



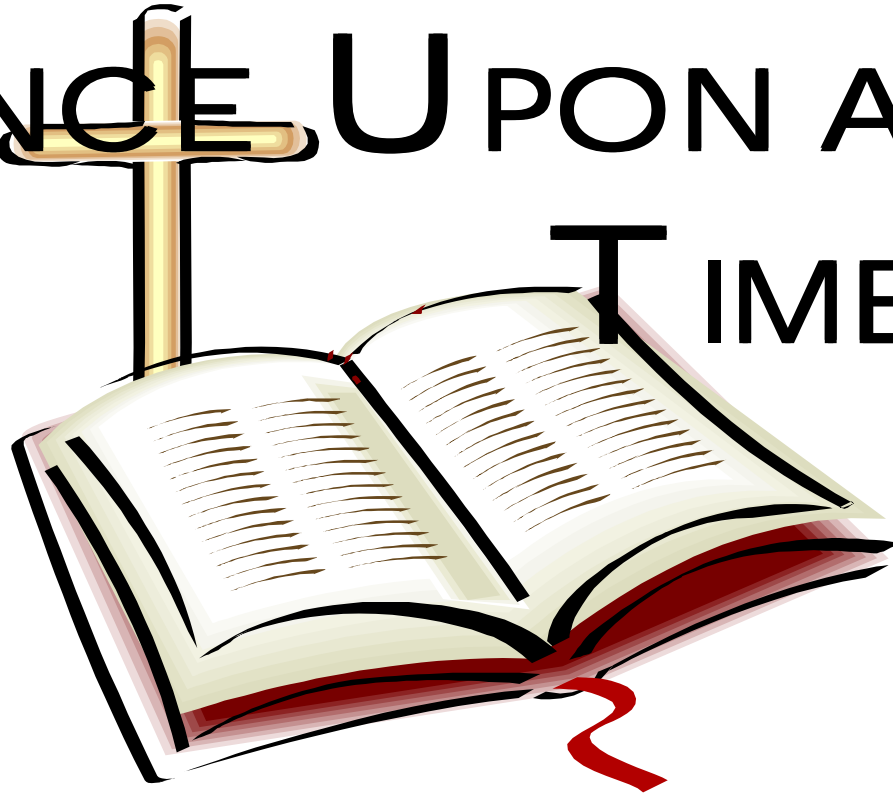
Sentinel

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Volume 8 No 3

ONCE UPON A TIME ...



“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. And the earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep; and the Spirit of God was moving over the waters.

“Then God said, ‘Let there be light’; and there was light. And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness.

“And God called the light day, and the darkness He called night. And there was evening and there was morning, one day.” Over the next days God created everything with the crown of His creation—man and woman—on the sixth day. He also blew the breath of life into man. It is important to remember that because of this God-given part man’s soul will forever hunger for a close relationship with his Creator

He trusted this man and woman so much that He put them in charge of His creation—but then this special creation thought he would be better off by listening to the *Great Deceiver*, also one of God’s creations. This caused a disaster that came down on the whole of humanity. Not only did God find this first man and woman hiding away in the Garden but the close relationship that existed between God and man and his woman was severed when they chose

to listen to Satan and his cleverly disguised deception. Note how Satan chose to work through the special part of man—his wife: “And he [Satan] said to the woman, ‘Indeed, has God said, ‘You shall not eat from any tree of the garden.’” The woman put him right though, because she said that God has said that they could eat from all the trees in the garden except the one in the middle, as that would cause their death. Satan countered and succeeded: “You shall surely not die! For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” Alas man was deceived—he did not physically die at that moment but he surely died spiritually! Even today man prefers Satan’s clever deceptions, sometimes so subtly disguised and mixed in with truth that it is hard to recognise the little untruth. So many cults and even some great and wellknown televangelists thrive on this mixing of the lie with truth. We even notice this subtle deception winding its way *snakelike* into the Church.

God then made a wonderful promise: That Satan will bruise the Offspring of the woman but this Offspring will crush his head. (Gen 3:14-15) Interesting to note that this Offspring is of the woman. More about this later.

Ever since this severance between Crea-

tor and creation man was in need of a Saviour. This promise of God goes beyond our understanding because we read that God had this plan all worked out even before He created. “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places just as He chose us in Him [Jesus Christ] before the foundation of the world...” (Eph 1:3-4)

Time marched on since man’s fall and history tells us about a number of men—prophets who prophesied a great future event. This promised One, is the Saviour and Messiah! The One who would take away all the sins of the world, suffer for it and die and even come out of the grave. Things that just stun the logical mind of man. We will spend a little time in considering these prophecies and their fulfillment, if any:

MESSIAH’S SUFFERING

PROPHECY AND FULFILLMENT NO 1:

Remember the Offspring was promised to come from a woman—this Child would not have an earthly Father. “Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will

Continued on page 6



Sentinel is die tydskrif van *Kulte Inligting & Evangelisasie Sentrum* en word kwartaaliks gepubliseer om die gemeenskap in te lig en te waarsku teen misleiding, die ware Evangelie te verkondig en die Kerk bewus te maak van die gevare wat die dwaalleer van die kultes inhou. Sentinel is the mouthpiece of *Cult Information & Evangelization Center* and is published quarterly to inform and warn the community against deception, to spread the true Gospel and to alert the Church against the heresy of the cults.

Is 'n Interkerklike Evangelisasie en Uitreik-aksie van die Ned Geref Gemeente-EDLEEN

Is an Interdenominational Evangelization Outreach of the Dutch Reformed Church-EDLEEN

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Disclaimer: The publication of any article does not mean that CIEC necessarily agrees with or condones all the viewpoints of the writer.

Redaksioneel/Editorial

WE'RE ON THE WEB!!

Yes we now have a website! Information at present is in Afrikaans, but we will get the English material on it soon. The web address appears on the front page. To get to our site via our very friendly host (www.christiannet.org.za), click on South Rand, scroll down and click on **KIES/CIEC**.

ABOUT THIS ISSUE

Over the years we have concentrated so much on cults, their heresies and subtle deception, that you may have felt overwhelmed by all the deception and false teachings. While it is true that with most all articles about the cults and their untruths we have always strived to give the true message of salvation through we also believe that to some degree the true Gospel may have been overshadowed by all these untruths.

The time has, therefore, come that we allocate space to the message of truth and salvation which can only be found in the Name of Jesus of Nazareth, who is **THE CHRIST—THE MESSIAH**—in Whom alone in the order of 300 or so prophecies have been fulfilled. Any statistician will tell you that the odds of this happening is so great that it just boggles the mind.

We hope that you will not only find consolation in the article *Once Upon a Time*, but that it will also give you some new hope and strengthen your faith in the Only Name given to men whereby they may be saved: "And in no other is there salvation: for there is no other name under heaven, given among men, through which we may have salvation."

CULT AWARENESS CAMP

Such a pity this camp which was scheduled for 12-14 May had to be cancelled due to lack of interest. Do our English speaking friends not have problems with our require to be informed about the hurt cults cause in the lives of people?

SAMEWERKING GEVRA:

Die middelblad bevat een groot advertensie vir die kulteskamp wat

gedurende die naweek van **18-20 Augustus** plaasvind.

Die formaat is reeds A3 dus kan jy dit maklik in dieselfde grootte fotostateer en as plakkaat opsit waar moontlik. Jy kan dit ook as strooibiljette byvoorbeeld by jou kerk uitdeel. Om dit te doen sal dit nodig wees om dit na A5-formaat toe te verklein gedurende fotostatering. Maak twee kopieë. Plaas die twee A5's langs mekaar en kopieër nou na A4 en siedaar twee A5 langs mekaar wat dan net middeldeur gesny kan word.

Die kamp beloof om soos die van die vorige drie jaar weereens 'n belewenis te wees wat nie misgeloop moet word nie.

SCIENTOLOGY

A local newspaper of not so long ago carried an article which stated that Scientology has been officially recognised by the Government as a religion.

INTERNATIONAL CHURCH OF CHRIST

A local Cape Town newspaper carried an article about this group's activities in South Africa. It indicated that this group has not only been banned by some overseas campuses but also by local university campuses. Whether this is so has not yet been confirmed. Locally this dissenting religious group is known by names like, Johannesburg, or Cape Town Church of Christ. They are particularly active among the youth and proselytise members on campuses of universities, technicians, and colleges.

Ons het tans 'n traktaat in Afrikaans oor hierdie groep beskikbaar. Dit kan per E-pos gestuur word. U kan dit self vryelik dupliseer.

Die groep sal ook op die kulteskamp behandel word.

OU APOSTOLIESE KERK

Ons word gedurende die laaste paar maande oorval deur navrae oor hierdie kulte. Enige iemand wat met inligting kan help is baie welkom. Veral indien iemand dalk van hulle eie literatuur het. Stuur dit gerus aan ons.

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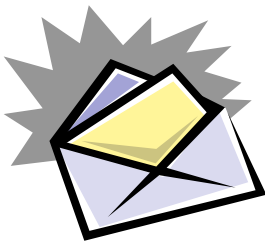
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Vrymesselary/Freemasonry

Japie Grobler*

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Letters/Briewe

SCHIZOPHRENIA: DESCRIBING THE ILLNESS, IN FIRST-PERSON

There is so much talk these days about people with schizophrenia, care in the community, turning violent, but does anyone really understand schizophrenia, or what it is actually like to BE a schizophreniac? Believe me, I talk from experience. I have had schizophrenia since I took LSD in 1977 and have been in and out of reality and other dimensions ever since.

When I was first diagnosed, I was given drugs (injections) and after the first injection, I felt my world, my then reality, draining out of my mind—I nearly passed out. The drugs caused the most severe muscular contractions and I went into spasms and had to be given another injection to try to counteract some of the side effects. I was on injections for several years, but eventually I had enough sanity and sense to take pills.

After my first injection, I went from being Johnny, the spirit of music, communicating with Jupiter through my VDU screen, my car a spaceship where I had to hold the steering wheel carefully to keep it on the road and not take off into the air. Communicating with God, thunder in the skies that I seemed to understand. I went from that to almost nothing, no thoughts, just emptiness and constantly so very tired.

It is only after all these years, as I have gradually reduced my dosage that I have managed to get some of that world back in my mind and still remain in touch with reality (I am an accountant). Every so often, be it a holiday, or as when I was told to give up drugs, I have a complete and utter breakdown where I don't eat, and I lose touch with reality on this planet.

It is no fun having schizophrenia. Not only do we have reality to cope with, as everyone does, but we hear voices, we see pictures, we have terribly strong feelings about things and if our judgement is not intact, this is what causes the danger. I was once having a drink with a guy from work and asked him: "Do you ever feel that something you do could affect the entire universe?"—for that is what it sometimes feels like. He said "No" and gave me a funny look as so many people used to do.

Normal people just don't understand. Have you ever felt larger than life? Have you ever talked to God? Have you ever met Father Christmas? It is all so real, and it is not just voices and the hallucinations: it is the feelings. They are so strong.

Imagine having to cope with this, along

with the job, the mortgage, family, friends, relationships and all the other things "normal" people have. People with schizophrenia don't just live life to the full, they have a whole other dimension of existence. Maybe people with schizophrenia are the next logical development in mankind, using more of their mind, and being more in touch with, in my opinion, what really matters. For it is not money and mortgage and job that really matter, surely it is the spirit, the salvation of the soul, our eternal pathway? Surely that is what it is all about and if we can in some way talk to God, or angels, then surely we are closer to the true pathway than ordinary folk.

Those questions that haunt us all: "who am I?" "Where am I going?" "What is it all about?" ...I hardly think of anything else. I remember once, staring up at the lifeless grey sky and feeling so alone, so terribly terribly alone and wondering if anything was real, and even asked myself the question: "Am I God?" Can you imagine having to go through things like this? Or the time when I felt so close to nature, and was full of such unbelievable emotion, and just when I finally broke down in tears, the skies opened and poured down an incredible hailstorm. What normal person experiences things like this?

More credibility, research and care should be given to people with schizophrenia. We are lacking, we are gaining, and providing we have judgement, who knows what could be discovered? I was told in no uncertain terms by the Cosmos that the Big Bang was caused by emotion. I wonder if anyone else ever even thought this. And I was told there is something that travels faster than light: it is thought. These are rational, interesting, reasonable thoughts. The fact that they may defy science is not important. Telepathy, intuition, love, emotion, faith: that is where our direction should lie—and I believe that people with schizophrenia are much closer to this pathway than normal mankind.

(Thanks to Friends of Tara and the Mentally Ill, Bryanston, who granted permission for publication of this letter which appeared in their Report of November 1998.

This letter is published as it also contains a warning to people who get involved with cults. Some of these experiences are also typical of those experienced by some ex-cult members—giving an indication of the damage cult mind control causes. Ed.)

STANDING BY MY POINT:

I was very excited when I received your letter and impressed by the trouble you took in answering my letter.

After reading your first point I feel that I must still stand by my original statement concerning Walter Martin, no disrespect intended.

I do not dispute his reputation, but feel that his knowledge of the Faith may be generalized, thus leading to fine actual errors. To clarify:—Mirza Yahya, Baha'u'llah's Half-brother, was appointed as the head of the Babi Faith after the death of the Bab in 1850. Mirza Yahya's task was to safeguard the infant Faith until the appearance of the Promised One. This we believe was Baha'u'llah who declared His mission in 1863 and claimed the title. Not to be upstaged by his brother Mirza Yahya then also claimed this title. This caused the small Babi community to split into three distinct groups. (1) Babi's who were confused by the turn of events and refused to accept either brother. (2) Followers of Mirza Yahya who called themselves Azali's and (3) Babi follower's (sic!) of Baha'u'llah who started to call themselves Baha'is so as to distinguish themselves from the other two groups.

As for your second point I must stand by my assertion that 'Abdu'l-Bahá was not a prophet as Baha'u'llah has stated that "Whoso layeth claim to a Revelation direct from God, ere the expiration of a full thousand years, such a man is assuredly a lying imposter." (Gleanings, p.346) Thus from this we see that 'Abdu'l-Bahá could not be a follower of Bah'u'llah and a prophet, as the one cancelled the other out. Many who met 'Abdu'l-Bahá found it hard to believe that this gentle, saintly man was indeed not a prophet, which is why he changed his name from Abbas Effendi to 'Abdu'l-Bahá which means Servant of Baha so that people should know that his station was that of servitude and not prophethood. Simply put Baha'is do not hold that 'Abdu'l-Bahá was a prophet. Others outside of the Faith may believe differently that he was a prophet or heretic or whatever. But if one wants to present an accurate picture of the Faith then it is best that it is in align with what Baha'is actually believe. I have found that many "knowledgeable authorities" have written books/booklets on the Faith, based on their own limited understanding, without first confirming their assumptions. This tends to create a false and distorted picture, sort of like bad journalism.

I hope that I have not sounded too critical. My desire is merely to point out the finer details of the Faith, which I find beautiful, and I do not wish to appear that I am degrading your article which was very positive and informative. (Letter shortened-Ed.)

Daryl Allais
Lombardy East

You are so right in pointing out that people must be fair and factual in presenting information. We always try to do just that, and thank you for pointing some important things out to us. Case now closed.

It is interesting to note that not one single Old Testament prophet, forerunners of the Christian faith, contradicted or ever recalled any prophecy of a forerunner.

Hope you will find this Sentinel informative.

Ed.

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call His name Immanuel.” (Isaiah 7:14) “Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows. When His mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together (had sexual intercourse) she was found to be with child by the Holy Spirit...” Joseph, the man she was betrothed to, did not like this at all and decided to leave in secret but an angel appeared to him with a message, “...that which has been conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit...she will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for it is He who will save His people from their sins.” (Matt 1:18-21)

PROPHECY AND FULFILLMENT NO 2:

But as for you Bethlehem Ephrathah, too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you One will go forth...” (Micah 5:2) Green’s Modern KJV translation states that His [this coming One’s] days will be from eternity: “And you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, you being least among the thousands of Judah, out of you He shall come forth to Me, to become Ruler in Israel, He whose goings forth have been from of old, from the days of eternity.” Now we realise why He is called “Immanuel: God with us.” (Matt 1:23) Bear this point in mind as we will look at this later.

“Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king... (Matt 2:1) “And Joseph also went up...to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem...Mary was with child...and she gave birth to her first-born son.” The angels announced this to the shepherds: “for today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ [Messiah] the Lord.” (Luke 2:4,5,7,10 & 11)

PROPHECY AND FULFILLMENT NO 3:

“He was despised [held in contempt] and forsaken [shunned] of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; And like one from whom men hide their face, He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.” (Isaiah 53:3)

“He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him.” “I have come in My Father’s name, and you do not receive Me...” (John 1:11; 5:43)

PROPHECY AND FULFILLMENT NO 4:

“A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.” (Isaiah 53:3)

“Then He said to them, ‘My soul is deeply

grieved, to the point of death...’” (Matt 26:38)

PROPHECY AND FULFILLMENT NO 5:

“Surely our griefs He Himself bore, and our sorrows He carried...”

“In order that what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, saying, ‘He Himself took our infirmities and carried away our diseases.’” (Matt 8:17)

PROPHECY AND FULFILLMENT NO 6:

“But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities...” (Isaiah 53:5) “They pierced my hands and my feet.” (Ps 22:16)

“And when they came to the place called The Skull [Calvary, Golgotha], there they crucified Him...” (Luke 23:33) “But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately there came out blood and water.” (John 19:34)

PROPHECY AND FULFILLMENT NO 7:

“And [He] was numbered with transgressors.” (Isaiah 53:12)

“At that time two robbers were crucified with Him, one on the right and one on the left.” (Matt 27:38)

“And they crucified two robbers with Him, one on His right and one on His left.” (Mark 15:27)

“...they crucified Him and the criminals, on the right and the other on the left.” (Luke 23:33) “...crucified Him, and with Him two other men, one on either side, and Jesus in between.” (John 19:18)

PROPHECY AND

FULFILLMENT NO 8:

“The chastisement for our well-being fell upon Him, and by His scourging we are healed” (Isaiah 53:5)

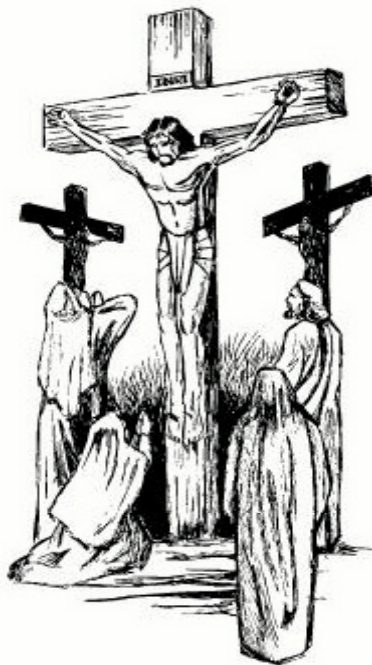
Green says it more clearly: “...the chastisement of our **peace** was on Him; and with His stripes we ourselves are healed.”

“And He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed.” (1 Peter 2:24)

PROPHECY AND FULFILLMENT NO 9:

“Like a lamb that is led to slaughter, and like a sheep that is silent before its shearers, so He did not open His mouth.” (Isaiah 53:7)

“And while He was being accused by the chief priests and the elders, He made no answer. Then Pilate said to Him, ‘Do You not hear how many things they testify against You?’ And he did not answer him with regard to even a single charge, so that the governor was quite amazed.” (Matt 27:12-14; also see 26:12-13)



MESSIAH’S DEATH

PROPHECY AND FULFILLMENT NO 10:

“...He was cut off out of the land of the living, for the transgression of my people to whom the stroke was due.” Green’s again: “For He was cut off out of the land of the living; for the transgression of My people He was stricken.” (Isaiah 53:8; see also Dan 9:26)

“...Because He poured out Himself to death...” (Isaiah 53:12)

“And Jesus, crying out with a loud voice, said, ‘Father, into Thy hands I commit My spirit.’ And having said this He breathed His last.”

Before this He called out: “It is finished!” (John 19:30) And indicated that the price God required as payment for sin was paid in full. He crossed out the invoice, so to speak, by writing (“Fully Settled”) on it. This offer was never to be repeated again. (Heb 9:14b,28; 10:12)

When Christ breathed His last, something else happened as well. He displayed His victory over Satan and his demons in the spirit world by dragging them along as prisoners, thus illustrating His crushing of the head of the serpent as promised to Adam and Eve. (Col 2:14,15) Naturally the final defeat of Satan will be when he and his followers are cast into the lake of fire. (Rev 20:10)

MESSIAH’S BURIAL

PROPHECY AND FULFILLMENT NO 11:

“His grave was assigned with wicked men, yet He was with a rich man in His death.” (Isaiah 53:9)

“And when it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who himself had also become a disciple of Jesus. This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate ordered that it be given over to him. And Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock;” (Matt 27:57-60; also see Mark 15:43)

MESSIAH’S RESURRECTION

PROPHECY AND FULFILLMENT NO 12:

“For Thou wilt not abandon my soul to Sheol; neither wilt Thou allow Thy Holy One to undergo decay.” (Ps 16:10)

“Brethren, I [Peter] may confidently say onto you regarding the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. And so, because he was a prophet, and knew that God had sworn to him with an oath to seat one of his descendants upon his throne, he looked ahead and spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that He was neither abandoned to Hades [Sheol], nor did His flesh suffer decay. This Jesus God raised up again, to which we are all witnesses.” (Acts 2:29-32)

PROPHECY AND FULFILLMENT NO 13:

“Yet it pleased the LORD to crush Him; to grieve Him; that He should put forth His

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soul as a guilt-offering. He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days.” (Isaiah 53:10, Green’s)

“And the angel answered and said to the women, ‘Do not be afraid; for I know that you are looking for Jesus who has been crucified. He is not here, for He has risen, just as He said. Come, see the place where He was lying.’” (Matt 28:5-6)

There are also views that these OT prophecies refer to the nation of Israel or one of the great men of old like Moses, Abraham or Cyrus. In Christian circles these have been applied to Jesus, however. You decide for yourself when you examine these and others closely.

DEALING WITH MESSIAH

Let us establish a basis first: “God is not a man, that He should lie, nor a son of man, that He should repent; Has He said, and will He not do it? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good? (Numbers 23:19) “In order that by two unchangeable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we may have strong encouragement, we who have fled for refuge in laying hold of the hope set before us...” (Hebrews 6:18) “[Christ] who committed no sin, nor was any deceit found in His mouth...” (1 Peter 2:22) It is clear from this that God cannot lie and neither did His Son sin or lie. So we have to come to the conclusion that we can trust Them and listen to and accept what They tell us.

When Jesus uttered the following words, we had better believe and accept it: “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but by Me.” (John 14:6) No wonder then that the Apostle tells us in Acts 4:12: “And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men, by which we must be saved.”

Let us recall for a moment the creation of man: God breathed the breath of life into him and this God-breathed part in every man, therefore, longs for contact with his Creator. Man thinks he is very clever and tries to establish this contact through various other ways, all false, as Satan is only too eager to make man think that he had found the way. Such a seeker may even have all kinds of experiences through gurus, yogis, mediums, ouija boards, crystals, sangomas, shamans, wicca practices, hypnotic regressions, meditation, Transcendental Meditation, Toronto-type experiences, gold dust, “holy oil” and other manifestations. People may even have their own spirit guides and regular angel contacts, Mary apparitions and even claims of Jesus having appeared to them, but if they do not have the real Jesus then they are lost forever. “He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life.” (1 John 5:12)

The question now is could there be *an-*

other Jesus? Sure! “For if someone comes and preaches *another* Jesus...” (2 Cor 11:4) then know for sure that you will also be lost for all eternity. “...He will convict the world concerning sin, and concerning righteousness, and concerning judgment...because they do not believe on Me...” (John 16:8-9, Green’s) Do not for one minute think that God will allow you into His Kingdom based on your performance—your works that you did in this life. “There is none who does good, there is not even one.” (Rom 3:12b) “For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, that no one should boast.” (Eph 2:8-9) Let us face it then—whatever works you try and please God with or find His favour will not work. Nevermind how many hours you go from door to door, or spend on street corners distributing tracts, magazines or whatever, even preaching the Gospel itself, **UNLESS your** relationship with the right Jesus is right all these things will be in vain. The Bible gives us a test: “Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith; examine yourselves! Or do you not recognize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you—unless indeed you fail the test?” (2 Cor 13:5)

Before you can even think of having the right relationship with Jesus you must have undergone something very important and Jesus laid this foundation: “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.” (John 3:5) This is the rebirth¹ (v.7), brought about by the Spirit, Who is like the wind—blows where it wishes. (v.8) The term “born of water” means the natural birth. Obviously if you have not come into this world you do not exist and there is nothing that requires salvation. Even as a newborn baby you have inherited the original sin of Adam and Eve, disobedience to God. To be saved you now require the birth by the Spirit.

Let us consider for a moment Jesus’ conception and birth. He was also born of water, but never required to be born of the Spirit. Why? “[Mary] was found to be with child by the Holy Spirit.” (Matt 1:18) We must bear in mind that He is God incarnate and, therefore, could not sin or lie. “...the Word became flesh [man], and dwelt among us...” (John 1:14) We have also seen that “His days are from eternity.” (Micah 5:2) He, therefore, had no beginning and Scripture tells us: “Before the mountains were born, or Thou didst give birth to the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting Thou art God.” (Ps 90:2) No wonder that we read: “O Jehovah God of armies, Who is vigorous like you, O Jah? And your faithfulness is all around you. You are ruling over the swelling of the sea, when it raises up you yourself calm them.” (Ps 89:8-9, Watch Tower Bible & Tract Society: *New World Translation of The Holy Scriptures* <NWT>, 1984; also see Ps 107: 25,29) “But as they were sailing along He [Jesus] fell asleep; and a fierce gale of wind descended upon the lake, and they began to be swamped and to be in danger. And they came

to Him and woke Him up, saying, ‘Master, Master, we are perishing!’ And being aroused, He rebuked the wind and the surging waves, and they stopped, and it became calm.” (Luke 8:23-24) Can we come to any other conclusion? Jesus is Who the Bible tells us: Very God of Very God! This is confirmed in many other places, but one of the strongest affirmations is found in Col 2:9, “For in Him ALL THE FULNESS OF DEITY dwells in BODILY form.” (Capitals ours.)

This brings us to another great mystery: God Himself through His Son paid the debt for our sins! This could only have happened through God becoming a man—a point we have already dealt with, but there is more to it. Did this mean that He stopped being God while He walked the earth as a mortal? Was He only a Man while on earth? This is the mystery of the incarnation. “...although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant and being made in the likeness of men. (Phil 2:6-7) Jesus is rightly called the Only-begotten (UNIQUE Greek = monogenes) Son of God. (John 1:18) there is none other like Him. That was also true when He walked this earth—He retained both natures, that of God and of man. These two natures were not intermingled, are not now and will never be. Now it is clear why the Jews wanted to stone Him for blasphemy (John 8:59), when He identified Himself as the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (vv.51-58), the One that appeared to Moses in the burning bush. (Ex 3:2-15). The Jews understood exactly what He meant, because their reaction is very clear in John 10:30-33. It now also makes sense why He will judge us as a Man. (Act 17:30-31) We will not be able to offer the excuse that we were mere men and could not withstand the devil and his temptations. (James 4:7)

PROMISE OF A NEW LIFE:

God promises us a new life. Jesus said, “I came so they might have life, and have it abundantly.” (John 10:10b) We can have the assurance of this new life now: “These things [about Jesus] I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, in order that you may know that you have eternal life.” (1 John 5:13) Note: Only those who believe in the name of the Son will have eternal life. Why is this so important? He is God as only God can give eternal life. This is well illustrated. God “bestowed on Him [Jesus] the name that is above every name.” (Phil 2:9. It does NOT read, “every [other] name” in the original and neither can it be derived from the context!) He is Yahweh! It is so well illustrated in the NWT: “‘Look! There are days coming,’ is the utterance of Jehovah, (no doubt who is speaking!) ‘and I will raise up to David a righteous sprout,² and a king will certainly reign and act with discretion and execute justice and righteousness in the land. In his days Judah will be saved

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and Israel itself will reside in security, And this is his (who? The Sprout/King who will be raised up) name with which he will be called, **Jehovah is Our righteousness.**” (Jer 23:5-6)

Further assurance comes from Jesus: “I go to prepare a place for you...[so that] where I am, there you may be also.” (John 14:2-3)

Are you certain that if you should die tonight you will have eternal life? If you should die tonight and stand before God and He would ask you, “Why must I allow you to enter into My kingdom?” What would you say?

GOD LOVES YOU:

“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that WHOEVER believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.” (John 3:16, capitals ours) “But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” (Rom 5:6,8)

We have agreed that neither God nor His Son can lie. So if this is true, then why do so many people search for *life* elsewhere. Why are so many people unsure of **this life**? Why do people so easily believe everyone that comes along with a new thing? “...the activity of Satan, with all power and signs and false wonders, and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved. And for this reason God will send upon them a deluding influence so that they might believe what is false...” (2 Thess 2:9-11) No wonder then that so many people are deceived by the present day signs and wonders and run after every new teacher or leader with a works oriented plan of salvation, a sign or wonder or manifestation, or some other exclusive revelation from God. Man thinks that because he is able with his money and abilities to acquire what he wants he can do the same for his soul. Satan plays along merrily and even comes disguised as an angel of light (2 Cor 11:14) He even gets his angels (demons) to appear to people in all kinds of deceptive apparitions which so many people then willingly accept as messengers from God. Listen to an ex-New Ager: “Only minutes after focusing on the crystal in a state of trance-like meditation, my consciousness was catapulted into electrifying domains of extra-natural light the likes of which I had never before perceived. The upper part of my head felt like it wasn’t there, like it had become invisible, as my awareness raced upwards at the speed of light. From a high distance, I could see in my mind’s eye that my body was trembling and shaking as the power of experience rattled through it.” Later this light proved to be Satan’s deception! (Randall N. Baer, *Inside the New Age Nightmare*, Huntington House Inc., 1989, p.25)

GOD GIVES IT FREE!

The true life is a free Gift of God! It is not something that can be earned by our good behaviour or works or regular church attendance

or being an active member of the group you belong to. No!

“For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Rom 6:23) “For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is a free gift of God; not as a result of works, that no one should boast.” (Eph 2:8-9)

MAN CANNOT REDEEM HIMSELF:

Man was not made to be God’s robot. He gave him a will and free choice. The Garden of Eden escapade illustrates this. You make the choices! Do not one day blame God when you find yourself in the wrong place. He now stands at the door of your heart and He knocks. The handle is on your side—you have to open the door to let Him in.

“All have turned aside, together they have become useless, there is none who does good, there is not even one...for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Rom 3:12,23) Our sins are an obstruction between God and us. “But your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He does not hear.” (Isaiah 59:2) The result: “And these will pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power.”

GOD’S ANSWER:

God bridged the gap of sin through His Son, Jesus Christ. “By this the love of God was manifested in us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him.” (1 John 4:9) So many people lay stress on the “God is love” part but forget the other side of God. He is also eternally righteous and His own law requires that “the wages of sin is death.” God, therefore, has to punish sin with eternal separation from Him in a place where there will be eternal pain and anguish: “...cast into hell, where their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched.” (Matt 8:12; Mark 9:48) Again, these are Jesus’ words. If this is not true then He deceived us, and we have to reject everything He said. There are two places where people will spend eternity: One of eternal peace and and the other of eternal punishment. Consider for a moment, “if God could have forgiven one sin of one person as an act of mere kindness, He would have compromised His own holiness which demands judgment for sin. Having thus compromised Himself with sin, He would need Himself to be saved because of the unrighteous thing He had done. He would by such kindness, have established a principle by which He could forgive all human sin as an act of mere clemency, and thus the death of Christ is rendered unnecessary...if God could save one soul from one sin by mere generosity, He could save all souls from sin by generosity and the death of Christ thus becomes the greatest possible divine blunder.” (Lewis C Sperry: *Systematic Theology, Vol 4*, Dallas Seminary Press, 1971:432-433)

You can have the assurance now as “...there

is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.” (1 Tim 2:5) He is “the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.” But still not all will taste a life in eternity with Him. Why?

FAITH IN JESUS:

You have to accept Him as your only Lord and Saviour and believe that He died for your sins: “Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes on Me has everlasting life.” (John 6:47, Green’s) This does not mean all kinds of electricity running through you or flashing lights or other experiences. You have to take God on His word. “But as many as received him, to them gave He the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His [Jesus’] name.” (John 1:12) “Therefore, if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.” (2 Cor 5:17) Take the step—“Repent, therefore and return, that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord.” (Acts 3:19)

WHAT MUST NOW BE DONE?

Are you willing to acknowledge that you are a sinner, in need of salvation, and you cannot save yourself?

Are you willing to trust in Jesus alone, accept, God’s free gift of eternal life and renounce that you can achieve it through works?

Are you willing to give your whole life and everything you have over to Jesus and let the Holy Spirit forthwith take control?

Then accept: “All that the Father gives Me, shall come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out.”

He stands at the door right now and knocks! Do you want to invite Him in?

Then pray this prayer:

“Lord Jesus, I acknowledge that I am a lost sinner. I thank You for dying for my sins and lay all my sins (name them) at Your feet and ask for Your forgiveness. I open the door of my heart for You to come in and cleanse me of all my sin. Take control of my life which I subject to the Holy Spirit. I thank You my Saviour for coming in and that I am now a child of God. Amen.

Your rebirth has now taken place and you are now a new creation. Live like one!

Should you now wonder or have some doubts, then remember: God does not lie—so take Him on His word: “He who has the Son has the life; he who has not the Son of God has not the life. I have put these things in writing for you who have faith in the name of the Son of God, so that you may be certain that you have eternal life.” (1 John 5:12-13, 1965 Bible in Basic English)

Footnotes:

¹ Can also be translated: “From above.”

² Scripture tells us Who this sprout is. (Isaiah 11:1)
