

CLOUDS WITHOUT WATER

Jude 12



The
Berean
Call

MARCH 2013

THEY CLAIM TO SPEAK FOR GOD — PART ONE

by T. A. McMahon

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ABOUT THE BEREAN CALL

Seven years after publication of the controversial ground-breaking bestseller *The Seduction of Christianity* in 1985, its authors, Dave Hunt and T. A. McMahon, joined forces on another front. TBC was formed under the direction of Dave Hunt for the purpose of encouraging spiritual discernment among those who regarded themselves not just as "evangelicals" but as *biblical* Christians. The primary vehicle for this endeavor was through the publication of the newsletter *The Berean Call*. The ministry and newsletter name is taken from Acts 17:11, in which the writer of Acts commended those in the synagogue of the Greek city of Berea for being more fair minded than those in Thessalonica—because not only were they eager to receive the Word, but the Bereans also checked it against what the Apostle Paul taught them in order to see if his teaching was according to the Scriptures. Through the publishing and multimedia efforts of The Berean Call (TBC) believers are exhorted to get back into the Word of God instead of being "carried about by every wind of doctrine," and are equipped with materials to help them walk in the truth. TBC's stated mission is to:

ALERT believers in Christ to unbiblical teachings and practices impacting the church

EXHORT believers to give greater heed to biblical discernment and truth regarding teachings and practices being currently promoted in the church

SUPPLY believers with teaching, information, and materials that will encourage the love of God's truth, and assist in the development of biblical discernment

MOBILIZE believers in Christ to action in obedience to the scriptural command to "earnestly contend for the faith" (Jude 3)

IMPACT the church of Jesus Christ with the necessity for trusting the Scriptures as the only rule for faith, practice, and a life pleasing to God

ERRATA: In our February 2013 issue, in the Q&A, p. 5, in the third paragraph of the first response, "Daniel" should not have been included in the list. Also, in the second question, the last part of the sentence should read, "...but what about the lost?" and not "...what about the Lord?" We apologize for the errors.

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THE BEREAN CALL

“[The Bereans] . . . searched the scriptures daily, [to see] whether those things were so.”—Acts 17:11

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They Claim to Speak for God

Part One

T. A. McMahan

A very large part of Christendom in the United States is enamored with those who claim to speak for God. If you think that’s an overstatement, simply tune into some of the programming on Trinity Broadcasting Network or some of the other cable religious networks. What you will see are churches filled with thousands of Christians hanging on to every word of a man or a woman who is declaring what God has just revealed to him or her. The content ranges from the mundane to the bizarre. To some observers who are fairly well versed in the Scriptures, what they are hearing and seeing is laughable. But that’s a tragic reaction by some who are forgetting that many of those being led astray by the so-called new prophets and apostles are their brothers and sisters in Christ.

Most North American believers are wonderfully and prayerfully sympathetic to the plight of fellow Christians who are undergoing terrible persecutions for their faith in foreign lands, yet too few have a real concern for fellow believers here in the West who are being spiritually seduced and whose biblical faith is being critically undermined. The tendency is to write off most false preachers and teachers as religious kooks and to think no more about their captive audience. All true believers, whether or not they have been led into false teaching, make up the body of Christ. When one part of the body is seduced and suffers, it affects the entire body (1 Corinthians 12:25-27).

Not only is such a cavalier attitude wrong biblically, but it is extremely shortsighted and therefore blinds a person to the seductions and ultimate deceptions that are involved. In this series of articles we want to present a wider view of what’s involved with those who “claim to speak for God,” demonstrating that it’s far more than a few delusional zealots but rather a host of men and women, ministries, and movements that have an agenda and methodologies, all of which are contrary to the Word of God. In that endeavor, they have captured the hearts and minds of multitudes of Christians, mostly those among the Pentecostals and Charismatics, as well as staggering numbers

of young adults, many from conservative evangelical backgrounds.

Dave Hunt and I have addressed this subject in bits and pieces in our books and in many articles in *The Berean Call* newsletters, but we haven’t communicated in a comprehensive way the extent of the spiritually destructive teachings and practices involved in this movement nor the scope of this development and its agenda. Now, however, there is a book available that covers the topic more extensively than anything yet in print. *Wandering Stars: Contending for the Faith with the New Apostles and Prophets*, authored by Keith Gibson, not only explains the methods of this movement from beginning to end, but it also exposes its satanically inspired contribution to the

THAT THERE SHOULD BE NO SCHISM IN THE BODY; BUT THAT THE MEMBERS SHOULD HAVE THE SAME CARE ONE FOR ANOTHER.

AND WHETHER ONE MEMBER SUFFER, ALL THE MEMBERS SUFFER WITH IT; OR ONE MEMBER BE HONOURED, ALL THE MEMBERS REJOICE WITH IT.

—1 CORINTHIANS 12:25–26

progressive development of the kingdom and religion of the Antichrist. Gibson’s observations need to be heeded: “The majority of the church has not taken seriously the claims of the modern apostles and prophets [that they are] introducing a new paradigm into the Body of Christ. These claims are far more than idle boasts. Indeed the paradigm shifts have already begun in many segments of Christianity. To say that the movement has grown rapidly would be a gross understatement” (p. 10).

The root fallacy of the movement is the view of how one receives communication from God. Most if not all of the leaders subscribe to the teaching that the Greek terms *rhema* and *logos* found in the Bible describe different ways of hearing from God. This has been a fundamental teaching among historic religious movements such as The Latter Rain, Manifest Sons of God, and the prosperity-and-healing-promoting Word/Faith teachers. They conclude that *logos* refers to the written word and *rhema*

refers to the spoken word. Although the Bible uses the terms interchangeably, making no distinction, in practice this false teaching elevates what (supposedly) God has spoken to them as *equal to* or *above* what is written in the Scriptures. It goes far beyond someone stating that he “believes” that the Lord has impressed something upon his heart. Gibson comments: “It is far different to claim an impression than it is to loudly pronounce, ‘Thus saith the Lord.’ The former is the hesitant expression of a thought, something that may or may not be completely true. The latter is a claim to divine revelation that by definition cannot contain anything but truth and which carries divine authority and must be obeyed.” Whether implied or declared, Gibson adds, “The words ‘Thus saith the Lord’ change everything. A higher level of authority is being claimed. One should be extremely careful before one puts words in the mouth of God” (p. 8).

Many do not realize the dire consequences of being seduced by the “hearing from God” teachings. First of all, they completely undermine the objective nature of the Scriptures. In other words, when the Word of God is mixed with what some *believe* they’ve heard from God, it is difficult to objectively determine what is truly *from* God. That fundamentally destroys the value of the Bible in the lives of those who buy into the so-called new prophets of God. God’s written word is no longer relied upon as a determiner of truth, especially regarding the new doctrines presented, which those who are “hearing from God” promote in abundance. Unfortunately, that’s fine with such false teachers because their “new thing that God is doing” cannot then be challenged by the “old written words” found in Scripture.

Gibson notes with great concern: “No doctrine is under more regular assault from within the prophetic community than the doctrines relating to the Scriptures” (pp. 67-68). He adds, “Today’s prophets, and consequently their followers as well, are consistently sloppy in their approach to Scripture, frequently ignoring context, history, and grammar. They can even be seen redefining words when necessary to force verses to fit their preconceived ideas. The intent of the author of the text is rarely considered. The Bible is left to mean whatever the prophets say it means today” (p. 71).

If conservative evangelicals think that this drift away from God's Word is a problem unique to Charismatics, they need to consider their own churches. Is *discipleship* a significant part of your fellowship? How about *apologetics*? In your Bible studies, are you actually studying books of the Bible or books by contemporary authors? Is the term *hermeneutics* a foreign word to most members of your fellowship? If that's the case, you also have something to be very concerned about.

In *Wandering Stars*, Keith Gibson underscores the critical necessity of hermeneutics for every believer. "Hermeneutics has been described as the art and science of biblical interpretation. In handling the Bible properly, one should consider such things as context, history, grammar, and the genre of the literature among other things. The goal of hermeneutics is to understand the passage according to the original intent of the author, as inspired by the Holy Spirit." Simply stated, "The Bible should be studied in its historical and grammatical context and with the normal understanding of the words used. The intent is to discover the meaning intended by the author of the particular passage... It is essentially a belief that God meant the Bible to be understood by the normal believer within the community of faith. This is sometimes referred to as the 'plain sense' principle of interpretation" (p. 70).

Simplifying it further, it involves not much more than what happens when two people have a normal conversation. Both are aware of the context of what they are communicating, know enough grammar to converse in sentences, and understand the meaning of the words used. We all do this every day, so it's mystifying that most misunderstandings of Scripture stem from not following the simple rules of hermeneutics.

Following such "plain sense" rules would eliminate the "prophetic hermeneutic" (i.e., believing what a dynamic preacher says just because he claims to be a prophet) that has caught many believers in the web of blindly following those who claim to be speaking for God. Gibson has seen the damage this has done to many believers' trust in God's Word. He writes, "The impact of this 'prophetic hermeneutic' is serious indeed. In the first place, as has already been stated, this type of approach to Scripture causes the Bible to lose its ability to provide boundaries for doctrine and practice because the Bible simply has no objective meaning. The Scripture means whatever any particular prophetic teacher declares that the Spirit has told him it means today. This style of teaching also serves to remove any definite understanding of Scripture from the common man who realizes that he simply

cannot see all the things in Scripture that these teachers are seeing. This makes the average church person dependent on these 'inspired teachers' in order to know what the Lord has said" (p. 78). Once that happens, the individual is vulnerable to whatever such a teacher dishes out and whatever direction the teacher wants to lead him.

Gibson spells out the tragic consequences of which few of us are aware: "Because these prophetic teachers do not approach God's Word properly, they reach false conclusions. These false conclusions then support aberrant doctrines and unbiblical practices. These unbiblical practices and false doctrines undermine the historic truths of the church and distract Christians from the pure faith and the true work of the ministry" (p. 80).

It isn't only ignorance of the Scriptures or mishandling them on the part of many of the leaders of the prophetic movement. Some seemingly distort them for their own purposes. Gibson quotes Wendy Alec, from her very popular book *Journal of the Unknown Prophet*. This is what she claims she has received from Jesus: "For the Word alone is yesterday's manna and even they [prophetic teachers] have seen deep in their hearts that it is no longer enough to feed my people" (quoted in *Wandering Stars*, p. 86).

So the written Word of God is not only "no longer enough," but it's also "yesterday's manna." Scripture tells us that leftover manna "bred worms and stank" (Exodus 16:20). Who would believe that Jesus, who is the living Word, the same yesterday, today, and forever, the One who said, "Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away" (Matthew 24:35; Mark 13:31; Luke 21:33), would have anything to do with such a blasphemous statement? Yet thousands accept it unquestioningly. We can't judge Alec's heart in this, but it is obvious that she has relegated the written Word at least to an inferior position in comparison to what she and others are supposedly hearing from God today. Again, tragically, this is infecting our brothers and sisters who are part of the body of Christ.

The Scriptures give us a sober warning that I believe is most applicable to the day in which we live: "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away *their* ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." Again, sound doctrine is simply the teachings of the Word of God, which every believer is to read, heed, and obey. Yet, according to these teachers, since biblical doctrine stands in the way of the "new things God is doing," it must be downgraded.

Gibson quotes prophetic movement leader Francis Frangipane: "We have instructed the church in nearly everything but becoming disciples of Jesus Christ. We have filled the people with doctrines instead of Deity; we have given them manuals instead of Emmanuel" (p. 122).

Frangipane and his cohorts have in fact done none of that. Gibson notes: "Frangipane seems oblivious to the fact that teaching people to become disciples of Jesus Christ would necessitate doctrinal instruction if for no other reason than because to teach them who Jesus is necessitates a doctrinal discussion. Additionally, how else is the church to follow the words of Christ given in the great commission and 'teach them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you' without instruction in doctrine?" (p. 114). Gibson's response is stunning in its simplicity, yet what is even more amazing is that so many are not thinking through what they are accepting. He adds, "It is simply neither possible nor profitable to attempt to bypass doctrinal instruction. Discipleship may certainly involve more than merely doctrinal instruction but it cannot involve less" (p. 114).

The leaders of the prophetic movement of necessity must make it "involve less." Rick Joyner, for example, declares: "We must first understand that our unity is not based on doctrines. Such unity is superficial at best. Our unity can only be found in Jesus. To focus our attention on Him and learn to love and cover one another is far more important than agreeing on all doctrines. Having like doctrines is not a basis for unity...it is a basis for division!" (p. 115). Although "doctrine divides" is the mantra of the new prophets and apostles, they are correct in a way with which they would not agree. Romans 16:17-18 sets the matter straight: "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences *contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned*; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple." It is false doctrine, i.e., that which is "contrary to the doctrine" taught by the biblical apostles, that "cause[s] divisions."

Of necessity and hopefully for edification, this first article majored on the fundamental erroneous teachings of the New Apostles and Prophets movement, i.e., its own false doctrines. With that understanding, it should come as no surprise as to how bizarre their beliefs and practices could and have become. In the next part of this series, the Lord willing, we will glean (primarily from *Wandering Stars*) who the leaders are and what is involved in their global dominionist agenda. **TBC**

Quotable

Seeking to perpetuate one's name on earth is like writing on the sand by the seashore; to be perpetual it must be written on eternal shores.

— D. L. Moody

Q&A

QUESTION: I understand that you believe that Jesus died on the cross on Thursday, not Good Friday. Why do you say that, and does it matter?

RESPONSE: Scripture reveals the answer. Through the writings of Jeremiah, Daniel learned that the Babylonian captivity would last 70 years (Dn 9:2). God had commanded that each seven years the Hebrew slaves should be set free, debtors forgiven, and the land given a one-year sabbath of rest (Ex 21:2; Lv 25:2-4; Dt 15:1,2,12). For 490 years Israel had disobeyed this precept. In judgment, the Jews became slaves of Babylon while their land rested for 70 years of sabbaths.

Daniel confessed this sin, pondering and praying, and was given the revelation that another period of 490 years (70 weeks of years) lay ahead for his people and for Jerusalem (9:24). Then all of Israel's sins would be purged, all prophecy fulfilled and ended, and the Messiah would reign on David's throne in Jerusalem. These 70 weeks of years were to be counted "from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem" (v. 25). That crucial date is given to us in Scripture.

Nehemiah tells us: "in the month Nisan, in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes the king" (2:1), he received the authorization to rebuild Jerusalem. When the day of the month was not given, the first day was intended. There were several Artaxerxes, but only one, Longimanus, who ruled more than 20 years—from 465-425 BC. Thus we have the key date from which this incredible prophecy was to be calculated: Nisan 1, 445 BC.

At the end of 69 of these "weeks" (7x69 = 483 years) "Messiah the Prince" would be made known to Israel (Dn 9:25) and then "be cut off [slain]" (v. 26). Counting 483 years of 360 days each (the Hebrew and Babylonian calendar), a total of 173,880 days from Nisan 1, 445 BC brings us to Sunday, April 6, AD 32. On that very day, now celebrated as Palm Sunday, Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a young donkey and was hailed as Messiah the Prince! (See also Zec 9:9)

There is, however, an even deeper meaning to the phrase, "In the fulness of time": April 6, AD 32, on the Hebrew calendar was the tenth of Nisan. On that day, the Passover lamb was taken from the flock and placed under observation for four days to

make certain that it was "without blemish." During the same four days, Christ, whom John the Baptist had hailed as "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (Jn 1:29), was likewise on display before Israel. On the fourteenth of Nisan, "the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it [the passover lamb] in the evening [between 3:00 and 6:00 PM]" (Ex 12:6). It was during that precise time period that Jesus died on the cross!

In fact, the rabbis had determined *not* to arrest Jesus during Passover, "lest there be an uproar of the people" (Mk 14:2). Yet that was when He had to die. Judas was not only Satan's pawn but God's. Even the "thirty pieces of silver" for which he so shrewdly bargained fulfilled prophecy (Zec 11:12-13). Peter would declare in his Pentecost sermon, "Him...delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain" (Acts 2:23). Paul wrote, "Christ our passover [lamb] is sacrificed for us" (1 Cor 5:7).

The fourteenth of Nisan began at sunset Wednesday evening. That night, Jesus and His disciples had the "last supper" in the upper room where they were preparing to eat the Passover the following night. At this meal "*before the feast of the passover*" (Jn 13:1), Jesus told His disciples, "One of you shall betray me" (Jn 13:21). Earlier He said, significantly, "I tell you before...that, when it is come to pass, ye may believe that I am he" (Jn 13:19). The word "he" is in italics and does not appear in the original. Jesus was declaring once again to His disciples that He was Yahweh, the I AM of Israel, who tells beforehand what will happen and makes certain that it comes to pass (Is 46:9-10).

Arrested by the Judas-led troop in the Garden later that night, Christ was taken secretly to the palace of Caiaphas, the high priest. A sham trial with hastily called false witnesses convened sometime after midnight and condemned Christ to death as dawn broke. Pilate, the Roman governor, was notified of the emergency. Hurriedly taken down side streets, the prisoner was received into the citadel at "the third hour" (Mk 15:25), (about 9:00 AM), Nisan 14. All over Israel preparations were underway to kill the Passover lamb, which was to be eaten that night.

Pilate let his citizens decide the prisoner's fate. The bloodthirsty rabble turned against the One who had miraculously healed and fed so many of them. "Crucify him, crucify him" (Lk 23:21). "His blood be on us, and on our children" (Mt 27:25).

Shortly before noon, Jesus, scourged and beaten, was led out of the city to "the place of the skull." By noon, the One whom Jerusalem, in fulfillment of prophecy, had hailed as its long-awaited Messiah, was

hanging naked on the center cross between two thieves. Man had crucified his Creator!

The next three hours of that Thursday afternoon the earth was darkened mysteriously (Mt 27:45) as God "laid on him the iniquity of us all" (Is 53:6). Thursday? Not "Good Friday"? Indeed not. Jesus himself had said, "For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth [i.e., "Abraham's bosom"]" (Mt 12:40; Lk 16:22). The gospel includes the declaration that Christ "rose again the third day" (1 Cor 15:4).

Had Christ been crucified on Friday, He couldn't possibly have spent three days and three nights in the grave by Sunday morning. We are distinctly told that the angel rolled away the stone "as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week" (Mt 28:1). The tomb was already empty, so Christ must have risen from the dead sometime prior to dawn.

Wednesday, Thursday, Friday—does it really matter? Yes! The day of our Lord's crucifixion is of the utmost importance. If Christ was not three days and three *nights* in the grave, then He lied. His death, to fulfill prophecy, had to occur at the very time the Passover lambs were being slain throughout Israel. It is an astronomical fact that Nisan 14, AD 32, fell on Thursday.

"And it was the preparation of the passover.... The Jews therefore...that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the sabbath day...besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away" (Jn 19:14,31). Wait! Not a bone of the Passover lamb (Ex 12:46) or of the Messiah (Ps 34:20) could be broken. Not knowing why he did it, "one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side" (Jn 19:34), fulfilling yet another scripture: "they shall look upon me whom they pierced" (Zec 12:10).

John explains that the "Sabbath," which began at sunset the Thursday Christ was crucified, "was an high day." It was, in fact, the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, of which the first and last days were special sabbaths. It ended Friday at sunset, immediately followed by the weekly sabbath that ended at sunset on Saturday. Thus two sabbaths followed Christ's death, preventing the women from coming to the grave until the third day, Sunday morning.

The rabbis thought that having Jesus crucified proved He wasn't the Messiah. In fact, it was one more proof that He was! The soldiers took His clothes for a souvenir and gambled for His robe (Ps 22:18; 69:21); He was given vinegar mixed with gall to drink, nails were driven into His hands and feet, and a spear pierced His side, drawing forth the blood of our redemption—all in fulfillment of prophecy! [Adapted from "The Cradle and the Cross," Dave Hunt, 1992]



IN DEFENSE *of the* FAITH

BIBLICAL ANSWERS *to* CHALLENGING QUESTIONS

Who is “Allah”?

QUESTION: “Allah,” contrary to what you have written in *A Cup of Trembling, Judgment Day!*, and elsewhere, is the one true God of the Bible. This is proved by the fact that the Hausa translation of the Bible in northern Nigeria, where there are many Muslims, uses Allah as a designation for the true God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, Jehovah of the Old Testament, and the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. What better way could we encourage Muslims to believe the Bible?

RESPONSE: Unfortunately, this is a common error that is found in Arabic translations of the Bible as well, which are used in some Muslim countries. It is a serious mistake. Far from helping Muslims, it leaves them trusting their false god, Allah. Identifying Allah as Jehovah has caused a great deal of confusion and harm.

One of the major promoters of this delusion is the Roman Catholic Church....For example, *Vatican Council II: The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents, Vol. 1* declares that Allah is the “Creator...the one, merciful God, mankind’s judge”—in other words, the one true God of the Bible. Yet nothing could be further from the truth.

The Moon God of Muhammad’s Tribe

Allah is *not* the generic Arabic word for God but the *name* of a particular god among many deities....Allah was the chief god among the approximately 360 idols in the Ka’aba in Mecca. In that pagan idol temple...there was a deity to suit each of the thousands of travelers passing through in the trade caravans.

Allah is a contraction of *al-Ilah*, the name of the moon god of the local Quraish, Muhammad’s tribe, which they had worshiped with animal and human sacrifices for centuries before Islam was invented. Ibn Ishaq, Muhammad’s earliest biographer, tells how Muhammad’s grandfather was about to sacrifice one of his sons, Abdullah (who would later become the prophet Muhammad’s father), when a sorceress persuaded him to sacrifice a camel instead. The name of Muhammad’s father, Abdullah, is a contraction of *Abd ul Allah*, which means “servant of Allah.” It is a historic fact that Allah was worshiped long before Muhammad was born. When Muhammad rejected polytheism, he took the name of his own tribe’s traditional deity, the moon god, as the designation for the one God of Islam, his allegedly new religion.

Pagan Practices Continue in Islam Today

Much of Islam is a carryover of primitive tribal laws and customs already in existence in Muhammad’s day. Even the holy month of Ramadan had long been established. Nor can Muslims deny that for centuries before Muhammad, Allah had been one of the many pagan deities (such as Baal or Molech) whom the God of the Bible, Jehovah, had forbidden His people, the Israelites, to worship....

Allah’s symbol was the crescent moon, which Muhammad also carried over into Islam. This symbol is still seen on mosques, minarets, shrines, and Arab flags. When he conquered Mecca... Muhammad smashed the idols in the Ka’aba, including Allah, and began preaching against idolatry. Nevertheless, the new self-proclaimed prophet kept the idol temple and retained the pagan ritual (long an integral part of the worship of the idols) of kissing

the black stone....That stone, actually of “dark red material, oval in shape, some seven inches in diameter,” remains in its centuries-old position to this day and must still be kissed by Muslims on their required pilgrimage to Mecca....

Deceptive and Grievous Confusion

...Allah is no mere linguistic designation for God, as *Dios* in Spanish or *Dieu* in French. Allah is the *name* of an ancient pagan idol adopted as the god of Islam. If Allah were merely the generic Arabic word for God, then Muslims would not hesitate to use the word for God in each language into which the Qur’an has been translated. Instead, they insist that Allah must be used in every language....The God of Israel, too, has a *name*, YHWH, now pronounced Jehovah but anciently as Jahweh or Yahweh....God told Moses, “By my name YHWH was I not known to them” (Exodus 6:3); and at the burning bush God explained the meaning of His name: “I AM THAT I AM” (Exodus 3:13–14). YHWH means not just one who *is*, but the self-existent One who *is in and of Himself*.

Contrasting “Allah” and “Yahweh”

That Allah is *not* the God of the Bible is very clear—His very character and characteristics are the opposite of the biblical God’s. The Qur’an says that Allah is not a father, has no son..., and is not a triune being but a single and unknowable entity. Allah destroys rather than saves sinners, has compassion on only the righteous, does not deal in grace but only rewards good deeds, and has no just and righteous way to redeem the lost....That Allah should become a man to die for the sins of the world would be heresy to a Muslim....

In contrast, the God of the Bible *is love*, an impossibility for Allah. As a single entity, Allah is incomplete: He was lonely and could not love or fellowship until other entities came into existence. Not so with YHWH or Jehovah. YHWH is three Persons in One: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, complete in perfection and in need of no others to love and fellowship with....Only of this God could it be said that He *is love* in Himself.

Allah could never say, “Let *us* make man in *our* image” (Genesis 1:26). The Muslim scholar has no explanation for this expression, which is even found in the Qur’an’s paraphrase of this Bible verse. We could point out other reasons, but this should be enough to show that to use the *name* Allah for the God of the Bible in the Hausa translation or in any other translation is a grave error!

TBC NewsWatch

TRYING TO SAVE THE LANGUAGE OF JESUS

RUSSIAN TIMES ONLINE, 1/28/13, "SCIENTISTS STRIVE TO SAVE DYING SPOKEN LANGUAGE OF JESUS" [EXCERPTS]: British scientists are attempting to preserve the Aramaic language spoken by Jesus and tied to Hebrew and Arabic.

Professor of linguistics at the University of Cambridge, Geoffrey Khan, has begun a quest to record the ancient language that's been around for three thousand years before it finally disappears.

Prof Khan decided to record the language after speaking to a Jew from Erbil in northern Iraq. "It completely blew my mind," Khan told Smithsonian.com.

"To discover a living language through the lips of a living person, it was just incredibly exhilarating," he added.

By recording some of the remaining native Aramaic speakers, the linguist hopes to preserve the 3,000-year-old language on the verge of extinction. Speakers can be found in different parts of the world, from America to Iraq.

Over the past twenty years Prof. Khan has published several important books on the previously undocumented dialects of Barwar, Qaraqosh, Erbil, Sulemaniyya and Halabja, all areas in Iraq, as well as Urmi and Sanandaj, in Iran. He is also working on a web-based database of text and audio recordings that allows word-by-word comparisons across dozens of Aramaic dialects, Smithsonian.com reported.

Aramaic which belongs to the Semitic family of languages is known for its use in large sections of the biblical books of Daniel and Ezra. It is also the main language of Rabbinic Judaism's key text, the Talmud. Parts of the ancient Dead Sea scrolls were written in Aramaic.

The language was used in Israel from 539 BC to 70 AD. According to linguists it was most likely spoken by Jesus.

http://rt.com/art-and-culture/news/aramaic-language-jesus-spoken-920/?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+delicious%2Fgqlf+%28Christian+Headlines+Top+Headlines%29/

THE PA: BREEDING GROUND FOR TERROR

FRONT PAGE MAG, 1/28/13, "THE PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY: A CONTINUING BREEDING GROUND FOR TERROR" [EXCERPTS]: Except for rockets from Gaza—which, meanwhile, have stopped since Israel's Operation Pillar of Defense in November—you

haven't been hearing much about Palestinian terrorism. But it's not for lack of trying.

Israel's Shin Bet (domestic security agency) has released its figures for 2012. It says it thwarted 100 "serious" terror attacks over the year, a third of them planned kidnappings, four of them attempted suicide bombings. The Shin Bet also arrested 2,300 terror suspects in 2012, leading to 2,170 indictments.

For the first time in four decades, no Israelis were killed in terror attacks in Judea and Samaria (the West Bank) in 2012. But the number of attacks there rose sharply, from 320 in 2011 to 578 in 2012.

These are big numbers—100 attempted serious attacks, over 2,000 suspects arrested, 578 attacks in one year in the West Bank. Considering that perhaps two million (the figure is disputed) Palestinians live in the West Bank, it would justify calling it a terror entity. As for Gaza, it numbers about 1.5 million Palestinians and fired 2,327 rockets into Israel during the year, finally necessitating Pillar of Defense.

As for the US, Congress has been withholding \$450 million in aid. The Obama administration wants it to free up the money, but Congress keeps refusing.

Results for the PA: its 150,000 employees got only half their November salaries and nothing for December; it owes over \$1.3 billion to local banks; it expects its poverty rate to double.

Israel's and Congress's insistence on exacting a price for Abbas's November move is a welcome development; it lets the PA know that it is no longer outside the normal human cost-benefit calculus, with Israel indefinitely propping it up and the US continuing to funnel it political and financial support no matter how it conducts itself.

Add to the picture the fact that, after almost two decades of existence, the PA—and not only Hamas-ruled Gaza—remains a breeding ground for terror, with only the Israeli security forces preventing it from taking a horrific toll, and there is all the more reason to reconsider automatic backing for "the Palestinians."

While the Obama administration, for its part, remains committed to the idea that upgrading the Palestinians to statehood is somehow a US interest, and Israel is constrained by the effort to get along with the Obama administration, it's to be hoped that Congress will keep taking a hard look at the Palestinian reality after all the earnest effort to cultivate them as a positive force.

[\(http://frontpagemag.com/2013/davidhornik/the-palestinian-authority-a-continuing-breeding-ground-for-terror/\)](http://frontpagemag.com/2013/davidhornik/the-palestinian-authority-a-continuing-breeding-ground-for-terror/)

WHY MORMONS DO BETTER YOUTH MINISTRY

THE CHRISTIAN POST, 1/26/13, "WHY MORMONS DO BETTER YOUTH MINISTRY THAN WE DO" [EXCERPTS]: Let's face it. Most of us look at the clean cut Mormon missionaries that peddle the streets of our city and knock on the doors of our houses as somewhat out of date. Although they are kind and well spoken young men, when they knock on our doors we either don't answer or tell them we are already Christians who reject Mormonism and bid them good day. We think to ourselves how "behind the times" these young people are forced to be when they are required to do door-to-door evangelism for their religion. We reflect on how grateful we are that we have the truth once and for all delivered to the saints. We may even think about how much more superior our youth ministry strategies are compared to theirs.

Or are they?

- Mormons expect a lot out of their teenagers. We don't.
- Mormons ordain their young men into the ministry at the age of twelve. We don't.

- Mormons require their teens to attend seminary every day of high school. We don't.
- Mormons ask for two years in the field of every graduating senior. We don't.

Maybe that's why we don't meet a lot of ex-Mormons, while there are hundreds of thousands of former church attendees in the true church of Jesus Christ (of everyday saints) who flee the church after graduating from high school.

When many of our teens graduate from high school, they grab their books and a beer and go off to the college dorm (A.K.A. "The Party Zone"). When Mormon teens graduate from high school they grab a backpack and a bike pump and go off on a mission.

They know what they believe and why they believe it. They've hammered out their theology on our doorsteps. Their souls and minds have been steeled and sealed into Mormon orthodoxy through their fanatical commitment to the accomplishment of their version of the Great Commission.

Meanwhile we compress most of our mission work into one week in Mexico once every year or two. And even that is comprised mostly of building houses, not necessarily advancing the kingdom of God and the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

[\(http://www.christianpost.com/news/why-mormons-do-better-youth-ministry-than-we-do-88930/#oYA8FAB0LKZdf35A.99/\)](http://www.christianpost.com/news/why-mormons-do-better-youth-ministry-than-we-do-88930/#oYA8FAB0LKZdf35A.99/)

T. A.'s Speaking Schedule

May 24-27 **Christian Renewal Center**
Silverton, OR
(503) 873-7743

Aug 23-24 **TBC Conference**
Bend, OR
(800) 937-6638

Letters

Dave and T. A.,

Just a note to let you know that we appreciate the work you guys do. The newsletter is very enlightening and informative. The book reviews are very helpful. As a pastor, I always encourage people to just stick to the Bible when I get asked about other books that come out. Thanks for sticking to the Word and being faithful to the call. May God bless your ministry and continue to use it mightily to lead people to the truth that sets them free. EB (OR)

To the Brethren of The Berean Call,

I want to thank you all wholeheartedly for sending *The Berean Call* to me at the different prisons I've moved to. Even using the word "wholeheartedly" isn't enough thanks! I've been receiving *TBC* since 2010. I've learned so much and I want to continue even when I get home. You have really helped me grow in being a Berean....I know many brothers who study books that are so misleading....I've stopped reading books that I have to pick through the glass to learn....I know God will increase your blessing because of your great service to Him. KW (CA, prisoner)

Dear Berean Call,

Thank you for your ministry. I just found it this [past] year when we visited a small church in another town. An older woman I was talking to recommended one of your books. It was a relief to find others like us! TS (CA)

Dear Brothers in Christ,

I want to thank you for your magazine. You have provided a resource for me as I teach God's Word. Words cannot express how much it has meant. God bless you both for your tireless work for the kingdom. PC (FL)

Dear Dave,

I just wanted to thank you very much for your wonderful book *What Love Is This?* I read it when it first came out and was very encouraged by what you wrote and then recently re-read it as I'd come under some fairly strong Calvinist teachings and needed to come to a deeper understanding of what

God's Word really says. I certainly found that clarification in your excellent book and felt a wonderful release and refreshment. LD (Western Australia)

Dear Berean Call,

We received your February newsletter and were reading it last night. First of all, we just want to let you know we are praying for you regarding the lawsuit.

We also just want to send a special thanks to Mark Dinsmore for his articles regarding America. We thought we were going crazy to not agree with Christian Nationalism. It's difficult when 99 percent of your friends and "Christian" acquaintances are bound on fixing America and hating those who they feel are opposed to this crusade. It was an almost immediate answer to our prayer for the Lord to show us the truth in such matters. Thank you, Mark!

I guess, we cannot express the blessing that we receive each month from your staff and it gives us such encouragement as believers. We feel lost and alone at times in many biblical matters, and your newsletter helps us to see "okay, we're not crazy after all!" We can't wait to meet you in person to thank you for your tireless work. Please know, it is *not* in vain and we are so grateful to the Lord for your perseverance to share biblical truth. D&KB (email)

Dear Dave and Tom,

Thank God for *The Berean Call* newsletter. It has been a tremendous blessing to me. I don't know who sent it...but I thank God for it. I was saved out of the darkness of Catholicism in 1948 through a radio broadcast one Sunday night. I was twenty-one years old when I received Him into my heart and as I saw that truth I was not worried about committing the mortal sin of presumption. Praise God. I became a new man instantly. Praise God! The Bible became a living book to me, and my life changed immediately....

The joy that I've known by reading the Word and obeying it has been a tremendous blessing of which Jesus said in John 15:11, "These things have I spoken unto you that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full." My joy has been full even in the midst of trials. Praise God!

Continue on in Christ, brethren, for our redemption draws near. May God bless you all richly. Keep looking up. JD (PA)

Dear Dave,

Recently, I was given a copy of *The Seduction Of Christianity*. I thank you for the timeliness of your message, even though the book was published nearly forty years ago.

I was a supporter of Dr. James Dobson, until I realized that much of my past emotional turmoil was due to seeking solace in

psychiatry, rather than the Word. Indeed, I spent nearly nine years in prison partly due to sensitivity to antidepressants, which had been prescribed by a psychiatrist, when what I truly needed was a prayerful return to my faith. This happened after I was sentenced. I have served Him since....I am blessed by your discernment, your wisdom, and your study. Thank you. AH (TX)

Dave,

I met you at a prophecy conference in 1989 at Calvary Chapel Chino Hills. There was a period of my life that, though I believe I was saved, I would follow any wind of doctrine coming down the pike. Through a set of circumstances that the Lord allowed I began to follow the Word of God taught inductively. As I began to cut loose all the bogus teaching and, of utmost importance, quit watching TBN, my foundations were being rebuilt by the pure milk of the Word.... Thank you all for making the Word of God so exciting. ME (email)

TBC Notes

Get With Your Friend

What a friend we have in Jesus, all our sins and griefs to bear!

What a privilege to carry everything to God in prayer!

O what peace we often forfeit, O what needless pain we bear,

All because we do not carry everything to God in prayer.

Have we trials and temptations? Is there trouble anywhere?

We should never be discouraged; take it to the Lord in prayer.

Can we find a friend so faithful who will all our sorrows share?

Jesus knows our every weakness; take it to the Lord in prayer.

Are we weak and heavy laden, cumbered with a load of care?

Precious Savior, still our refuge; take it to the Lord in prayer.

Do thy friends despise, forsake thee? Take it to the Lord in prayer!

In his arms he'll take and shield thee; thou wilt find a solace there.

Sing it. Do it!

T. A. McMAHON
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Basic Principles for Digital & Social Media

excerpts from *Biblically Handling Technology and Social Media*



THE SPEED AT WHICH TECHNOLOGY HAS ADVANCED in just the last decade is incredible! We are literally reeling with all the “new.” With so many innovations happening so quickly, it is easy to carelessly accept what is going on around us without mentally taking a step back and evaluating our Christian response to the times in which we live. In 1 Chronicles 12:32, the Bible talks about how *the children of Issachar . . . were men that had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do.* We should accept this challenge to understand the times in which we live and learn how we, as Christians, should respond to our culture in a way that reflects a biblical worldview. . . .

The danger in mindlessly copying the world’s ways or responses is that we can easily be led into carelessness, foolishness, and sinfulness, often even becoming enslaved. Where are you today? Have you become a slave of texting, Facebook, YouTube, a blog (or other people’s blogs; maybe you are a blogaholic!)? Or rather, have you learned how to make these cultural trends your servants—making sure that you remain their master? *Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?* (ROM. 6:16).

All that God has provided, including these devices, can be tools for ministry. Tools usually have an intended use. As believers, our intended purpose is to be focused on doing all we do to further His kingdom. We are His ambassadors (2 COR. 5:20); therefore, let us use whatever we have to serve Him well, *giving no offence in any thing, that the ministry be not blamed* (2 COR. 6:3). . . .

Consider the following principles to help you better glorify God and thus be a good ambassador for Him.

Don’t Be Rude – Show Respect For Others

One way that you can be distinctively different from the world while using any kind of device is to think of others more highly than yourself (PHIL. 2:3-4). When God’s people make the conscious effort to stop putting “me” first, they are less apt to be rude and more able to think of others’ needs and feelings above their own. We have to remember that it can become uncomfortable for a person to try to communicate with someone who is constantly checking a phone or texts, using an iPod or Bluetooth ear bud, or is unable to look away from her Facebook page for even a minute to look directly at the one who is speaking to her. Being inconsiderate (rude) with our devices and social media sources can be especially discouraging for those who are less involved with the newest electronic and digital trends (e.g., those who didn’t grow up in the technology generation—many elderly and even some middle-aged people. Don’t allow yourself to use anything in a way that could make others feel inferior. . . .

[The Scriptures say]: *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself* (MK. 12:31); and *Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous* (1 PET. 3:8). . . . The Lord Jesus always treated people as important—more important than Himself. We need to be concerned about practicing the principles He has given us for loving others (SEE 1 COR. 13:4-8). Specifically remember the principle that love is not self-seeking. We must train ourselves to die to our selfish desires as the Apostle Paul encourages in 1 Corinthians 15:31: *I die daily*. . . .

Don’t Be Excessive

Remember the Fruit of the Spirit and exercise temperance (self-control) (GAL. 5:22-24)! Don’t forget to *let all things be done decently and in order* (1 COR. 14:40). Take a minute to re-evaluate your life and consider how much time you are spending in the Word, witnessing, serving (within our families, churches, or communities), compared to the time spent on a phone, MacBook, iPad, MySpace, blogspot, video game, or any Internet activity.

Don’t Be Possessive Or Too Dependent

Remember these Biblical admonitions: *Turn ye not unto idols, nor make to yourselves molten gods: I am the LORD your God* (LEV. 19:4). *Ye shall make you no idols* (LEV. 26:1). Consider taking certain days to “fast” from your devices or media, replacing that time with a renewed focus on improving your relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ so that you do not allow idols into your life.

Don’t Be Secretive

If there is something about your text messages, voice messages, phone numbers on your call log, song selections on your iPod or Mp3, content of your social network or blog, YouTube selections, or your Internet browsing choices that would embarrass you if someone in an authority position (parent, grandparent, spouse, church leader, friend) in your life knew about it, or that you would become defensive concerning, it is a very good sign that it is something that would not honor the Lord (SEE PROV. 10:17). . . .

Each day when you pick up your phone or portable media player or log into your social networking account, ask God to help you use them in ways that will please Him. Allowing a parent or spouse to have the password to your personal media or entertainment options will help keep you accountable. Applying scriptural principles to your use of technology-based systems and social media is a great way to guard yourself from being in bondage to them. *But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?* (GAL. 4:9).

Communicate With A Purpose

Incorporating “yourself” into your social network or blog in a God-glorifying manner for example could be posting that you had specifically prayed for something and the Lord answered. Instead of talking about your achievements, talk about your latest ministry or witnessing adventure, mission trip, or family day. Share about the blessings and the challenges that the Lord gave you through those activities. Talk about the people you spend time with and the character qualities that you like in them. Use media options to glorify the Lord by having a true meaning to your posts. Ask the Lord to give you a redeeming purpose for your blog, Facebook, and YouTube posts, or personal websites. It is important to once again stress that we as Christians need to be distinctively (yes, even radically) different in the way that we use whatever the world promotes or the culture deems acceptable. The strength of the choice is in your hands. By God’s grace, you do not have to allow anything to have power over you (2 COR. 12:9-10).

See page 12 to order *Biblically Handling Technology and Social Media* by *Biblical Discipleship Ministries* (www.biblicaldiscipleshipministries.org)

MASONIC AMERICA: OCCULT SUBVERSION OF CHURCH & NATION

EXCERPTED FROM *The Secret Teachings of the Masonic Lodge* BY JOHN ANKERBERG & JOHN WELDON

According to most Masonic authorities, modern Freemasonry (also called “speculative” Masonry) can be traced to the founding of the first Grand Lodge in London in 1717.

The Lodge is also a secret society. In fact, the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* classifies it as the largest secret society in the world. To maintain its secrets, Masonry uses symbolism, secret oaths, and secret rituals to instruct new members called “Initiates.” Each new member swears during these secret ceremonies to remain loyal to the Lodge and its teachings. The teachings instruct each new candidate how he is to serve and the rewards he can expect. In addition, Masonry views its mission in life as helping to bring the beliefs of all men into harmony—a harmony based primarily on Masonic teachings. Two of these teachings form the foundation of all Masonry.

First is their belief in the universal fatherhood of God and brotherhood of man. By this, Masons teach that all men—Muslims, Jews, Hindus, Mormons, Buddhists, and Christians—regardless of their personal religious views, are the spiritual sons of God. Masonry’s second foundational belief is that reforming personal character and practicing good works will secure God’s favor...[and] will earn him a place in the “Celestial Lodge Above” (i.e., heaven).

Several leading Masons have defined Masonry. According to Albert G. Mackey in *Revised Encyclopedia of Freemasonry*, “All [Masons] unite in declaring it to be a system of morality, by the practice of which its members may advance their spiritual interest, and *mourn by the theological ladder from the Lodge on earth to the Lodge in heaven.*” [Italics added—see Jn 10:1] Other respected Masonic authorities define Masonry in the following ways:

- “Masonry is the realization of God by the practice of Brotherhood.”
- “It is a science which is engaged in the search after Divine Truth, and which employs symbolism as its method of instruction.”
- “Freemasonry, in its broadest and most comprehensive sense, is a system of morality and social ethics, a primitive religion and a philosophy of life...incorporating a broad humanitarianism...it is a religion without a creed, being of no sect but finding truth in all; It...seeks truth but does not define truth.”

Masonry: The Same Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow?

Through its history Masonry has changed, and even today Masonry worldwide is not uniform. This characteristic of Masonry presents an important issue that needs to be resolved at the outset: Does Masonry’s lack of a central authority make it incapable of being subject to legitimate criticism? The answer is no....Masonry may not have a single human authority, but few Masons will dispute that Masonry itself provides the authority. In *The Newly-Made Mason*, H. L. Haywood refers to the obligations placed upon the new Mason:

I hereby solemnly and sincerely promise and swear that as a beginning Craftsman in the Masonry of the mind and as a Newly-Made Mason I will not permit myself to be led into making hasty conclusions. *I promise and swear that I will not listen to those who are not competent to teach me.* There will be nothing binding on me except the truth. If there be those who say one thing and if there be others who say the opposite thing, *I will consider that it is Freemasonry itself which finally is to decide between them.* [Italics added]

Regardless of the fluid and sometimes historically contradictory nature of Masonry, there remains a solid core of belief that is central to the majority of Masonry and to which almost all Masonic writers appeal. Mr. Bill Mankin, a 32d Degree Mason, admitted on national television that “The authoritative source for Masonry is The Ritual. The Ritual—what happens in the Lodge, what goes on.” State by state

the rituals may vary slightly, but the doctrines they are intended to convey are everywhere uniform. For example, Mackey states in his encyclopedia on Masonry that

The Ritual is only the external and extrinsic form. The doctrine of Freemasonry is everywhere the same. It is the Body which is unchangeable—remaining always and everywhere the same. The Ritual is but the outer garment which covers this Body, which is subject to continual variation. It is right and desirable that the Ritual should be made perfect, and everywhere alike. But if this be impossible, as it is, this at least will console us, that while the ceremonies, or Ritual, have varied at different periods, and still vary in different countries, the science and philosophy, the symbolism and the religion, of Freemasonry continue, and will continue, to be the same wherever true Freemasonry is practised.

A vast amount of Masonic literature is available to the researcher. This includes at least 100,000 volumes, among which are a minimum of 600 analytical works....Also in print are numerous exposés of Masonry by former members who have revealed virtually all the secrets of the Craft. Thus, Masonry is a “secret society” *only to those who have not read this literature.*

The Blue Lodge, the Scottish Rite, and the York Rite

The Blue Lodge is the parent, or mother, Lodge of Freemasonry. In the Blue Lodge are conferred the first three degrees: (1) the Entered Apprentice, where a man is initiated into the beginning mysteries of the fraternity of Freemasonry; (2) the degree of Fellow Craft; and (3) the Master Mason Degree. Many, and probably most, Masons do stop with the first three degrees. But the candidate may choose to proceed higher along one or both of two branches in Masonry. One branch is known as the Scottish Rite, which advances by numerical degrees, beginning with the Fourth and ending with the 32d, the 33d Degree being either active or honorary. The other major branch is the York Rite...ending with the degree of Knights Templar.

Although the Blue Lodge is Masonry, and although it is the Masonry of most Masons, it is not all that Masonry constitutes. Sovereign Grand Commander Henry C. Clausen admits, “An initiate may imagine he understands the ethics, symbols and enigmas, whereas a true explanation of these is reserved for the more adept.” Masonic author Albert Pike wrote in *Morals and Dogma*:

If you have been disappointed in the first three Degrees, as you have received them,...remember...that these antique and simple Degrees now stand like the broken columns of a roofless Druidic temple, in their rude and mutilated greatness; in many parts, also, corrupted by time, and disfigured by modern additions and absurd interpretations. They are but the entrance to the great Masonic Temple—Imagine not that you will become indeed a Mason by learning what is commonly called the “work,” or even by becoming familiar with our traditions....The streams of learning that now flow full and broad *must be followed to their heads in the springs that well up in the remote past,* and you will there find the origin and meaning of Masonry.

The first three degrees of Masonry, then, are merely a stepping-stone to the higher “truths” of the Lodge. In fact...many Masons will admit that the Blue Lodge teachings are *purposely deceptive.* Under his discussion of the Third Degree of the Blue Lodge in *Morals and Dogma*, Albert Pike observes that “Masonry, like all the Religions, all the Mysteries, Hermeticism and Alchemy, conceals its secrets from all except the Adepts and Sages, or the Elect [the worthy], and uses false explanations and misinterpretations of its symbols to mislead...to conceal the Truth, which it calls Light, from them, and to draw them away from it. Truth is not for those who are unworthy.”

Congress: Freemasonry Is “Bedrock” to the United States

In 1948, *The New Age* [magazine of Freemasonry] estimated that “between one in five and one in 10 of the adult thinking population come directly within the circle of Masonic influence.” Even in 1912, scholar Martin Wagner could observe in his critical treatment on Masonry that “Masonry, with its numerous offsprings, is a powerful factor...It is influencing our civic, our social, our family, and our moral and religious life far more than is generally realized.”

Wagner’s assessment remains true. Critic Paul A. Fisher, who has had considerable experience in military intelligence and has been active in political life, refers to Masonry’s “enormous influence in the world media...” In the US, according to the leading Masonic magazine, *The New Age*, many members of the National Press Club are Masons. Fisher observes that Masons have dominated the US Supreme Court from 1941-1971...He concludes that such influence may have contributed to the high court’s “determination to move the nation away from an emphasis on Judeo-Christian values in public life,” helping to further secularize society and sustain “an epoch of revolutionary liberalism” with far reaching consequences.

If Fisher’s claims contain any substance, then addressing the religious views, content, and goals of Freemasonry is not an idle task but is relevant to each of us. In the 13th Degree of the Scottish Rite the oath reads, “I furthermore promise and swear to use *every means in my power...to contribute with all my might to the...propagation of liberal ideas wheresoever I may be.*” [Italics added]

According to Masonic and Congressional records, as many as fourteen US Presidents have been Masons...[while] an additional fourteen Masons have been Vice Presidents. The influence of Masonry in contemporary government was revealed by the Senate Congressional record of September 9, 1987. Objections from...Congressional members were raised against questioning Masonry because “*Masonry in this country is the bedrock...*” [Italics added]

Secrecy: Its Power and Purpose

Masonry stresses the importance of secrecy for at least two principal reasons. The first is that the element of secrecy itself is something that attracts men and makes them feel important. They have access to what they believe are vital secrets and truths that other men do not share. The second reason is because it offers the Craft a stabilizing influence. Men who swear extremely solemn oaths of secrecy to the Lodge not only conclude that the information received is important but that it must be protected at all costs.

For example, the Guide to the Royal Arch Chapter observes, “*Mystery has charms as well as power. The entire fabric of the universe is founded on secrecy; and the great Life-force which vivifies, moves and beautifies the whole, is the deepest of all mysteries. The first obligation of a Mason—his supreme duty—his chief virtue—is that of silence and secrecy.*” Masonic historian Alphonse Cerza further believes: “The secrecy of our ceremonies of initiation are intended to meet a natural human characteristic. What is open is often overlooked, but *what is hidden attracts attention.* It is hoped that the new member, because of the element of secrecy and interest in discovering what it is all about, will come to the meeting with an alert mind...” [Italics added]

But there are other reasons for Masonry’s secrecy, both religious and, apparently, sometimes political. By maintaining secrecy, Masonry can hide its religious nature from the outside world and secure converts who would not otherwise join. In addition, some believe secret political goals of the Lodge exist. Paul A. Fisher, formerly active in both military intelligence and political life, claims that “Freemasonry in America and elsewhere is far more than a fraternal organization. It never hides its charitable endeavors. But its secret work is something else entirely.”

A New World Order “Coming into View”

Masons foresee the day when all religious division and sectarianism (i.e., what Masonry views as specific or exclusivistic, and therefore “divisive,” religious beliefs) will be wiped away, and a new era of universal peace, brotherhood, and religious faith will emerge. In this sense, Masonry is far more than a fraternal brotherhood. It seeks to *remold* the world after its *own* image. In other words, it wants to [“fundamentally transform”] the world.

Masonic author H. L. Haywood sets forth the objectives of Masonry. He asserts that Masonry will bring about a new world order: “It is a world law, *destined* to change the earth into conformity with *itself*, and as a world power it is something superb, awe inspiring, *godlike.*” Another Masonic writer declares that “the doctrines of Masonry will ultimately rule the intellectual world.”

The most widely read and influential book in Masonry is Joseph Fort Newton’s *The Builders*. Newton declares that as Masonry expands, all religious dogmas will “cease to be.” All individual creeds and doctrines will be done away with, and what remains will be what is termed “the one eternal religion—the Fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of man, the moral law, the golden rule, and the hope of a life everlasting!” Because of this, Newton defines Masonry as “a great order of men, selected, initiated, sworn, and trained to make sweet reason and the will of God [i.e., Masonry] prevail!” Newton claims that Masonry will not become “only one more factor in a world of factional feud” but that “it seeks to remove all hostility which may arise from social, national or religious differences.”

Why does Masonry seek to change the world? Because Masonry teaches that all non-Masons are living in spiritual darkness. The ritual of Masonry for the First Degree of Entered Apprentice teaches the candidate that he “has long been in darkness, and now seeks to be brought to light.” The Lodge teaches that *only true Masons are enlightened and live in the Truth.* Masonry claims that “each member is a living stone in this Holy House”—the Masonic temple.” It refers to itself as a “Holy Empire” whose mission is “to dispel darkness.” Thus, it is the mission and “duty of its initiates to diffuse among men its ideals, *without which error, superstition, and spiritual subjugation must be eternal.*” [Italics added]

The result of this premise is that, if true world brotherhood is ever to be achieved, it demands for its success *a worldwide religion of Masonry.* Thus, informed Masons partake in “the glorious privilege which belongs to Masonry as the precious jewel of its prerogative, *to be the chiefest of human agencies used by God* to bring forward the *rosy dawn* of this magnificent future.” [Italics added]

But if Masonry is to one day rule the world, then all non-Masonic beliefs must either be abandoned or absorbed into Masonry. “Sectarian” religions with exclusive teachings, such as the Christian faith (John 14:6; Acts 4:12), simply cannot be permitted if Masonry is to succeed. Masonry then, claims that the Lodge is the light of the world and that only “its ideals” can save the world from its errors and superstition. All of this is why Masonry is far more than simply a worldwide fraternal brotherhood. Masonry desires to change the world. As we have seen, one means by which it hopes to change the world is to influence and *remold* the church...In [this book] we will provide detailed documentation revealing how the religious world view of Masonry distorts, dismantles, and replaces the Christian faith with Masonic doctrine. [See page 12 to order]

“*For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.*” —Jude 4

“*Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.*” —Acts 20:30

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KEITH GIBSON was raised in a very liberal church and came to know Christ after attending an apologetics conference with Josh McDowell. Rev. Gibson graduated Magna Cum Laude with a B.S. from Palm Beach Atlantic University, and has received a Master’s of Arts in

Religion from Liberty University. He is presently pursuing a Doctor of Arts in Theology at Trinity Seminary. He is ordained in the Southern Baptist Church (SBC) and has served in vocational Christian service for 20 years in 5 different churches. He is the founding pastor of Word of Life Community Church in Grandview, MO. He has spoken at conferences throughout the Midwest and lectured at the EMNR conference. He has also authored numerous articles and is a charter member of the International Society of Christian Apologetics.

Keith Gibson will be speaking at TBC’s 2013 conference. See page 16 for more details on how to attend.

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