9; Luke 5:32).

FORGIVENESS

LDS: Granted at end of process of repentance and reformed behavior (*Mormon Doctrine*, pp. 292-298; *Gospel Principles*, pp. 75-77, p. 123; *Doctrines of Salvation*, 1:133-134).

BIBLE: Complete forgiveness granted the moment we turn to Christ (Mark 2:5; Col. 2:13-14; Eph. 1:6-7).

“Mormons may use the same terms that Christians use, but they have a different dictionary!”

SALVATION BY GRACE

LDS: Believe Christ's death brought release from grave and universal resurrection. Salvation by grace is universal resurrection. Beyond this, man must earn his place in heaven. Saved by grace after all we can do (Book of Mormon, 2 Nephi 25:23; *Mormon Doctrine*, pp. 669-671).

BIBLE: Salvation is not limited to universal resurrection but gift of God to those who believe (Rom. 1:16; Heb. 9:28; Eph. 2:8-9).

REDEEMED

LDS: From mortal death only. Not same as Eternal Life (*Doctrines of Salvation*, 2:10-15).

BIBLE: Redeemed from more than mortal death; redeemed from spiritual death & given Eternal Life (Rom. 6:23; Eph. 2:1; Gal. 4:4-5).

GOSPEL

LDS: Doctrines and commandments of the LDS Church. True gospel restored by Joseph Smith (*Mormon Doctrine*, pp. 331; 334; *Doctrines of Salvation*, 1:156-159).

BIBLE: Good news of Christ's death and resurrection as atonement for our sins (1 Cor. 15:1-4; Gal. 1:6-8).

BORN AGAIN

LDS: Baptism into the LDS Church (*Mormon Doctrine*, p. 101).

BIBLE: We are spiritually dead until our spiritual birth (1 Pet. 1:23; 2 Cor. 5:17; John 3:7, 14, 15).

TRUE CHURCH

LDS: Only the Mormon Church. The true church was taken from the earth until Joseph Smith restored it (D&C 1:30; 115:3, 4; *Mormon Doctrine*, pp. 133, 136).

BIBLE: Not an organization; as born-again Christians we are part of God's Church (1 Cor. 12:12-14; Matt. 16:18; 18:19-20).

AUTHORITY – PRIESTHOOD

LDS: Believe only LDS have authority to baptize, ordain, etc. Have two-part system of priesthood – Melchizedek and Aaronic (*Doctrines of Salvation*, 3:80-81; D&C 107:1-21).

BIBLE: Christ brought end to Aaronic priesthood and is the only High Priest after the manner of Melchizedek (Heb. 5:9-10; 7:11-17; 7:24-27; 2 Tim. 2:2).

BAPTISM

LDS: Must be performed by LDS priesthood (*Mormon Doctrine*, pp. 69-72).

BIBLE: Emphasis is on Believer – not priesthood authority (Matt. 28:19; Acts 2:37-41; 16:30-34).

SONS OF GOD

LDS: We were all born in heaven, prior to earth, as literal spirit children of God and his wife (*Mormon Doctrine*, pp. 589-590).

BIBLE: Spiritually adopted at conversion (John 1:12; Gal. 3:26).

ETERNAL LIFE

LDS: Exaltation in Celestial Kingdom; godhood and ability to bear children in heaven. Must have a temple recommend and be sealed in Mormon temple (D&C 131:1-4; 132:19-25, 30, 55).

BIBLE: Not limited to certain ones in the top part of heaven. No mention of parenthood or temple marriage but is given to all true believers (1 John 5:12-13; Luke 20:35-36).

IMMORTALITY

LDS: Universal gift. The ability to go to heaven and live forever but not same as Eternal Life. Lower level of heaven and unable to bear children (D&C 14:7; *Mormon Doctrine*, pp. 237, 376-377, 670).

BIBLE: Makes no distinction between immortality and eternal life. No second class citizens in heaven (2 Tim. 1:10; John 3:15-16).

HELL

LDS: Hell as an institution is eternal – inmates come and go as in jail, but do not spend eternity there. Temporary. After debt is paid they will go to the Telestial Kingdom (*Mormon Doctrine*, pp. 349-351).

BIBLE: No mention of people getting out of Hell (Rev. 21:8; Matt. 13:24-43, 47-50; Luke 16:26).

HEAVEN

LDS: Divided into three kingdoms – Celestial, Terrestrial and Telestial. A place for almost everyone (D&C 88:16-20; Misuse of 1 Cor. 15:40-41).

BIBLE: Only mentions two conditions – everlasting punishment or eternal life (Matt. 25:31-46; 2 Thess 1:7-10).

KINGDOM OF GOD

LDS: Means Celestial Kingdom. Only those in the Celestial Kingdom are in God's presence. Those in the Terrestrial or Telestial Kingdoms are not in the presence of the Father (D&C 76:50-88; 131:1-4; 132:16-17).

BIBLE: All redeemed will be in God's presence (Rev. 21:1-3). All believers are part of [the] Kingdom (Matt. 13:41-43).

LDS REFERENCES:

LDS Scripture: Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants, and the Pearl of Great Price.

Mormon Doctrine by Bruce R. McConkie, 1979; *Doctrines of Salvation* by Joseph Fielding Smith; *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith* by Joseph Fielding Smith; and *Gospel Principles*, published by LDS, 1995.

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BOOK REVIEW

The Kingdom of the Cults

Reviewed by William A. BeVier

The Kingdom of the Cults. Walter Martin; Hank Hanegraaff, General Editor. Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House Publishers, 1997.

Walter Martin first published his book titled The Kingdom of the Cults in 1965 (a revision of his earlier work titled The Rise of the Cults, 1955). After that, until his death in 1989, Martin himself revised and updated this major work several times (as a teacher of a college course in the cults I and my students had to repeatedly purchase new editions of Martin's basic work – it was the most complete available on the subject).

After Dr. Martin's death, his widow controlled the rights to the book. After some indecision, she finally decided upon Hank Hanegraaff, who took Martin's place as head of Christian Research Institute and as host of Martin's radio program "Bible Answer Man," as the one to produce a revision of her husband's seminal work.

Through the years various cults have been deleted and various cults added in Martin's book. The most recent edition is no exception. The subtitle on the dust jacket of the 1997 edition intimates this: "The Definitive Work on the Subject Now Completely Revised & Updated." This is considered the "30th anniversary" edition of the book.

In one way this edition is completely different from previous ones. Though he used researchers to help him, Walter Martin is attributed with writing the earlier editions entirely by himself. This is not true of the 1997 edition. Hank Hanegraaff is termed the General Editor, but Gretchen Passantino (once a researcher for Martin) is the Managing Editor. For the first time, Contributing Editors were used, eight in number. These eight each wrote one or more chapters in the book, generally on a specific cult. Most of the general chapters were written by Gretchen Passantino, as well as

the chapter on the Jehovah's Witnesses. She edited all of the other chapters and most of the appendixes.

As in Martin's work, the Seventh-day Adventists are presented in an extended appendix, again titled: "The Puzzle of Seventh-day Adventism. The Word Faith Movement and Islam are also in appendixes. Buddhism, however, is presented in a chapter along with the nine other "cults" in the book.

It should be recognized that while the basic approach of Walter Martin was followed and there is one managing editor, the various styles and differences in the individual contributing writers are present.

The updated edition is welcomed, though at the moment R.A.S. is not stocking this volume. We continue to make available the last edition done by Martin, both in hard cover and paperback.

[For the record, this reviewer some years ago, before the 1997 edition was published, wrote to Gretchen Passantino a personal letter suggesting Seventh-day Adventism be considered a major cult.]