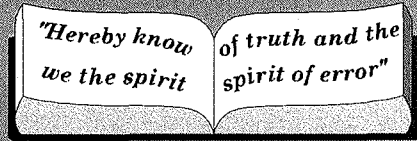


The Discerner



Volume 16, Number 4

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AN INTERDENOMINATIONAL HERESY-EXPOSING QUARTERLY

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EDITORIAL

By William A. BeVier

In each issue of The Discerner we attempt to present current happenings in our areas of ministry, plus give a perspective from the past and from Scripture.

In this issue we complete the series on the fifty year history of Religion Analysis Service. My Wife has reviewed all the existing records of R.A.S. in the preparation of these articles. We trust these articles have been beneficial and informative.

We also have been featuring articles from past issues of The Discerner coinciding with the period covered in each part of the history series. This time we have selected an article by Victor and Deborah Khalil on Islam. It is a fitting introduction to a series we are beginning on this subject.

Since 1990 and the overthrow of Communism in the USSR many Americans have visited the former Soviet Union. However, most have stayed only a few weeks or months and have not been capable of analyzing from a Biblical perspective what is going on in that part of the world. Beth Yugovich, a Northwestern College graduate, has recently returned from two years in Moldova

as a teacher. She previously has written an article on the New Age Movement for The Discerner (Jan, Feb, Mar 1994) and was asked to give her impressions from her observations there. Moldova, most of which was once known as Bessarabia, is located SW of the Ukraine and E of Romania. Beth lived in a small town some distance from the capital city while she was there; she experienced life at the level of most of the people in that nation.

There is much being said and written today about relationships between Protestants and Roman Catholics. We need to keep in mind that all called "Protestants" are not alike. We even apply terms like Fundamentalists, Conservatives, Evangelicals, Mainline, Liberals, and Modernists attempting to describe some of the differences (and they are real and many). One also can find differences and distinctions among Roman Catholics, some to the point that individuals are excommunicated (including bishops and priests). The major issues today seem to be among individuals identified as "Evangelical Protestants" and a group of "moder-

ate" Roman Catholics attempting to find how much they have in common and minimizing or ignoring basic differences. David Cook, one of our Board members, has prepared a carefully documented article based on the Apostle Paul's epistles setting forth basic differences between historic Protestantism and traditional official Roman Catholicism.

Because of the impact Islam is having on the world today and the apparent lack of knowledge in the Western world about this religion, we are beginning in this issue a series on the subject. Many do not realize that Jesus, Abraham, Moses, etc. are mentioned many times in the Koran (the "holy book" of Islam) along with hundreds of other references to the Bible. As our articles will point out, Islam is the product of a combination of corrupted Christianity, corrupted Judaism, and pagan, polytheistic, idolatrous Arab religion.

We have one book review included in this issue of The Discerner. The book is a good contribution to the ongoing dispute about the origin of Pretribulationism.

We are grateful for the continuing financial support of R.A.S. Without the help of many people the ministry could not continue. We especially appreciate those of you who send in a gift along with your subscriptions to The Discerner. As we have come to the end of the calendar year and those of us in the U.S. are soon to be faced with reporting our 1996 income taxes, perhaps a special gift to R.A.S would reduce the amount we need to pay to I.R.S. The Lord spoke to His disciples about placing treasures for themselves in heaven rather on earth (Mt. 6:19-21). He said our heart is really where our treasures are located. The Lord said to render to Caesar what is his, but also to give unto God the things that are His (Mt. 22:21).

FIFTY YEARS OF HISTORY (Part 4)

By Jo Ann BeVier

In the last 20 years the ministry of R.A.S. continued at a slow but steady pace. The office moved a second time, this time to the Podany Building on Lake Street in Minneapolis. The move was made in September, 1975.

After 22 years of ministry with R.A.S. Dr. Dahlin stated the need for someone else to be the director. Rev. Pugsley, the Office Manager, also asked that a replacement for him be sought. Board members changed fairly often during this period and

finances were not sufficient to keep books in stock. But with the "not so good" news there was also encouraging news about the outreach of mailings. The report in May of 1970 was that there was a mailing list of 3,678 and in March of 1976 it was 5,971. The newsletter was being sent two times a year and the catalog was for two years, not three as previously printed. In 1977 the newsletter was sent to 6,000-7,000 and cost of a new catalog was \$1500. Also in that year Mrs. Dahlin died.

Rev. Pugsley completed 10 years as Office Manager on September 11, 1978 and Mrs. Pugsley retired from her job. They planned to move back to their home state of Kansas. A farewell dinner was held in their honor October 2, 1979. He had served faithfully for 11 years by then. [Note: Rev. E. Loren Pugsley went to be with the Lord January 13, 1994, one day short of his 85th birthday at his home in Wichita, Kansas.]

Rev. Ewald Eisele was interviewed and accepted the Office Manager's position. Rev. Eisele had been serving as a pastor in Crosby, Minnesota. He was to receive an increased, but minimal, salary and was able to learn the office procedure from Rev. Pugsley in an overlapping time before their move. At this time Dr. William BeVier was elected to serve on the Board, replacing Rev. David Harrison who had passed away. Another faithful servant of the Lord, who had served R.A.S. so sacrificially in the Office, Mrs. Kay Anderson, went home to be with the Lord on February 22, 1980.

Again and again the blessing and sustaining of R.A.S. was evident and despite obstacles and frustrations the ministry continued. Also as a reflection, all the work at the R.A.S. Office was voluntary from 1946 to 1980 (taken from the Annual Report). There had been no expense for an Office Manager or his housing and the rent for the office had been \$50 a month. With the increased expenses of rent and a salary and lack of financial support, again the cycle repeated itself in considering dissolving the organization. Another solution considered was having an interested Bible college take over R.A.S. as a

part of the college. But due to the optimism and direction of Rev. Eisele changes were made, debts paid and the picture brightened. The Lord was still using the ministry of R.A.S. On the cult front secular humanism became a major threat as evidenced by the number of telephone calls received from concerned Christians.

The quarterly business meeting on Tuesday, January 20, 1981 was also Inauguration Day for the U.S. President and the day hostages were released in Iran. Rev. David Larsen, who had served on the Board faithfully for nearly 14 years, moved from the Twin Cities in 1981 and his contribution was missed. Dr. Dahlin was in his 15th year serving as President of R.A.S. A new catalog was printed. The possibility of a merger was pursued with more vigor, even to the point of meeting with a Bible College interested in relocating R.A.S. Two new Board members were elected.

As the R.A.S. met with the Bible College the consensus seemed to be the relocation of R.A.S. and a taking over of the ministry by the College, including publishing of The Discerner, as well as the possibility of Rev. Eisele moving to be a part of the work of R.A.S.

In the ensuing months, due to considerable added financial debt to be paid by R.A.S. for the move and with no assurance that the ministry would continue if, after a six-month trial period, the financial situation should become unfavorable, it became a closed issue, and R.A.S. did not relocate.

In the meantime, the work moved on. The apartment rented for Rev. Eisele was vacated and a back room

in the Office was remodeled for his living quarters. At this time, with the resignation of Rev. Ramsland, who had been on the Board and served as Secretary for a number of years, and the election of Anton Chryst as a Board member, there was a similarity with the present Board in that the majority of the Board are serving now who were on the Board in 1982. The income was the best in 26 years in 1982. Also, responses from an ad in The Sword of the Lord publication came from all over the world.

One of the obvious notes of interest about the organization of R.A.S. was the interest and prayer concern of the Board members for each other. The ministry of the Board has continued in spite of their personal trials and tribulations. Rev. Caneday's wife passed away after an involved illness during this time.

Rev. Eisele made longer trips representing R.A.S., i.e., Florida, Indiana and Ohio. A trip to California was made in 1985. These trips were paid for by an individual who was saved to Christ out of the "2 by 2" movement through literature sent to him from R.A.S. He continued to finance trips for R.A.S. representation until his homegoing this past year.

At the Annual Meeting in 1985 Dr. Dahlin gave his views and observations of the past 39 years of R.A.S. which began with A. B. Jones, Mr. and Mrs. Roy Divers who served for over 19 years, Rev. Pugsley who served 11 years, and now Rev. Eisele who had been with R.A.S. since 1979. All of these facts of history have been included in: "Fifty Years of History" in the last three Discerners.

The Osterhus Publishing Company of Robbinsdale, Minnesota (located less than a mile from our present 1996 office) became the printers for R.A.S. and still print The Discerner, the catalog, the semi-annual newsletter, plus other printing needs and reprints of articles and booklets.

During the following year or so Dr. Dahlin's health and age made it more difficult for him to continue his leadership and a concentrated effort was made to secure leadership. A computer was purchased and some volunteer secretarial help alleviated some of the work load. A financial income sheet from 1975 to 1987 indicated that there had been an increase of over \$12,000 in annual income.

In January 1989, Dr. William BeVier was elected President of R.A.S. succeeding Dr. John Dahlin who had served as President and leader of the organization for 33 years. The \$5,000 owed to Office Manager, Ewald Eisele, was also paid. Once again the mantle was passed and Religion Analysis Service continued. This was the beginning of many changes for the organization. Dr. BeVier also began serving as Editor of The Discerner officially in January of 1990.

The offices of R.A.S. had moved only twice in its 44 year history; the first move was to 902 Hennepin Avenue in Minneapolis; after 24 years the second move was to 2708 E. Lake Street in Minneapolis; the third move was in February-March of 1990 to Brainerd, Minnesota. The location on Lake had become a deteriorating area and it was necessary to move. Mr. Eisele had a house in Brainerd. He could continue as Office Manager

if the move was made. Two separate moves were made while the R.A.S. office was located in Brainerd.

In November, 1993 it became necessary to move back to the Twin Cities' area, where most of the Board are located. In December Rev. Eisele resigned as Office Manager of R.A.S. after serving faithfully and sacrificially for 14 years.

These years of change and transition have smoothed out and as many who watched, worked, and served would say: "These 50 years have indeed been a miracle." At the present time our mailing list numbers close to 7,000; The Discerner has approximately 1,300 subscribers; our catalog of 60 pages has an inventory of 712 books, booklets, and tracts; our location in Robbinsdale has three

rooms with adequate space and street level access and parking space; our Board continues to serve in many capacities; the R.A.S. office is operating entirely with volunteer help; our finances are in good condition; we are on World Wide Web; we have a new computer and fax; and the ministry is needed more than ever with the burgeoning number of cults, false teachings, and increasing apostasy.

To complete this brief overview of "Fifty Years of History" : we would not exist aside from the prayers, support, interest, and inquiries of many thousands of people over this number of years. We can certainly say as the Apostle Paul did, "...thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (I Cor. 15:57).

The following article is reprinted from The Discerner,
Volume XII, No. 12, Oct-Dec 1988

WHEN CHRISTIANS MEET MUSLIMS

By Victor and Deborah Khalil

North Americans may think Islam began with Mohammed in the 600's, but if you ask a Muslim, you would probably get a different answer:

"It is as old as time; it is as old as God's creation; as old as Adam and Abraham and Moses. Was not Abraham himself a Muslim, and his son Ishmael the father of the Arab race? Did not Hagar find water for Ishmael at the well Zamzam in Mecca, which would become the very heart of the Muslim world? Does not the Koran contain the unchangeable

and eternal word of God, which was revealed in the Arabic tongue?"

Some of those claims, of course, are highly open to question. But they demonstrate how sure Muslims are that theirs is the only religion, the final revelation from Allah and the only way to receive eternal life in paradise.

The word *Islam* means "submission," that is, submission to the will of Allah. To become a Muslim, one must only recite the creed with all his heart: "There is no God but Allah, and Mohammed is his prophet." Yet

Islam regulates every aspect of life, to the point that culture, religion and politics in a Muslim country are practically inseparable.

The central point of Islam is the unity of Allah. He can have no equal, no partner. Thus Muslims deny the Trinity and the lordship of Jesus Christ. They think Christians believe that the virgin Mary had relations with God in order to bear Him a son.

The Koran depicts Jesus as a great miracle worker and one of the greatest prophets. But did he die on a cross? No. Muslims believe that when the Jews sought to crucify him, God called him up to heaven and threw his likeness onto someone else, who was crucified by mistake. Traditions add that Christ is to come again—and acknowledge Islam.

The Allah of the Koran is a god of judgment and justice, demanding that human conduct receive due reward or punishment. On the Day of Judgment, each man will be held accountable for his works. The righteous will enter paradise, where all material gifts and pleasures will be lavished upon them. (What the women receive is not mentioned!) The unrighteous will fall into the fires of hell.

To the Muslim, life is preordained, and everything depends upon the will of Allah. As the Koran says, "Allah wills what he wills." More than anything, the Muslim is afraid of Allah. He is taught not to try to escape Allah's will, even by working for a better life than the one into which he was born. He diligently obeys the laws and decrees, hoping that in the Day of Judgment his good works will outweigh the bad.

He's expected to recite the creed, perform the ritual of prayer five times a day (with more merit if in a mosque), fast during Ramadan (no food or drink from sunrise to sunset during the ninth month of the Muslim calendar), give alms and make at least one *hajj*-pilgrimage to Mecca.

THE APPEAL OF ISLAM

Islam is actively seeking converts, especially in the West. Its appeal, however, is often the material incentives offered to those who will convert. In Egypt, for example, where housing is extremely tight, a convert to Islam will be given not only an apartment but a car and a wife as well.

Meanwhile, the truth about Islam is often misrepresented. While Islam claims to offer common brotherhood for all Muslims, it has more sects than Christianity, and news accounts show obvious tensions between them.

Muslims pray at the same time, all facing Mecca, and recite their prayers in Arabic, the language of the Koran (and, they say, of heaven). Muslims who don't speak Arabic recite without understanding the words. They say, "Allah knows."

Islam also appeals to the intellect. Muslims claim that Christianity cannot be proven; Christians must simply accept doctrines such as the Trinity and the deity of Christ. On the other hand, Islam says its fundamentals are purely logical.

However, if a Muslim takes a question about the Koran to his imam (leader) he will undoubtedly hear, "This is the excellency of the Koran-

that we cannot understand everything Allah has written in it.”

A member of one Islamic sect was challenged by his daughter to compare the Bible and the Koran after she became a Christian. As an engineer, he could not accept the illogic of the Koran and found himself taking seriously the new truths he read in the Bible. The changes he observed in his daughter and his wife as she too accepted Christ confirmed the power of the Word of God to save. He became a Christian as he saw that faith is the beginning of a living relationship with God beyond logic.

Men are usually attracted to Islam first, and their families follow. Women in the West, however, are being drawn into Islam through marriage. They meet a Muslim man who gives them romance and attention, but they are unaware of the life that lies ahead. Romance ends very abruptly when the wedding ceremony is over, and the woman finds herself married not just to a man from a different culture but to his whole family—and Islam grants her very few rights. Perhaps she will be treated wonderfully for the first year or so—as long as it takes her husband to get an immigration card. Then he suddenly files for a divorce.

Or worse yet, a man will take his American wife and children back to his home country and divorce her there; in the Middle East, the father keeps the children. She returns home alone and brokenhearted. These things happen far too often.

American blacks have been widely wooed by Islam, but through misinformation. They hear, “Christianity is the white man’s religion; Islam is

the religion of all mankind.” They are told that Allah and Mohammed are black. In reality, Muslims in the Middle East still regard blacks as slaves. It would be worse than blasphemy for them to believe that either Allah or Mohammed were black.

Islam’s greatest growth comes through population increase, enhanced by the polygamy allowed in Eastern Islam. Statistics are hard to confirm, since converts to Christianity are still counted as Muslims in the belief they will eventually return to their true religion.

A Muslim will say to a Christian, “There is much we agree on. We both believe in one God who created everything. We believe in doing good and being obedient to God. If you Christians got rid of the Cross, we would be alike.”

But that’s not the whole story. In addition to denying Christ’s deity, crucifixion and resurrection, the Koran also withholds forgiveness of sin. Because the Muslim believes he will be accountable for all deeds, he seeks salvation by works alone.

The Muslim prays, but Allah is distant and impersonal. The 99 names of Allah include “Great,” “High” and “Holy.” But not one is “love.” Because the Muslim has never known unconditional love, he finds it strange. Even new converts need time to grasp the reality of God’s grace.

PRESENTING THE GOSPEL

The leader of an Islamic terrorist group was delivering drugs to the States when he was arrested. Confused and broken, he began reading an Arabic Bible brought to the prison by a Christian lay minister.

As he discovered the forgiveness of Jesus, the change in his life was miraculous.

"Anyone who could forgive me for all I have done has to be God," he said.

We have found that sharing one-to-one is a most effective way to build relationships. Arguing about doctrine causes them to dig deeply into their Koran, but the teachings of Christ draw them out.

Mohammed picked up stories and traditions from nominal Christians. As a result, Muslims think Christians worship three gods—the Father, Mary and Jesus—and also worship statues.

Jesus often answered a question with another question, so we follow that example. First we ask what the Muslim knows about Christianity and what he thinks we believe.

Then we ask what he believes and, most importantly, why. The purpose is to make him think.

Victor once asked a Muslim, "Why don't you eat pork?"

"Because it is unclean," he replied.

"Well, you wash your hands and feet before you pray to make you clean," Victor said. "Why don't you just wash the pig to make it clean?"

His point was clear: What makes a person clean has more to do with the soul than the body.

The greatest witness, of course, is simply the life lived before a Muslim friend. The Koran speaks highly of the life of Christ, and Muslims expect the Christian to live accordingly.

But "Christian" nations in the West are shockingly immoral to

Muslim eyes. That forces us to clarify that not all Westerners are Christians. When we visit Muslim friends, Debbie wears long sleeves, a high neckline and skirt below the knees. Women talk with women and men with men. (If a woman talks with a Muslim man, he thinks she is looking for a husband or has loose morals).

Muslims expect us to respect the Bible—never putting it on the floor, taking it into the bathroom or stacking anything on top of it. Furthermore, writing on the Bible's pages supports their claim that we have altered the text, so we take a clean copy when we visit. They do respect the teachings of Isa (Jesus), so we often start with the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5-7. If we spend a year covering three chapters, that's all right; the listener is considering the words backed up by the life led before him.

The Muslim often fears what his family and friends will think if he begins to ask about Christianity, so we respect this. He must have time to consider what accepting Christ will cost him. In the Middle East, he will be persecuted; he may lose his job, his wife and children, and his inheritance. He may even be killed by members of his family, or as in Saudi Arabia, by the government itself. When a Muslim finally stands for Christ, his faith is strong because he hasn't made the decision lightly.

It is also a simple faith, trusting Jesus to protect and keep him. An educated Muslim woman asked her imam some questions that disturbed her about the Koran. When she heard she wasn't to question, she turned to the Bible and discovered its

truth. She attended the Arabic church Victor was pastoring then and grew quickly in her faith.

One day when her husband came home with a migraine headache, she told him Pastor Victor often prayed for the sick in the name of Jesus. Since she couldn't reach Victor, she put her hands on her husband's head and prayed. The headache was gone almost immediately. The testimony of her changed life and the answered prayer brought her husband to Jesus.

THE POWER OF THE GOSPEL

During a recent trip to the Middle East, Victor saw a Pakistani man praying before eating. He approached him and discovered he and his companions were all ex-Muslims. The man said thousands of Pakistanis are becoming Christians. "They read the Bible, see the truth and turn to Jesus," he said. "It is the work of the Holy Spirit."

Other Muslims are responding as a result of visions or dreams of Jesus. Often they've had some contact with Christians or the Bible prior to these supernatural revelations. But the Holy Spirit is apparently responding to the prayers of God's people and opening Muslim eyes and hearts.

Many Muslims are becoming disillusioned with what they see happening in their countries in the name of Islam. The Ayatollah Al-Khomeini has actually driven many Iranians to Christianity. He promised them free-

dom; he claimed he would march to Jerusalem and establish Islamic rule; he was to be their Messiah. Instead, his policies have cost the lives of thousands of men and children. The more Muslims fight each other, the more illusive the promised peace becomes. Many are open to an alternative.

In the West, where debate runs free, Muslims are even more open, and many, in fact, come to the U.S. looking for a better life. Students especially are willing to consider new ideas.

The greatest field, however, is among children. Even if they don't accept Christ right away, seeds are sown into impressionable minds that will bear fruit later. Women ministering to children in Dearborn, Michigan, have used puppets, stories and songs in park meetings and home clubs. They start with games, but as trust grows (especially among the parents), they begin to share the truths of the Bible. Many of these children will return to their homelands and become more effective missionaries than any Westerner could be. And all because someone refused to believe they were unreachable.

(In 1988 Victor and Deborah Khalil and their 2-year-old son lived in Dearborn, Michigan. Victor, born in Egypt, was the founder and director of Muslim Ministries International.)

THE STATE OF RELIGION IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

By Beth Yugovich

As a Peace Corps volunteer, I was assigned to Moldova in June of 1994, to teach English. It isn't surprising that I hadn't heard of Moldova before then, as Moldova had only gained independence from the USSR in August of 1991. With the exception of Armenia, Moldova is the smallest of the countries that have formed since the break-up of the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. It is, with no exceptions, the most heavily populated. Over four million people live within the country, which covers only 33,700 square kilometers [about 13,100 sq. miles]. Most of the people live in small towns and villages scattered across the country. Chishinau, the capital, is home to approximately 700,000 people.

ORTHODOXY

Moldova has, for centuries, bounced between occupation by one country or another, most recently the former USSR. For the past 50 years, the people were "forced" to accept communism as their God. The resurgence of the Orthodox church since 1991 (in fact, since perestroika) has been rapid and thorough. Most people publicly returned to the religion of their past, and now most of them, when defining themselves in terms of religion, call themselves Russian Orthodox or Orthodox Christians. The Orthodox religion survived through the years of persecution in the privacy of homes, as parents shared with their children what they weren't allowed to discuss or practice in public. Today the Orthodox church

is strong, a result of two things. One, the majority haven't heard about any other options. Two, no one questions what they've been told because for generations under the Soviet system, if they questioned anything their superiors taught them (and the Orthodox certainly do believe their priests are their superiors), they were punished for it. Orthodox believers are convinced they are right, and in most places there is no one to show them otherwise.

Orthodoxy is a religion that is based heavily on tradition, and is, unfortunately, quite superficial (most of it is merely ritualistic rather than based on a personal relationship with Jesus Christ). Traditions are handed down from parent to child with little or no instruction and therefore not much learning is done. An example of this is how the children believe they are to pray to the many icons found in their homes and churches. Because their parents do it, and tell them to do it, they do, never understanding why, but never asking. Soon it becomes so habitual that they only regard the forsaking of it to be a sin. The average Orthodox doesn't read the Bible, and sometimes they don't even own one. Instead, all of their information is taken from their local priest. Their prayers are all read from liturgical books of prayers and individual relationships with Christ are not only not understood, but not heard of.

MARIA

One of the most destructive things about the Moldovans' ortho-

doxy is that it has become so completely entwined with the superstitions of the culture that it's to the point where the two cannot be separated. I saw a perfect example of this in the woman with whom I lived for two years in the small Moldovan village where I taught English. Maria is an extremely devout woman. She attends church services every Sunday, sits reading her prayer book as many times a day as is deemed necessary, consults it in times of need (a large thunderstorm was one such occasion when I saw her pull the book out and begin reading a prayer for the abatement of the storm), and follows all the "rules" she is supposed to, such as not working on Sundays.

At the same time. She told me that she had "read cards" on her youngest daughter to find out about her future. She also believes in horoscopes, as do many people there (one of the questions I was asked most often when people met me was what is my "sign"). And Maria once took her husband, ailing with a heart problem, to a "healer" who came to visit the village. After this incident she absolutely glowed when she told me he was now going to get better. Unfortunately, he didn't live much longer. Whenever I approached Maria, as I did a few times, about why she believed this or that (such as the "healer"), she told me that these are things or people that God uses to help Himself here on earth.

Another incident I can use as an example both of how their false beliefs are intertwined with their Russian Orthodox religion and how they never question what they're told is something that happened one St. John's Day. In Moldova they celebrate saints' days quite regularly. On St. John's Day people, for some rea-

son, they cut their watermelon differently than usual. It sounds strange to us, but to them it's a serious thing. The way they normally cut watermelon is to cut one of the ends off first; it's what they call "cutting the head off." They then proceed to slice it. But this cannot be done on St. John's Day, because if it is, it's a bad omen for people named John. One St. John's Day Maria unconsciously cut the top off a watermelon. Once she realized it, she couldn't believe what she had done! She wouldn't calm down. When I asked her what would happen as a result of her doing this, her response was "I don't know, but something terrible." She was so caught up in this superstition, that she couldn't see that God's wrath was not going to strike simply because she had cut the top off the melon.

Oddly enough, I also remember one time a woman commented to Maria that what their country really needed to get back on their feet was another Lenin. Maria responded "But something good has come out of our independence, God has opened all our churches again." Many people in Moldova, like Maria, need only to be exposed to the truth of the possibility for a personal relationship with Christ, and I'm sure a separation of true religion and superstition would be possible. Unfortunately, most never get the chance to hear this, for most never come in contact with evangelical Christians.

CHRISTIANITY

There are some evangelical churches in Moldova now, but unfortunately most are concentrated in the major cities, while most of Moldova's population is rural. The people in Moldova's cities who have been exposed to evangelical Christianity

and the teaching about a personal relationship with Christ, have shown just how welcome Christ is in their land. People are hungry for God. Missionaries can enter the country with ease (for a system that's still trying to shake communist attitudes towards security), and there are now a small handful of them, also located in Moldova's cities. Baptist churches can be found in cities and larger towns known as regional centers (like our county seats); these are pastored not by missionaries but by Moldovans or Russians. One particular church in the capital city of Chishinau that is doing some incredible work is Chishinau Bible Church, a non-denominational church pastored by an American missionary. When the pastor arrived the "church" was a Bible study of maybe 10 university students. That ministry has grown to include two Sunday morning services, a Friday evening service, Bible studies, and Sunday school classes. Groups of students come from the States each summer to do week-long clubs with children in the city, they put together a nativity program on the city streets each Christmas, and people come on short-term trips with humanitarian aid organizations or to work with hospitals or orphanages. One especially important milestone was the beginning of their Bible institute, which is now in its second year. Training for those enrolled at the institute begins with six months of intensive English classes (as all the classes are taught in English). They then go on to train as pastors, missionaries, or Sunday School teachers. This Bible institute, as well as one affiliated with a Baptist church in Chishinau, is helping to meet the incredible need for trained pastors in that part of the world.

Sadly, there are already conflicts taking place in Moldovan churches. People have left churches as a result of debates over things like speaking in tongues. And in a country where alcohol consumption is as much a part of their life as the language they speak, the Baptist church's stand against any and all consumption of alcohol pushes away some of those who might otherwise attend services. Some people have sought to find Jesus elsewhere, such as at churches of Jehovah's Witnesses or Mormons, just two cults that have already planted their seeds in Moldova's fertile spiritual soil.

LILIA

Lilia was a 21 year old college student when I met her in July of 1994. I had been alone, visiting a Moldovan village, and knew no one. Lilia happened to know the family with whom I was staying. She also happened to know English. So, a God-send, she spent a day with me, and we ended up having an incredible conversation about Christ (and related topics). I feel Lilia's life is a good example of the lives of many in that area of the world, an example of how desperately people there need to hear the truth.

Our conversation began when Lilia asked me when my birthday was. I told her, and she began to explain to me how my birthday affects my character. I was able to turn the conversation to God, and how I believe only He controls my life and character. She said to me "I believe these things now" (astrology, etc.), "because I am still young. I suppose when I am old I won't pay so much attention." That was strange to me. It was like she was admitting that she's wrong, yet without realiz-

ing it. We talked much about God; who He is, what He did, what that means. There were so many things Lilia had never been told, and therefore never knew. For example, she had no idea that she could pray to God like she was having a conversation. She thought she needed a liturgical prayer book. She also believed she had to read the Bible in order, from Genesis to Exodus and so on through Revelation. Therefore she had never read the passages found in the New Testament, which are so much easier for a new believer to read and understand, because she couldn't get past the difficult books of the Old Testament. Also, she had never heard that God is omnipresent, not a human controlled by space and time. She had also been told some things that are not only untrue, but a hindrance to someone searching for the truth. First, she had been told that she had to attend church not only once but twice each Sunday, and every Saturday. Second, that if she were in church and thought of anything but God while there, she was committing a terrible sin. And lastly, that she couldn't move on in reading the Bible unless she fully understood what she'd last read. What a predicament we'd all be in if that were the case! I doubt that Lilia is the only one confused about so many aspects of God and our worship of Him.

IN CONCLUSION

There are many spiritual needs that Moldova, and many other countries of the world, need met. They are short on trained pastors. They

require the understanding that they can't believe everything they're told anymore, but that there is One who they can completely believe in. Moldova lacks an extended outreach into her rural areas, as well as enough trained evangelicals to go there. The entire country needs to learn discernment.

One day a group of evangelical Christians arrived at my small village school to pass out copies of the New Testament to all who wanted one. At first the teachers were wary. They wanted to be sure that these people weren't spreading propaganda about anything. One teacher was concerned that they didn't believe in purgatory, but the group eased this by saying that they did. Another said she'd heard the evangelical Christians don't believe other religions to be legitimate. The group said, no, of course we don't have anything against other religions. Someone else asked if they believe that Christ is the Son of God. The evangelicals responded yes, and the teacher responded "That's the principle thing." Yet how many cults profess the same belief? The group was allowed to hand out the Bibles. I'm not sure how many of their responses they worded the way they did just to pacify the staff so they could hand out Bibles, but if they do believe in purgatory, if they don't have anything against other religions and are saying they all lead to eternal life, then even those churches are infiltrated with false teachings. Moldova needs, most of all, the truth—Jesus Christ (John 14:6).

THE FIVE SOLAE OF GOSPEL CONVERSION IN PAULINE THEOLOGY (PART 1)

By David A. Cook, M.A.

Biblical separation from false teaching has been a major concern in the struggle for a “pure” church throughout the centuries of the Christian era. The mixing of false ideas with the truth of the Gospel brought swift “*anathema*” (i.e., God’s judgment) by the Apostle Paul in his day upon false teachers.

I am amazed that you are so quickly deserting Him who called you by the grace of Christ, for a different gospel; which is really not another; only there are some who are disturbing you, and want to distort the gospel of Christ. But even though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to that which we have preached to you, let him be accursed. As we have said before, so I say again now, if any man is preaching to you a gospel contrary to that which you received, let him be accursed. Galatians 1:6-9 (NASB cited in this article.)

Today, Christians in this struggle for a pure gospel would do well to follow Paul’s twofold example: 1) to proclaim the gospel, 2) to defend it from the compromising dilution of error. Since the Council of Trent (1545-1564), Roman Catholic Dogma has clearly defined another “gospel” which has been mixed with human merit (e.g., II Corinthians 11:4). At the time, 16th century, many Roman Catholic

cardinals, bishops and monks protested against the mixing of human works to the Gospel in order to merit eternal life. Reformers like the Augustinian monk, Martin Luther, in AD 1516 appealed to the source writings of the Apostle Paul, especially from the N.T. books of Romans and Galatians. Consequently, Luther followed Paul’s use of Habbakuk that proscribed “The just shall live by faith” (Romans 1:17). Luther had come to see that the Gospel began and ended with faith (i.e., from faith to faith). The reformers reclarified five Biblical distinctives regarding the Gospel: Grace-alone, Christ-alone, faith-alone, Scripture-alone, and Glory to God-alone.

What this article is attempting to accomplish is to offer a Biblical theology from Paul, especially from his letter to the Romans concerning the gospel of conversion, in order to demonstrate that, in fact, Luther “did get it right.” Further, it will be shown that Scripture portrays a harmony between these five reforming Protestant principles, which operate and interrelate with complete concordance to each other. Conversely, Roman Catholic “Tradition” has introduced a contradiction in terms (an oxymoronism) to the Gospel when they mix creaturely human merit to justification before God. This oxymoronic kind of activity, in effect says Paul, nullifies and voids the grace and glory of God (Galatians 1:6-9; 2:14).

In order to begin with Paul's theology regarding the Gospel of Christ, one begins naturally with the grace of God. The first Biblical Protestant principle is that a sinner is justified by God's grace. God's part, His grace, becomes the sole merciful instrument in justification before God. God's justification is not to be mixed with creaturely merit. In the context of Romans chapters three through five, Paul is dealing with the doctrine of the justification of sinners, the ungodly (Rom. 4:5; 5:6-8), before God (Rom. 3:20; 4:2, 17; 5:1). Paul is not discussing in this context (Rom. chs. 3-5) the practice (good or bad) of righteous saints who are already Christians, but rather to those who are yet to receive God's grace, that is, sinners. Chapter six and following, then, deal with those who are "alive in Christ" (e.g., Rom. 6:11; 8:1); and, as a result, are those who, as saints, do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit (e.g., Rom. 8:4). Therefore good works (like religious sacraments) do not have their place in receiving God's justifying grace, but are Spirit-empowered fruits of converted Christians. The Apostle states that man's justification before God is by God's sovereign grace. "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified as a gift by His grace..." (Romans 3:23, 24).

God justifies by His grace, says Paul. It is by God's grace, and grace alone. The word "solae," which is used in the title of this article, refers to the plural form of the Latin word sola; which as an adjective, means "alone, only, sole."¹ God's part in justification is by sola gratia (Lat. "grace"), by grace alone. Thus, God's

part in justifying a sinner definitely does not incorporate the mixing of human merit with grace, since that would result in a contradiction in terms (cf. Galatians 3:11). The reason for stating that this is a contradiction is seen in the fact that in Romans 3:24, grace is referred to as a gift (Gk. dorean). Moreover the Greek word grace, "charis," is closely linked to charisma: "gift"; and so, rules out human works. God's grace exclusively involves His unique, undeserved and unmerited "favor" (charis: Romans 4:4). Therefore, Paul firmly contends that no flesh can be justified through observing: the ten commandments, circumcision or other rituals (e.g., baptism, etc.) to morally "earn their way into God's grace." "Because by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight; for through the Law comes the knowledge of sin" Romans 3:20.

In the section entitled "Canons concerning justification" the Roman Catholic framers of the Council of Trent say:

Can. 20. If anyone says that a man who is justified and however perfect is not bound to observe the commandments of God and the church, but only to believe, as if the Gospel were a bare and absolute promise of eternal life without the condition of observing the commandments, let him be anathema.²

Paul and Trent do not agree on grace (see also: Eph. 2:8, 9; Titus 3:5-7). Roman Catholic Dogma when it authoritatively and officially mixes human works with God's grace (et al Can. 1, 32),³ becomes oxymoronic and

a lethal half-truth. Mixing a creature's human works to the grace of justification makes grace **VOID!** The voiding of God's grace is illustrated for example in Israel's election: "But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works, otherwise grace is no longer grace" Romans 11:6.

In summary then, when a sinner is justified in the writings of Paul, it is not by man's works (cf. Romans 3:20), but by God's grace (cf. Romans 3:24). Neither is justification by a Roman Catholic combination of works and grace (cf. Romans 11:6). God's part in the justification of a sinner is by His grace and grace alone (sola).

The second Biblical Protestant principle is that a sinner is justified by Christ, the Redeemer. Christ's part, His death, becomes the sole "meritorious" instrument in justification before God. God's justification is not to be combined with man's merit. In Romans 3:24-25, Paul continues by declaring that God's grace comes through the merits of Christ and His shed blood. "Being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood...."

There is complete harmony between God's grace and Christ's merits in the book of Romans. God's grace (i.e., His part) is unmerited on man's part, but merited on Christ's part. An insightful acrostic illustrating the harmonious inter-relationship of God and Christ is seen in GRACE. Grace refers to: God's Righteousness At Christ's Expense.⁴ Notably, the acrostic is found in

Romans 3:22-25: 1. Grace (v. 24), 2. God's righteousness (v. 22), 3. Christ's expense (vs. 24, 25) and 4. Not by any other's expense (v. 23). Therefore, God is both holy and gracious. "...that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus" (Romans 3:26).

God justifies the sinner through Christ's work of shedding His blood on the cross (cf., Rom. 3:24; 5:8-9), and through Christ's work alone. The term for this is called sola christus (Latin for "Christ-alone"). Jesus declared upon the cross "It is finished" (Gk.: tetelestai, John 19:30); and so, His work in justification was and remains solely and sufficiently complete in Him. Moreover, in Pauline theology, Messiah (i.e., Christ) is the sole mediator of God's grace. "For there is one God and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." I Timothy 2:5.

All other men [and women, Ed.] are disqualified from meriting and mediating God's justification: "...every mouth may be closed and all the world may become accountable to God...no flesh will be justified...all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." Romans 3:19, 20, 23.

To attempt to incorporate: 1. The sacramental works of a Roman Catholic priest⁵; 2. The Co-mediation of "the Mary" of Roman Catholic Dogma, the Mediatrix of all Graces⁶; or even, 3. The good works of the sinner,⁷ voids and nullifies the cross. "...I do not nullify the grace of God; for if righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died needlessly" Galatians 2:21. And

also: "For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel, not in cleverness of speech, that the cross of Christ should not be made void" I Corinthians 1:17. See also Titus 3:5-8.

Christ's part in justification is by the merits of His blood and His merit alone (sola).

The third Biblical Protestant principle is that a sinner is justified through his faith. Man's part, his faith, becomes the sole "receiving" instrument in justification before God. God's justification does not incorporate man's works of merit. In Romans 3:24, 25, Paul continues yet a third time by declaring that God's grace through Christ's merits are received freely through faith. "...being justified as a gift by His grace,...we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" Romans 5:1.

God justifies through man's unmerited faith, and faith alone, not human works. This concept is called sola fides (i.e., faith alone). Faith alone is necessitated in Romans 3:28, which states: "For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from works of the law."

Faith and human works are even antithetical (oxymoronic) in Pauline theology regarding justification. "Now to the one who works his wage is not reckoned as a favor but as what is due. But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is reckoned as righteousness" Romans 4:4, 5.

Believing is the opposite of doing. It is contradictory to combine faith

and works in justification before God. Paul is clear again in other passages:

...nevertheless knowing that a man is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Christ Jesus, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we may be justified by faith in Christ, and not works of the law, since by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified Galatians 2:16.⁸

Not only does Paul remind his readers that God's grace and Christ's merits are harmonious, but man's faith as well: "For this reason it is by faith, that it might be in accordance with grace" Romans 4:16.

However, the Council of Trent is not in accordance with Paul in justification:

Can. 9 – If anyone says that the sinner is justified by faith alone, meaning that nothing else is required to cooperate in order to obtain the grace of justification, and that it is not in anyway necessary that he be prepared and disposed by the action of his own will, let him be anathema.⁹

Can. 12. – If anyone says that justifying faith is nothing else than confidence in divine mercy, which remits sins for Christ's sake, or that it is this confidence alone that justifies us, let him be anathema.¹⁰

Paul and Trent do not agree on justification by faith. Paul went to extreme measures in Romans 3:22-5:2 to dichotomize faith and works; so much so, that he used the word for

“faith” twenty-six times in that passage; contrariwise, the subject of human meritorious works. Roman Catholic teachers do commit a grievous error by nullifying the promise of eternal life as well as voiding the faith principle entirely, when they demand a kind of faith mixed with law-abiding works in the area of justification before God. Paul states:

“For if those who are of the law are heirs, faith is made void and the promise is nullified.” Romans 4:24; cf., Galatians 1:6-9.

Therefore, man’s part in justification before God is through faith, and faith alone (*sola*). Anything else is anathema (Gal. 1:8-9).

TO BE CONTINUED

ANOTHER LOOK AT ISLAM (PART 1)

By William A. BeVier

Attempting to write about Islam in a periodical article or series of articles is difficult. There is too much to present to make the writing useful, however, it is hoped this overview of Islam will be helpful to many. The Discerner has not presented this subject since the reprint of Fred Hartman’s article “The Islamic Program for America” in our July-Aug.-Sept. 1993 issue. Significant developments have taken place since then.

BACKGROUND OF ISLAM

Americans (and Western Europeans) are being faced today by what is to many of them a new movement. Most of us, in fact, know very little of substance about Islam.

In reality, Islam is a syncretism of a form of Judaism, a form of Christianity, and ancient Arabian idolatrous polytheism. Muhammad (or Mohammed, AD 570-632), attributed with the founding of Islam, was a product of his time and his culture. It is not an error to say that Islam is

an aberrant of its three identifiable sources. One person, a student of Islam, has termed it a “cult of Christianity,” because of the influence of Christianity on Muhammad as evidenced in the Koran (Quran), the “scripture” of Islam.

Islam claims to have been started by supernatural visions and revelations given to an Arab camel driver turned businessman (Muhammad) of the Hijaz (some say Quraish) tribe by the angel Gabriel (at the outset, the influence of the Bible on Muhammad can be seen). It is generally accepted Muhammad could neither read nor write (not uncommon among Arabs in the 6th century), so his visions were later written by others (some of them after his death in AD 632).

At one time Muhammad attributed his visions to a jinn (ancient Arabic term for an evil spirit) (Ankerberg 10).

Islamic jihad (holy war) has been interpreted by Muslims to mean not only armed conflict and “terrorism,” but also such activities as economic

“warfare.” Conversion to Islam can be, according to the Koran, either by persuasion or force. Professed Christians during the medieval Crusades attempted to imitate this approach, ultimately without success. Historically it was Islam’s jihad into Palestine which initiated the Crusades, but two wrongs don’t make a right. The Bible, for those who believe it, makes it very clear people come to Christ by the preaching of the Gospel (Rom. 1:15-16; 9:13-17), not by persuasion (I Cor 2:1-5) or force (2 Tim. 4:2).

A jihad (call for assassination) has been announced by Muslim clerics against the Muslim author Salman Rushdie because he wrote a parody of Islam in his Satanic Verses. The Koran is cited as authority for this action.

Muslims face the same problem with the Koran that Mormons face with The Book of Mormon. They do not use the original edition (which they suppose is written permanently in heaven and came from Allah to Muhammad through the angel Gabriel). Shortly after Muhammad’s death at least four different versions of the Koran were being used. The caliph Uthman (an accepted successor to Muhammad by the Sunnis, AD 644-656) declared one of the texts official and ordered all others destroyed. But the earliest versions of the Koran differed from the “authorized” one. In fact, the Koran in use today in Arabic (same one used by all orthodox Muslims) is a “revised version” (Ankerberg 38-39).

A long quotation from John Ankerberg and John Weldon should

give us a good perspective of the Koran:

The Koran offers a religion that relies upon methods of violence and force – a doctrine of “holy” wars that brings inducements to political revolution and jihad which have produced wars and tragedies unimaginable. The Koran offers a theology that is distinctly anti-Christ, claiming a method of salvation based entirely upon works, thereby leading people away from their [only] Savior and eternal salvation. The Koran teaches a morality that accepts polygamy, concubinage, and wife-beating [plus slavery], thereby bringing instability to the families and personal relationships of millions of people. If these are not what one would expect from divine revelation, then what other source of revelation remains? (The Facts on Islam 43)

Muhammad was born in Mecca (now in Saudi Arabia) in AD 570. After his father’s death, Muhammad was raised first by his paternal grandfather and then an uncle. He was even nursed by a woman other than his mother. His uncle was a merchant who traveled and Muhammad accompanied him, becoming a caravan leader.

About age 25 Muhammad entered the caravan service of a wealthy widow named Khadijah in Mecca. She was about 15 years his senior, but when she proposed marriage, he accepted. Muhammad was apparently devoted to her until her death.

Only afterward did he marry multiple wives.

Muhammad and Khadijah had six children. The four sons died in infancy. One daughter later became significant in Islam. She was named Fatima and married Ali, Muhammad's cousin (and some claim his rightful successor).

After Khadijah's death, Muhammad married 15 wives (though his later revelations in the Koran limited a man to four wives, plus concubines). It should be noted, that after Khadijah, Muhammad had no more children. Muhammad's justification for his polygamy reminds one of both King Solomon and Joseph Smith, Jr. (founder of Mormonism). Muhammad took multiple wives for political reasons and because so many Muslim women were left without husbands (they had been killed in battle). Solomon took multiple wives to solidify alliances with surrounding nations; Joseph Smith claimed he (and his followers) took multiple wives because there were more women than men in early Mormonism.

Muhammad saw the polytheistic, idolatrous Arab tribal society around Mecca deteriorating in his day. He withdrew to a mountain cave near Mecca and spent a month (28 days) in meditation. This happened to be the month of Ramadan, now the ninth month in Islam's lunar calendar. During this time he claimed Allah (or Gabriel) first spoke to him and Islam had its start.

Muhammad, reportedly, was so disturbed by his first "vision," he went home to be consoled by Khadijah. She consulted a cousin

who had been "converted" to Christianity. He assured her and Muhammad he, like Moses, had received a revelation from God (see Anis A. Shorosh and Harold J. Berry). The cousin apparently was a convert to Nestorian Christianity, a break off from the Greek Orthodox Church.

Muhammad continued to have "visions" and "revelations" and began to assert he was restoring the true religion of Abraham, Moses, Jonah, Jesus, etc. which had been corrupted (students of the cults will recognize this view). These visions and revelations were later recorded as the Koran (Quran), lit. "recite." Good Muslims are expected to memorize the Koran (about the length of the New Testament), hence the word "recite."

Sources today indicate that Allah was one of the 360 idol-gods worshipped by the Arab tribes at the Ka'aba in Mecca. The Ka'aba apparently is a black meteor whose origin is lost in antiquity. Arabs today claim it was first given by Allah to Adam and established by Abraham as the place to worship Allah. Sura 6:163 in the Koran has Abraham saying: "This am I commanded, and I am the first of the Muslims."

After conflicts for several years both in Mecca and Medina, Muhammad was able to convince many of his fellow Arabs that Allah (originally a moon god to the Arabs) was the only true god. As an aside, Muslims believe it was Ishmael, not Isaac, who was offered in sacrifice by Abraham and it was at Mecca and not at Mt. Moriah in Jerusalem, as the Bible states. The Koran is silent

about this, the supposed offering of Ishmael is a later Muslim "tradition." Also, it is a historic fact Muhammad died and was buried in Medina in AD 632. Late Muslim "tradition" is that he went by night to Jerusalem and on a white horse ascended into heaven from the rock now enclosed in The Dome of the Rock (Mosque of Omar) on Mt. Moriah. This is why Jerusalem is a "holy place" for Muslims.

Muhammad's proclaiming of monotheism (Allah is the only god) caused so much opposition in Mecca that he and a few followers had to flee 250 miles to what is now Medina in AD 622. His flight to Medina is known as the Hegira (or Hejira) and marks the beginning of the Muslim calendar. Muhammad became the political and religious leader in Medina, i.e., "City of the Prophet," and it became the center for expansion of Islam.

Muhammad thought the local Jews in Medina would accept him because of his monotheism. But instead, probably for economic and political reasons (Mecca was the center of local trade), most Jews sided with Muhammad's enemies in Mecca. He drove the Jews from Medina.

Remember, Judaism also had become non-Biblical in many ways by the 7th century.

Muhammad eventually gained enough followers that he conquered Mecca in AD 630 (his "hometown"). He destroyed the idols in the Ka'aba and declared it a "mosque" (originally an Arabic word for temple, but came to mean place to prostrate oneself to pray). In the next decade following AD 630 Muhammad's followers spread Islam over Palestine and Syria (neither the Greek Byzantine nor Persian empires could stop the advance). Later Islam spread far beyond its homeland.

With Muhammad's death without a male heir, dissension gripped Islam. Today 90% of Muslims are Sunnis, claiming Muhammad's successors are the caliphs. About 10% of Muslims claim the line of succession should be through Ali (Muhammad's son-in-law) and his wife, Fatima. Other divisions within Islam are known as Sufis (mystics), Alawites, Takfirs, and Wahhabis (Berry 15). The "Black Muslim" movement in the U.S. is not recognized as being true Islam by most traditional Muslims.

TO BE CONTINUED

BOOK REVIEW

Morgan Edwards: An Eighteenth Century Pretribulationist

By Frank Marotta

Reviewed by William A. BeVier

A very interesting booklet has come to our attention by Frank Marotta. The author is a pretribulationist and dispensationalist.

The subtitle of the booklet is: "Including a Survey of Early Baptist Prophetic Views and A Brief Answer to Dave MacPherson's The Rapture Plot."

Anyone interested in the current controversy and literature of the pre-mid-post, etc. tribulation rapture issue should profit from reading this well-documented booklet.

The arguments that J. N. Darby was the first to express the pre-tribulation rapture doctrine and that he obtained it from a young lady named Margaret Macdonald are refuted. Dave MacPherson's views on these issues are clearly established as being in error, even though he knew of Morgan Edwards.

Marotta documents from his writings that Morgan Edwards

(1722-1795), a New England preacher, was clearly a modern pretribulationist. We don't know if Edwards was the first modern pretribulationist but he was certainly a pretribulationist and he dates from the 18th century, long before J. N. Darby (or Margaret Macdonald).

It appears unfortunate that so little is known about Morgan Edwards and his writings. After he came to this country from England he pastored several Baptist churches and was a co-founder of Brown University. None of his writings seem readily available today.

We intend to make Marotta's book available from our stock. It is well worth the price for anyone interested in the subject of the historicity of the pretribulation rapture of the Church, the Body of Christ.

(Published, 1995, 28 pp. \$2.00 plus postage and handling.)

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