

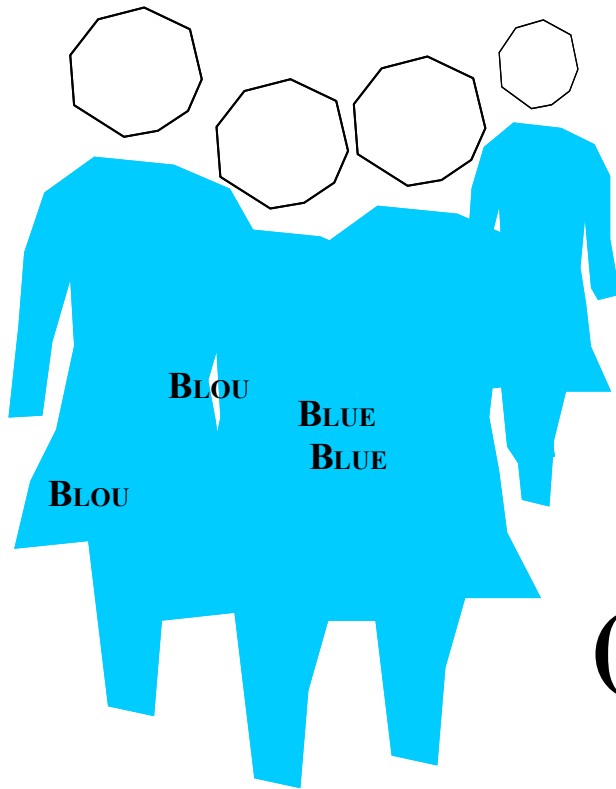


Sentinel

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1st Qtr 2003



THE LATTER RAIN MISSION ("BLOU ROKKE")

ORIGIN:

This religious group had its beginnings in South Africa under the leadership of Maria Martha Fraser whom they call their founder. Their golden jubilee publication, *Spade Reën Sending van S.A., 1927-1977* (hereafter *SRS*), tells on page 11 of "how a Holy Spirit Light (Spade Reën/Latter Rain) was born in December 1927 to Maria and ten other believers after a nine month period of prayer and fasting." According to her the Lord revealed in this prophecy that "he would establish a work where all the gifts of the Holy Spirit would operate freely, a work after the Lord's heart, where sin would not be able to persist." (M. Fraser, *Faith of Life*, p.13) In one of many other revelations or visions she was shown the distinctive blue dress which gave rise to the nick name "Blou Rokke/Blue Dresses". *SRS* also states that the difference between Latter Rain

and other pentecostal movements is more in degree than in essence. (p.12) They aim to:

1. Comply with the full Gospel of Jesus Christ, to bring it to others and inspire them so that they can walk according to it.
2. Strive towards holiness and a spiritual rebirth so as to reach the life in Christ which is required of a member of the Bride of Christ at His return.
3. As the Holy Spirit is the Teacher of this congregation, He must at all times be given the opportunity to reveal the will of God through the spiritual gifts (1 Cor 12).
4. To strive towards a continuous outpouring of the New Testament Spade (latter) rain.
5. Extend all possible help to those who strive towards worthiness so as to

escape the forthcoming perils over this earth and be worthy to stand before the Son of Man.

6. As members of the body (with Christ as Head) be submissive in childlike manner to Him and to trust in Him not only for the spiritual but the material as well.

Mrs Fraser was a member of the Apostolic Faith Mission (AFM) church before the split. This was brought about by her accusing the AFM of "not only stifling the Spirit of God, but also of individual moral findings on the part of its lesser officials. According to her own account the various prophecies or visions were always justified [and so] she met with increasing opposition from the leaders of the AFM." (Walter J. Hollenweger, *The Pentecostals*, Hendrickson Publishers, 1988:140)

Continued on page 6



Sentinel is die lyfblad 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

Skrifaaanhalings, tensy anders vermeld, is uit die 1983 Afrikaanse Vertaling/Scripture quotations, unless stated otherwise, are from the NASB. Disclaimer: The publication of any article does not mean that CIEC necessarily agrees with or condones all the viewpoints of the writer.

Alhoewel **KIES** as arm van die Ned Geref Gemeente Edleen funksioneer is ons verantwoordelik vir ons eie finansiering en is dus ten volle afhanklik van die vrywillige donasies van *Sentinel* se lesers en ander ondersteuners.

Redaksioneel/Editorial

CANNOT BELIEVE IT!!

Well what do you know. This long-promised *Sentinel* finally became reality. After a year of silence and a delay in getting it out in the 1st qtr of 2003 you now have it in your hands. The main article is about the "Blou Rokke", our response to the many enquiries we had about this local religious group, well known for the distinctive blue dress the women wear. We promise that issue no 2 for this year will follow soon. The main article will be about British Israelism. This is very much a result of the letter about the Alon-cult at Tzaneen and quite a number of enquiries about this subject we have received.

For various reasons we could not manage to publish the remaining three editions during last year to make up the full number of four editions. We kept on promising ourselves that we will catch up but eventually so much time had past that it just remained a promise we could not fulfill, and in the process really felt bad about letting you our readers and supporters down. Finally we accepted the inevitable, that it may be good to see 2002 as a sabbatical as far as writing and publishing a newsletter was concerned. In hind sight this proved to be a good thing and we can see the hand of the Lord in this.

The main bonus we got out of this was that we could concentrate in learning how to develop and design a website and started to work on our very own website. It saw the first light during July, underwent some changes and can be found in its present form at

<http://www.gksa.org.za/kies>

In addition we also compiled our first CD which contains a wealth of information including our 300 page *Kulte Evangeliseringhandleiding*. Information can be found on the website. However for those of you who do not have access to the internet, the CD is available at the ridicu-

lously low price of R100,00 excluding postage and packaging. If you compare this with the current price of a hard copy of the cult guide of R200,00 then you are really getting more than your money's worth.

Having set up a website certainly proved to be the right decision as people are now able to find much of the information they phone or write to us about directly on the website. This has proved to be a great time saver to us. Not that we do not want to hear from you, but responding to all the enquiries just took up so much time that other things began to suffer.

We hope that you will enjoy this edition and like me, cannot wait for the next one.

As we have a suspicion that you may have let your subscription lapse we have sent you this copy but stamped your envelope "Complimentary". You will then not receive future editions, but may ensure that you do, if you prefer, by sending us a renewal note to confirm your details. **If your envelope is not stamped, then we thank you very much, you are on the current mailing list.**

Cult Awareness Weekend Camp

Once again we will have a weekend camp dealing with various cult issues

Date: 15-17 August

**Venue: Baptist Training Centre, Roodepoort
Programme: To be announced**

Editors:

Japie Grobler (*Sentinel*).
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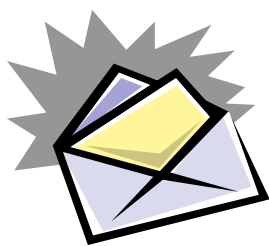
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Letters/Briewe

Different Opion

It is good to hear you are still in the cult-busting business.

Thank you for the preliminary copy of the article about the Latter Rain Mission of SA. I cannot really say they are a cult, at least not for the reasons the article proposes. For example, it is my contention that there is a place for New Testament revelation, provided it is in line with the Word.

I think that to be fair to these people you consider some modifications based on my thoughts below:

For example, the practice of confessing sin to a fellow Christian is not necessarily incorrect. Sometimes one has to be confronted by someone else with one's sin. Take the case of David and Nathan. After this David prayed that the Holy Spirit not be taken from him (Psalm 51). So why did the Holy Spirit not convict him of his sin with Bathsheba? Why did Nathan have to do it? I agree that it should not be a demand on all church members all the time, when it can become a tool of control, but the principle is not necessarily incorrect.

Likewise, concerning deliverance - this is definitely a New Testament practice. Deliverance and speaking in tongues are the only practices that one finds only in the New Testament, so the church can hardly ignore them. They are in fact hallmarks of the New Testament age. (I realise you bring deliverance in as a side issue, and not in connection with the Blou Rokke)

Concerning their practice of ridding areas of demonic influence. I have been in places where satanic rights have been practiced. If the gift of discernment of spirits operates, and/or the word of knowledge, you know that there are evil things hanging about. Even the natural man has knowledge of such things. And

as they are trespassing on Jesus's territory (all authority in Heaven and Earth has been given to Him), we tell them "get thee hence" as he told Satan in the wilderness. Every place on which our foot shall tread, he has given to us. I think it is a question of relative power - the church at Pergamos was not strong enough to dispell the presence of Satan's seat, admittedly. But that does not mean as a general principle we are to let Satan rule us. Our command is rather that we resist him and he will flee. And as for him as for his demons.

I would rather say the Blou Rokke are in error for other reasons, not mentioned in the article:

1. It was started by a woman, and woman may not hold leadership office. To me the scripture is clear that apostles, prophets, pastors, teachers, evangelists and elders must be men. Women may prophesy, as Agabus's daughters did, but they may not hold the office of prophet.
2. They separated themselves from the rest of the church.

Regards
Edgar Bradley

Four Ways
(We are not really in the cult-busting business. The essence of our ministry is to spread the true Gospel of Jesus Christ yet exposing deception, as called upon by the Word of God.

Ed)

You're wrong about TBJ!!!

Just writing a small letter to you concerning T.B Joshua in your web page. There are a few matters that concern me, no. 1 would be were any of you ever there in Lagos or are you simply getting information about him?

Secondly would be, have any of you ever prayed for revival and what do you think will happen in revival for example demons coming out? (by the way Jesus himself said one kingdom cannot be divided against another). Then there is the testing of the Spirits (Does he

confess Jesus as healer? Not the water Spirits). In my opinion he does.

Then thirdly. To me the ultimate would be to give Satan credit for a miracle that God has done. That is downright blasphemous and absolutely in the same class as a cult or even worse.

I am so concerned that groups are raising up all over shooting down others they have no clue about. Then the question arises, did God ever raise up ministries that seek to destroy others? Yes test them and I am so convinced in The Name of Jesus My Lord and Savior that you personally don't even know TB Joshua that is the saddest. Then there is a scripture where Jesus said (sure you would find it easily since you so are educated on these matters) I have come to do well (in other words heal you, deliver you, save you) FOR WHICH ONE OF THESE DO YOU WANT TO STONE ME?

Conrad Kruger (E-mail)

Nuwe Kulte!

Ek wil julle aandag graag daarop vestig dat daar 'n nuwe kulte is wat sterk besig is om mense te lok. Die naam is Alon en hulle basis is in Tzaneen.

Julle kan kyk by www.alon.org

Hulle het klaar my ouers en twee van my broers. Hulle hoofdoel is om jong mense na hulle te trek, en dan hulle families in te trek en te werf en wat gewoonlik al hulle eiendom en finansiële bates aan die groep bemaak, met die dekmantel dat hulle hulle kinders gered het van dwelms, alkohol ens., en kyk hoe goed gaan dit nou met hulle kinders. Hulle sny alle familie af, verbied hulle om met familieleden te praat wat nie soos hulle glo nie, en oordeel dan daarvolgens. Hulle glo dat alle mense wat nie aan hulle organisasie behoort nie, eendag aan hulle hekke gaan kom ruk om in te kan gaan. Hulle is glad nie by hulle volle positiewe nie, en ek wil net graag mense waarsku teen hulle.

Mag God hulle insig en wysheid gee sodat hulle oë oopgaan.

(Per Epos. Naam weerhou om skywer te beskerm-Red)

The question is....

Does a Christian expose the works of darkness and deception and heresy, or does he leave the workers of iniquity be as he can do nothing about it, and after all revenge is God's? That is the question!

When an individual or an organisation is called by the Lord into the special ministry of dealing with heresy and deception and reaching out to those who are deceived by another gospel, another Jesus and another spirit, it certainly is not an easy task. First of all there is the great burden of ensuring that the true gospel must be preached. This cannot be done unless the one responsible for spreading the good news has the Good News himself and has accepted Jesus as His Lord and will listen to His voice and His voice alone.

Secondly there is the great chance that people will be upset and harmony will be disrupted. In essence one will tread on toes and some of them will be very sensitive. During this process one has to guard against the self which is normally set on revenge, smugness or self-assertion rather than the shining-through of Christ's love for the searching, possibly confused but lost soul. How does he handle all of this?

Why not do what we all do when we buy a new piece of equipment—read the instructions? The Handbook for Christians contains various examples and many are those of our Perfect Example, Jesus Christ. While we are far from perfect we can still learn very valuable lessons from His dealings with the heretics and the workers of iniquity of His time. Then there are the apostles. They were mere men like us who were also faced with demoniacs, heretics, false apostles and teachers and their likes.

Let us look at only a very few of the examples of Jesus' dealing with these things: His greatest test was when Satan tried to deceive Him in the wilderness with very deceptive reasoning—every time Jesus quoted from the Word of God. In other words He not only relied on the Word, but also considered it as the ultimate truth and in the process pointed out to Satan how he twisted the truth to suit his own

agenda.

On numerous occasions He was questioned by the *clever* theologians of His time—the scribes and pharisees. And in more than one instance He answered their questions with counter questions, which shut them up, and quite probably forced them back to Scripture and deeper contemplation. With regards to their questioning of His identity we find examples in Matthew 22:42-46, "What is your opinion of the Christ? whose son is he? They say to him, The Son of David. He says to them, How then does David in the Spirit give him the name of Lord, saying, The Lord said to my Lord, Be seated at my right hand, till I put under your feet all those who are against you? If David then gives him the name of Lord, how is he his son? And no one was able to give him an answer, and so great was their fear of him, that from that day no one put any more questions to him." (*Bible in Basic English, BBE*) Then there is John 8:48-59 when He was even accused of having a devil, "The Jews said to him in answer, Are we not right in saying that you are of Samaria and have an evil spirit? And this was the answer of Jesus: I have not an evil spirit; but I give honour to my Father and you do not give honour to me. I, however, am not in search of glory for myself: there is One who is searching for it and he is judge. Truly I say to you, If a man keeps my word he will never see death. The Jews said to him, Now we are certain that you have an evil spirit. Abraham is dead, and the prophets are dead; and you say, If a man keeps my word he will never see death. Are you greater than our father Abraham, who is dead? and the prophets are dead: who do you say that you are? Jesus said in answer, If I take glory for myself, my glory is nothing: it is my Father who gives me glory, of whom you say that he is your God. You have no knowledge of him, but I have knowledge of him; and if I said I have no knowledge of him I would be talking falsely like you: but I have full knowledge of him, and I keep his word. Your father Abraham was full of joy at the hope of seeing my day: he saw it and was glad. Then the Jews said to him,

You are not fifty years old; have you seen Abraham? Jesus said to them, Truly I say to you, Before Abraham came into being, I am. So they took up stones to send at him: but Jesus got secretly out of their way and went out of the Temple." (*BBE*) In these two examples He not only confirmed that He was the promised One, but also that He was God's Son and very God of very God, that is why they took up stones to stone Him—the law required death by stoning when anyone claimed to be God. They knew and understood exactly what He meant by the words, "Before Abraham came into being, I am."

Finally we have examples where He called them workers of iniquity, white sepulchres, vipers and even children of the devil, as we have seen from the above. (See Matthew 12:34; Luke 13:10-27 for instance.)

We also have examples from the apostles who did not tolerate heretics or false teachers. Some of them, like the prophets of the Old Testament, also called them by name and Paul in his first epistle to Timothy even gave some over to Satan: "This order I give to you, Timothy my son, in harmony with the words of the prophets about you, so that by them you may be strong, fighting the good fight, Keeping faith, and being conscious of well-doing; for some, by not doing these things, have gone wrong in relation to the faith: Such are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I have given up to Satan, so that they may say no more evil words against God." (1 Tim 1:18-20, *BBE*)

It is clear from these few examples that the apostles in true fashion after their Lord and Master did not tolerate deception, heresy and false teachers. Not only Paul, but Peter, John and some of the other apostles warn the new church against false teachers and appeal to them that they must hold onto the truth and guard against deception. We also learn from the examples of Jesus and the apostles that they did not ignore deception and heresy because it existed and they thought they could not change things or people's minds but spoke out against it nevertheless. It was up to the hearers to decide what they would do about it. Also look at Jesus' warnings in Matthew 24; Luke 21 and Mark 13 again.

In the Great Commission our Lord commanded His followers to “Go then, and make disciples of all the nations, giving them baptism in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit: Teaching them to keep all the rules which I have given you...” (Matthew 29:19, *Green’s Literal Translation*) This is our first and most important calling, but...

Then we also see, “Do not be turned from the right way by foolish words; for because of these things the punishment of God comes on those who do not put themselves under him. Have no part with such men; For you at one time were dark, but now are light

in the Lord: let your behaviour be that of children of light (Because the fruit of the light is in all righteousness and in everything which is good and true), Testing by experience what is well-pleasing to the Lord; And have no company with the works of the dark, which give no fruit, but make their true quality clear; For the things which are done by them in secret it is shame even to put into words. But all things, when their true quality is seen, are made clear by the light: because everything which is made clear is light.” (Eph 5:6-13, *BBE*)

What then about *love your neighbour; turn the other cheek and other similar utterances?* Must we tolerate

all kinds of unacceptable things, false teachings, even plain deception and heresy because we should show to the world that Christians are loving caring people? Is it OK to let your child, other family member, friend, colleague at work or neighbour go to hell because he is involved in all kinds of unsavoury things, just because you love him, care about him and do not want to risk upsetting him? That, certainly is not what was meant by our Lord. It is precisely the opposite. Because you love him you have to warn, expose, inform and above all preach the great and wonderful news about the Gospel of Jesus Christ!

Counterfeit vs the genuine



The copy above of a R100,00 note has one small flaw, making it a counterfeit. Do you spot it?

This is exactly how false teachers, and deception works. They will mix their untruths, be it very subtle or gross, with Biblical truth and present it as Christian. Naturally any obvious deception will be spotted by most but the very ignorant Christians. The danger lies in the subtle deception the various leaders and groups employ. As most Christians are not very familiar with their Bibles and even less so with the orthodox Christian doctrines, they quite easily become prey for the cults. The ± 12M Mormons, 6M Jehovah’s Witnesses, 1Billion Catholics and millions of people belonging to the vast array of other cults are proof of this. Whether the deception is great or small it works just like poison.

If poison is taken in small doses it will take longer to kill you, but death is inevitable. Religious deception does not kill you physically but it will cause spiritual death—so that when you die physically you will end up in the place of eternal torment.

Subtle deception also has the habit of blinding you to the truth so that more deception can be introduced as you go along without you noticing it. The longer a person is involved with deception the harder it becomes for him to see the light.

Let us look at a few examples of deception:

The Watchtower Bible & Tract Society (Jehovah’s Witnesses): Jesus Christ is Michael the archangel, who came invisibly in 1914.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons): You can become a

god, live on your own planet with your goddess wives and spawn an endless number of spirit children.

Roman Catholicism: After death you end up in purgatory from which their is escape either through your living relatives’ paying of penances or when you have spent the allotted time there.

The New Age: You have the Christ principle in you and in essence is a god—just realise it. The Word Faith Movement with Kenneth Hagin as “father” also teach that man is a god. It may be written with a little “g” but is nevertheless heretical and unbiblical.

Obviously the answer is: School yourself thoroughly in the truth so that you can spot the counterfeit even in the dark and combat it with the truth.

Latter Rain: From page 1

These all led to the eventual intervention of the leaders of the AFM. An ultimatum was sent to Mrs Fraser and her followers to cease their various practices, some of which were the uncovering of sin and publication of the *Spade Reën Boodskapper (Latter Rain Messenger)*. Naturally Mrs Fraser and her faithful followers refused and they were excommunicated. Eviction, with force and the help of the police, from AFM chapels followed. The public auction of their properties, for the most part built with their own money, and the restriction by the AFM that such properties must not be sold to Latter Rain members, did not deter them and they proceeded to acquire a piece of land in 1928 on which their first “faith home”, Jatniël—a name given by God, arose. In December 1976 Mrs Smalberger, then moderator, cut the ribbon at the official inauguration of their magnificent temple. Just a year later a second home, Jizreel, was opened in Pretoria. By 1933, according to their own sources, they had spread across the whole of South Africa.

At these as at other faith homes which stand as “light houses of prayer, spiritual education and edification” around the world they accommodate married couples and single people to which they, among various other material needs, also provide meals in the community dining room, do the laundry and repair residents’ motor vehicles. Most of the fresh produce and dairy products are produced on their properties. All their literature, mostly written by the late Dr AV Krige, who left the University of Stellenbosch in 1929 to join them, are given away free. He is credited with the establishing of their own printing works at Jatniël.

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VISIONS LEAD TO DOCTRINE:

After Maria Fraser’s divine healing in August 1920 she just longed for day

and night contact with God. During a train journey a few days later to Benoni she became aware of an extremely bright and piercing light shining in her compartment. A heavenly peace came over her and she came to the conviction to stop wearing any jewelry or modern clothes. At this time she also received a strong need to pray and spent hours during the nights on her face in tears and prayer and learned the necessity and importance of the confession of



MARIA FRASER

all of her sins. It was also revealed to her that she should be baptised in water whereafter she also received the baptism of the Spirit. It was during these prayer sessions that God revealed to her one of their central doctrines; the confession of sins before a witness. In 1926 she received from God guidance to introduce the gifts and offices of the Holy Spirit (Eph 4:11-16) in all congregations to the perfection of the saints to enable their more complete functioning. Later, in March 1927, she was called by the Holy Spirit, *speaking in tongues and interpretation*, to meet every morning at 10:00 in prayer so that God could educate them in His ways. During one of these sessions she tells of how she was taken up in the spirit and shown an altar with burning coals and an angel touched her lips, exactly like Isaiah (Is 6:6,7). This was when she was commissioned by God with a specific message to the heads of the Pentecostal movement which eventually led to the split and actions described above.

One source states that Dr Krige, in response to a letter to him, said they have no doctrines and that the difference between them and other Pentecostals, like the Full Gospel Church, is that they allow the Holy Spirit complete freedom to lead, teach and control them, in their personal lives and especially in their services and prayer meetings. Nevertheless, from their various writings we can safely conclude

that they do have some doctrines.

New Revelations: From what we have already touched on it is clear that with them as with many other sects and cults *revelations* are characteristic and play an important, oftentimes crucial, role. Such revelations led to the splitting away from the AFM, the purchase of specific places for faith homes, their name, the distinctive dress, the confession of sins before a witness, the revelation of sin by the Holy Spirit, etc.

Opposed to this the Word of God teaches that God had revealed Himself once for all through His Son Jesus Christ (Heb 1:1) and that it is confirmed in 2 Tim 3:16,17. No new revelations will follow or are necessary and all additions to His Word are sin and punishable (Rev 22:18,19). Please also read Jeremiah 23:32-40.

Baptism: They believe in adult baptism through immersion but with a difference. The Holy Spirit showed them that those wishing to be baptised and who are approved to receive baptism are baptised according to their own preferences: single or threefold immersion. Fraser, however, believed that the church should recognise threefold immersion.

Blue Dress: After a long period of fasting and prayer the Lord showed her “the ‘blue dress’, telling [her] that He wished [them] to wear that, as the Lord wanted us to be isolated from the world and honourably clad. Together with the blue dress with its long sleeves, its high neck with collar, [they] should wear black shoes and stockings, but nothing was to be made of silk. (M Fraser: *Faith of Life*: 21-22, as quoted in Holweger: 141) The blue dress was laid down for the six weekdays and the same in white for Sundays.” (This sentence is missing in the English and Afrikaans versions but contained in the German version of Fraser: *Persönliche Ehrfahrungen* (Personal Experiences): no date: 24, Holweger: 141) In their Jubilee publication it is stated: “The white dress symbolizes purity, righteousness and peace, and the blue does not only refer to the colour of heaven but the Jewish history where the high priest wore a breastplate as part of his official dress with the twelve precious stones which represented the twelve tribes of Israel. The colour of the stone for Judah was turquoise. (emerald, Ex



THE MODERATOR: MRS SJ SMALBERGER

28:18) Each tribe had its own colours (standard/banner); that of Judah was blue like heaven.” The question is then asked: “Now what relationship does the tribe of Judah has with the blue colour?” They answer: “We know that the Lord Jesus was born of the tribe of Judah and when a person is re-born he becomes co-heir with Christ (Gal 4:4-7) and are thus spiritually born into the tribe of Judah. If we are then born spiritually why can we not make the colour that represents Judah our own?”

DOCTRINES:

They do believe in the primary orthodox Christian doctrines, like the Triune God, salvation only through the Name of Jesus Christ, a heavenly home for all those in Jesus Christ, hell as a place of eternal torment for those who rejected the blood of Christ.

Their beliefs seem to indicate that salvation for them is not through grace alone but also by works. This is clear from the blue dress and separation idea, the continuous confession of sins before witnesses and the doing of good works.

They also practice the cleansing of areas by going about the grounds, buildings and rooms on a regular basis and symbolically *riding* such places of demons or demonic influences and calling the blood of Jesus down on such areas. Nowhere in the New Testament church can an example of this practice be found.

CRITIQUE:

It was stated above, more specifically by Dr Krige in his response to a letter to him, that they allow the Holy Spirit complete freedom. The question is: Does the Almighty God need man’s permission to act in any church meeting, the life of any individual or at any moment anywhere? The Bible is clear on more than one occasion that the Holy Spirit acts as He wills (Acts 2:4, 14; 13:2, 4; 1 Cor 12:4-11), but always in complete harmony with the will of the Father and the Son. The Holy Spirit also did not come out of His own free will but the Father and the Son sent Him. “But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom **the Father will send** in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.” (John 14:16,26) “But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom **the Father will send in my name**, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you. But when the Comforter is come, whom **I will send unto you from the Father**, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me...” (John 15:26) When we as mere humans call on God the Holy Spirit it must not be to fulfil our selfish desires as this would be tantamount to Simon the sorcerer who, when he saw what the apostles did, desired to buy this power. (Acts 8:14-23) God is supreme and sovereign. He acts according to His perfect will as and when it pleases Him. He has never been a marionette that we can manipulate by pulling one or other string.

Their practice of an individual being separated in a room where he or she is put under great psychological pressure to search for and dig deep in the self to find any possible hidden sins and then to confess these before two or more witnesses is a gross distortion of verses like Luke 12:2, “For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known”, and James 5:16, “Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.”

When we look closely at these two verses they use in support of their practice which is not quite biblical we no-

tice a typical cult practice: Take two or more scriptures, use them completely out of context, then connect them and so get support for your point. The first verse deals with what would happen at the second coming of our Lord. Whatever people did during their earthly life will all be exposed—even the most innermost thoughts. The second does not speak about sins but about those things a person did that caused another person to be hurt in one way or another. More light is cast on this by Jesus’ own words in Matthew 5:23-24, “Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.” Does it make sense that this gift is what we read in Romans 12:1, “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.”

Not only is the Bible clear on the issue of the confession of sins but Jesus told us what to do: “But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.” (Matthew 6:6) This ties in with Mark 6:7 “...who can forgive sins but God only?” A clearer example cannot be found than in Luke 18:9-14: “And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: ‘Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.’” God deals with our sin that we bring to Him (Ps 32:1-5) in a very differ-



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ent way as we see in Micah 7:19, "...thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea" and Jeremiah 31:34: "...I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." After all, this is exactly why the Son of God became a Man—to pay for all of our sin, past, present and future—in Him (Jesus Christ) we are justified before God. That is why the Roman system of confession before a priest—and we have the same in this group—is wrong and unbiblical! It becomes a never ending circle of confession upon confession—what assurance can man give? Let the Roman doctrine as published in the *Council of Trent* serve as a warning: "If anyone says that after reception of the grace of justification the guilt is so remitted and the debt of eternal punishment so blotted out to every repentant sinner, that no debt of temporal punishment remains to be discharged either in this world or in Purgatory before the gates of Heaven can be opened, let him be anathema." (Canon 30) God knows the heart of man (Matthew 12:25), that is why He says to those who think they are righteous, "I will reveal your righteousness and your works, and they will not benefit you." (Is 56:12, *Green's Literal Translation*)

It is clear that confessing sins to and before earthly priests/witnesses means nothing—it has to be taken to God and Him alone. We cannot trust our feelings. When we feel down it could force us to think that it is one or other sin we have not confessed and so back into the room we go to search for and confess something that does not exist under the watchful eyes, alert ears or probing words of the two or three witnesses so that we can come out of there feeling better, uplifted and healed. The church could be making itself guilty of this same control today as the practice of deliverance is becoming more common in orthodox churches. Gone are the days where a person is convinced in his heart by the Holy Spirit that he is a sinner and then goes to God in deep reproach to confess his sins, which God graciously forgives and does not think of anymore. No we have to play our part and really FEEL our sins are forgiven. And so we run to one or other person that practices deliverance so we can be helped to work through all our sins of the past—even the sins of ancestors have to be realised—so that we can arrive at a point where we can truly feel clean and that our sins are now behind us.

Can we no longer accept the fact that when we have accepted God's grace, confessed our sins and left it at the foot of the cross, that Jesus' blood covers all sins? Why do we still want to play a role in this process and not accept God's words? Look at Ephesians 2:89 again: "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast."

Can you imagine the amount of control or influence that can be obtained over a person when you know his or her innermost secrets?

IN CLOSING:

In contrast to many millions of orthodox Christians and like so many other members of sects the members of this group are also very serious about their beliefs and how they go about it. Like other sect members they are an example of zealousness and sincerity to many orthodox Christians. However, it is not sincerity or zealousness that guarantees a person access to God's heaven, but having a personal relationship with Him through His Son Jesus Christ.
