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JUNE 2010

THE WORKS-SALVATION DELUSION

by T. A. MCMAHON

**IMPORTANT
UPDATE!**

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THE BEREAN CALL Summer Conference



DAVE HUNT

LATEST NEWS UPDATE!

DAVE'S HEALTH, SPEAKER CHANGES, AND SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

Our staff is excited about the TBC conference coming up July 9-11. We have had to make some changes that I want to share with you.

Because of Dave's continuing health issues and ongoing recovery, it is likely that he will not be able to speak from the podium at this year's conference. This news is disappointing to all of us, as we had hoped and prayed that he would be sufficiently strengthened. Nevertheless, Dave will, by God's grace, be at the conference for fellowship—just not in a speaking role.

We have a great "plan B" that we think will be a real blessing. Recently, we discovered several videos of Dave that go back to 1988. These video treasures have never been published and capture Dave in some of his finest moments. We are very excited to share them at the conference!

Also, as a special feature, we'll be premiering a TBC documentary of Dave's travels in Russia that is loaded with great teaching and classic Dave Hunt incidents you won't want to miss!

There are two other changes in our lineup of speakers:

1. Amir Tsarfati will not be able to speak as planned. The Lord has provided another exceptional speaker to join us instead! We are pleased to welcome Steve Herzig, the North American Director of the Friends of Israel. Steve will be sharing interesting, up-to-the-minute details about the spiritual climate in Israel today.

2. Jim McCarthy will be speaking in place of Ken Johnson. Jim's diverse background includes missionary work in Ireland and ministries on numerous college campuses (including UC Berkeley). Jim is a well-known documentary producer (*Catholicism: Crisis of Faith*), an author (*The Gospel According to Rome*, *John Calvin Goes to Berkeley*), and is co-director of the Discipleship Intern Training Program in San José, California.

In Christ's love and service,

T. A. McMahon, Executive Director

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

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The Works-Salvation Delusion

T. A. McMahon

I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come[s] by the law, then Christ is dead in vain. —Galatians 2:21

When we compare biblical Christianity with the religions of the world, using the Scriptures to guide us, we see that the gap between them is unbridgeable. In fact, one is forced to the conclusion that there are really only two religions in the world: biblical Christianity—and all other religions. (Note: I refer to biblical Christianity as a "religion" only for comparative purposes: a religion is a manmade belief system, whereas biblical Christianity is what God has revealed to mankind.)

These two "religions" are set apart primarily by what they teach about salvation—how one can get to heaven or paradise or Valhalla or Nirvana or the abode of God, or whatever else people believe about the afterlife. Each of the two can be placed under one of two categories: Human Achievement and Divine Accomplishment—or, to put it simply, the religions of "Do" and "Done." I'm referring to the fact that either there are things you *must* do (Human Achievement) or there is *nothing* you can do because it has already been done (Divine Accomplishment) to earn entrance to heaven.

Biblical Christianity alone comes under the heading of Divine Accomplishment. All the other religions of the world must be placed under the label of Human Achievement. Let's first consider some of the major religions, such as Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, Judaism, and certain denominations or cults that profess to be Christian.

Hinduism has about 330 million gods who must be appeased through some type of ritual. A couple of years ago I was given a tour of a massive Hindu temple just outside Chicago. The parking lot was filled with luxury cars. There was imported stonework from Italy. No expense was spared. Inside, doctors, lawyers, and engineers, among others, according to my guide, were serving meals to the idols, Hanuman, the monkey god, and Ganesha, the elephant god.

Hinduism is a system of works—things that one must do to reach *moksha*, the Hindu heaven. It involves the practice of yoga, which, contrary to what many have

heard, has never been for improvement of one's health but is rather a means of dying to one's body in the hope of delivering oneself from the physical realm. This is supposed to yoke one to Brahman, the Supreme Deity of Hinduism. Reincarnation, a system that supposedly enables one to work one's way to heaven through many births, deaths, and rebirths, is one of the teachings of this religion.

Buddhism is also all about works. Buddha believed that the key to reaching Nirvana, which is allegedly the state of perfect peace and happiness, is through an understanding of the Four Noble Truths and by practicing the Noble Eightfold Path.

In essence, the Four Noble Truths declare that we endure suffering because of our desires or cravings. These "Truths" claim that suffering will stop when we cease trying to fulfill those desires. According to Buddhism, we can achieve this by following the Noble Eightfold Path, which has the elements of "right view, right intention, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and right concentration." This is all done by man's *achievement*, i.e., "doing things right" in order to reach Nirvana.

In Islam, paradise is attained when Allah weighs a follower's good works against his bad deeds on a scale at Judgment Day. The Qur'an declares: "For those things that are good remove those that are evil" (Surah 11:114). It's a quantitative process. Good deeds need to outweigh or blot out evil deeds. From the Qur'an again: "The balance that day will be true: Those whose scale [of good works] will be heavy, will prosper: Those whose scale will be light will find their souls in perdition" (Surah 7:8,9).

Here's an interesting example of what a Muslim faces to get into paradise: On April 3, 1991, the Egyptian magazine, *Akher Saa*, recorded a heated debate between four female journalists and Sheik Doctor Abdu-Almonim Al-Nimr, who holds a high position at Al-Azher Islamic University. One of the journalists asked him: "Is the *hijab* [veil or head covering] obligatory for women in Islam? If I do not wear the *hijab*, shall I go to hell in spite of my other good deeds? I am talking about the decent woman who does not wear the *hijab*."

Dr. Al-Nimr replied, "The ordinances in Islam are many, my daughter, Allah made us accountable to each. It means if you do that ordinance you earn a point. If you

neglect one, you lose a point. If you pray, you earn a point; if you do not fast you lose a point, and so on." He continued, "I did not invent a new theory...for every man there is a book in which all his good and evil deeds are recorded...even how do we treat our children."

The journalist said: "That means, if I do not wear the *hijab*, I will not enter the hell fire without taking into account the rest of my good deeds." Dr. Al-Nimr replied: "My daughter, no one knows who will enter the hell fire...I might be the first one to enter it. Caliph Abu-Bakr Al-Sadik said: 'I have no trust concerning Allah's schemes, even if one of my feet is inside of paradise who can determine which deed is acceptable and which is not.' [See *TBC*, 10/91] *You do all that you can do...* and the accountability is with Allah. You ask him for acceptance [*Italics added for emphasis*]."

In Judaism, heaven is attained by keeping the Law and its ceremonies. Obviously, that isn't consistent with what the *Tanakh* (the Old Testament) teaches, yet that has been the practice of Judaism for millennia. As Jesus said, "In vain they do worship [God], teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" (Matthew 15:9).

His words also apply to a number of "Christian" denominations and cults that stress works as necessary for salvation. Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons, Seventh-Day Adventists, the Church of Christ adherents, Roman Catholics, Eastern and Russian Orthodox members, Lutherans, and many others all include something that needs to be accomplished or is necessary for salvation, whether it's baptism, the sacraments, or joining their particular organization and fulfilling their requirements.

Here is an example from the first 30 years of my own life as a Roman Catholic. I lived by a religious system of laws, many of which a Catholic is obligated to keep. It began with baptism. If one is not baptized, the Church says he can't enter heaven. It also says that although baptism is required, it is *no guarantee*. There are many other such rules that a Catholic *must* keep.

I have a book in my office called the *Code of Canon Law*. It contains 1,752 laws, many of which affect one's eternal destiny. Sins recognized by the Roman Catholic Church are classified as either mortal or venial. A mortal sin is one that damns a person to hell, should he or she die without having had it absolved by a priest. A venial sin doesn't

need to be confessed to a priest, but whether confessed or not, all sin adds to one's temporal punishment, which must be expiated either here on earth through suffering or good works or else be purged in the flames of purgatory after one's death.

There are obligations that a Catholic must fulfill regarding both beliefs and deeds. For example, one is required to believe that Mary was conceived without sin (an event called the Immaculate Conception). If a Catholic doesn't believe that, he commits a mortal sin, which carries the penalty of eternal damnation. The feast day of the Immaculate Conception is a holy day of obligation, a day on which all Catholics are *required* to attend Mass. Failure to do so could result in commission of a mortal sin.

All the belief systems that I've mentioned, and many others as well, consist of doing or not doing certain things to reach "heaven." All are based upon human achievement. But what about biblical Christianity? How is that different?

Ephesians 2:8-9 spells it out for us: "For by grace are ye saved *through faith*; and that [salvation is] not of yourselves: it is the *gift* of God: *not of works*, lest any man should boast [emphasis added]." That's pretty straightforward. Our salvation doesn't have anything to do with our *achievements*.

Verse 8 tells us that it is by *grace* that we are saved. Grace is unmerited favor. If any merit is involved, it cannot be by grace. It's the gift of God. So if it's a gift, it can't be of works. That should be obvious. Someone puts in a tough month of work and his employer comes to him with his paycheck and declares, "Good job, Joe, here's your gift!" No—Joe *worked* for what he was paid. No gift was involved.

Regarding a person who works, Romans 4:4 tells us that his wages are a payment for the debt his employer owes him, and his paycheck has nothing to do with grace or a gift. A worker who has done a good job can boast or feel a sense of pride in the work he has accomplished. Yet all of that is contrary to grace or a gift. Grace rules out any sense of merit, and a gift does away with any sense of something earned or paid for.

Paul's teaching in Ephesians is affirmed in his epistle to Titus, chapter 3, verse 4:

But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, *not by works* of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. [Emphasis added]

We can see that this is consistent with Ephesians 2:8-9. It's not by our *works* that we are saved—not by works of righteousness that we have *done*—but it's *by His mercy* that we are saved.

You may well imagine that, as a Roman Catholic conditioned by a life of Church rules and rituals, I had great difficulty believing that *faith* was the only basis by which I could enter heaven. It didn't make sense to me.

Well, not only does it make sense—it's the only possible way anyone can be saved. It is *miraculously sensible*!

First of all, what keeps anyone from heaven or eternal life with God? We know that the answer is "sin." Here is a small sampling of the applicable verses: All have sinned (Romans 3:23); the wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23); sin separates us from God (Isaiah 59:2); the soul who sins shall die (Ezekiel 18:20); sin brings forth death (James 1:15).

In Genesis 2, God explains to Adam the consequences of disobeying Him. Adam was told not to eat from a certain fruit in the Garden of Eden. It was a commandment that was related to obedience and love—not of God's withholding something from Adam, as the Serpent implied. Remember, Jesus said "If a man love me, he will keep my words," that is, His teachings (John 14:23). Our love for God is demonstrated by our obedience.

What was God's penalty for disobedience? Genesis 2:17: "...for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Adam and Eve loved themselves more than they loved God, because they didn't "keep [His] words." They disobeyed Him, and the consequence was death. "The day you eat of it you will surely die." In the Scriptures, death always involves separation, and in God's judgment upon them, two applications are found: 1) physical death (the degeneration of the body, leading ultimately to its separation from the soul and spirit), and 2) eternal separation from God.

Adam and Eve did not die instantly, but the death process began at that point for them and for all creation. However, their *spiritual* relationship with God changed immediately and forever. God's judgment for sin is eternal: separation from God *forever*. It's an infinite penalty. And God, who is perfect in all of His attributes, including justice, had to carry out the punishment. He couldn't let them slide by and just give them another chance. That would have meant that He was not perfectly true to His Word. The penalty had to be paid.

So what could Adam and Eve do? Nothing, except die physically and spiritually, which is to be separated from God forever. And what can the rest of mankind do, seeing that *all have sinned*? Nothing. Well, one might ask, what if we do all sorts of good

deeds that might outweigh our sins, or if we go to church a lot, or get baptized, do religious things, receive the sacraments, and so forth? None of those things will help us. Why? Because they don't pay the penalty. So what *can* we do? There is nothing that we can do—except to pay the penalty ourselves by being separated from God forever.

Our situation would be absolutely hopeless except that God has some other attributes in addition to being perfectly just. He is also perfect in love and mercy! "For God so loved the world that He sent His only begotten Son" to pay the penalty for us (John 3:16).

And that is exactly what Jesus did on the Cross. It is incomprehensible to us that during those three hours of darkness (when He cried out "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?") He took on the sins of the world and suffered the wrath of His Father—for us. On the Cross He "tasted death for every man" (Hebrews 2:9), that is, He experienced and paid the infinite penalty for everyone's sins.

When that *divine accomplishment* ended, Jesus cried out, "It is finished," meaning that the penalty had been paid in full. It was a *divine* accomplishment because it was something that only God could do! God became a man and died physically, because physical death was part of the penalty. Yet, as the God-Man, he was able to experience fully the penalty that every sinner would experience—being spiritually separated from God forever.

God's justice demands payment. Either we pay the penalty ourselves or we turn to Jesus by faith and receive the benefits of His sacrificial atonement. What does Roman 6:23 say? "For the wages of sin is death; but the *gift* of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." The Bible could not be more clear that salvation can only be "the gift of God" and that we can only appropriate that gift by faith.

Any attempt to merit salvation by our works is not just futile—it is impossible: "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all" (James 2:10). Worse yet, it is a denial of the infinite penalty that God imposed, a rejection of God's "unspeakable gift," and a repudiation of what Christ accomplished for us.

It used to be that most evangelicals would agree. This is no longer the case as the apostasy gathers momentum in these Last Days. Recently, a Pew Forum survey of more than 40,000 Americans found that 57 percent of those who said they were evangelicals believed that Jesus is not the exclusive way to heaven. Since Jesus is the only one who provides divine accomplishment, all that remains is the futile delusion of human achievement for salvation.

TBC

Quotable

Prevailing prayer is not so much prayer that knocks at the gates of heaven and extorts an answer from an unwilling God, as the prayer which, having received the answer and promise, carries it forth against the gates of the enemy and beats them down, as the walls of Jericho fell [at] the tramp and shout of Israel's believing hosts....It is faith putting its hand on the omnipotence of God and using it in fellowship with our own omnipotent Head until we see His name prevail against all that oppose His will.

A. B. Simpson

Q&A

QUESTION: My dad was very disturbed by Matthew 18:9 and asked me about the verse "If thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire." I wonder if you have some information about that. I assumed it had something to do with sin in your life and doing whatever it takes to get rid of it.

RESPONSE: The Scriptures condemn religious activities such as self-mutilation or inflicting wounds or pain (Lv 19:28, Dt 14:1), so we know that the Lord is not advocating the literal removal of one's eye. Even in an act such as fasting, the Lord commanded, "But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face; that thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret: and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly" (Mt 6:17-18).

The issue is, what things impede our coming to Christ? Due to the seriousness of this question, the Lord used this extreme example. It is instructive to consider how many prison inmates write to us and confess that going to prison was an extreme act that acted as a stimulus to bring them to Christ.

Similarly, Paul wrote to believers, "For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live" (Rom 8:13). The literal meaning of "mortify" is to "put to death." Please note that it is the "deeds of the body" that are to be "put to death." Clearly, there are good deeds done by the body, but it is "through the Spirit" that believers discern what is proper and right and what is better set aside.

QUESTION: Genesis 3:15 mentions the serpent's seed and the seed of the woman, which was Jesus Christ. Does it not appear

that if the serpent's seed wasn't real, that Jesus could not have been real?

RESPONSE: You are saying that if the "seed of the serpent" is not a literal seed, then how could the Lord Jesus be real as well? It sounds as though you support what is called the "Serpent Seed" doctrine, in which the sin of Eve was having sexual relations with the Serpent.

There is no biblical support for this heresy. The "serpent seed" doctrine is nothing new, having been a part of the teaching of William Branham in the earlier part of the last century. Other false teachers have taught the same, probably going back to the very early church. After all, Paul warned that, "...after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." (Acts 20:29-30). As Jeremiah records in 17:9, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" Here is where prayer comes in, for the very next verse states, "I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins..." (Jer 17:10).

Who, then, is the Lord talking about in the Genesis 3:15 prophecy? In truth, those who would "bruise his heel" were those who would follow Satan. The Lord Jesus rebuked the Pharisees, "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do" (John 8:44). Can anyone imagine that Jesus is saying that the Pharisees were the literal *physical* seed of Satan?

During the flood of Noah, "every living substance was destroyed which was upon the face of the ground, both man, and cattle, and the creeping things, and the fowl of the heaven; and they were destroyed from the earth: and Noah only remained alive, and they that were with him in the ark" (Gn 7:23). That "living substance" that was destroyed included every descendant of Cain, who, according to this teaching, was fathered by the Serpent.

Genesis 4:1 tells us that "Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain..." It wasn't until Adam had relations with his wife that she conceived. Any other idea must be willfully forced upon Scripture. Consequently, how can anyone conclude that the "seed of the serpent" in Genesis 3 is talking about more than those who would follow Satan and reject the Lord? We cannot, without departing from Scripture.

QUESTION: Could you please address the views of some who believe that Christians shouldn't smuggle Bibles, Christian literature, or printing presses into restricted nations? They also seem to feel that believers shouldn't meet in unregistered or home churches. The reason for this

belief is that they are breaking the laws of those nations, disobeying the Bible's command to obey authorities.

RESPONSE: Romans 13:1 tells us, "Let every soul be subject to the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God." God has ordained for there to be civil authorities over human affairs to execute His righteousness, to punish evildoers—and they "bear not the sword in vain" (Rom 13:4). Of course, many rulers have not upheld God's moral laws.

The passage clearly tells us to be subject to the "higher powers." There is no higher power than God, and there are times where God must be obeyed despite the command of the authorities. The apostles were reminded, "Did not we straightly command you that you should not teach in this name?...Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:28-29).

There are earlier examples. The midwives were told by Pharaoh to kill all baby boys at birth (Ex 1:16). The midwives did not do so, and the Lord commended their actions (Ex 1:20-21).

Daniel knew that King Darius had signed a decree forbidding any petition (including prayer) to anyone other than the king:

Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled on his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime. (Dn 6:10)

Any such disobedience, however, would have consequences. Daniel was thrown into the lion's den, but the Lord "hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me" (Dn 6:22).

In like manner, those who engage in Bible smuggling and similar activities will also be subject to consequences should they be caught by the authorities of these respective countries. Consider another biblical example:

If this be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace....But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up. (Dn 3:17-18)

During World War II, Corrie Ten Boom and her family preserved the lives of Jews contrary to the will of the authorities. Those who smuggle Bibles are bringing the Word of Life to those without Bibles. Concerning illegal house churches, we must remember that the early church took precautions:

Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst....” (Jn 20:19)

Question: Could you explain what “suffer in the flesh” (1 Peter 4:1) means and whether it is part of God’s chastisement?

RESPONSE: In context, Peter is addressing the finished work of Christ and its application to believers. Christ died on the Cross. That He “suffered in the flesh” is a synonym for that death. In like manner, Christians are to “reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord” (Rom 6:11).

To a dead man, sin no longer has any appeal. We may parade any temptation past a dead man. None will entice him. Peter goes on in chapter 4 to explain, “For the time past of our life may suffice us to have worked the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revelings, parties, and abominable idolatries: Wherein they think it strange that ye run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you” (1 Pt 4:3-4).

Finally, it is certain that this passage does not support the false idea (as portrayed in *The Passion of the Christ*) that physical sufferings bought our salvation. It was through the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus that Satan, the serpent, would be destroyed (see *TBC* 10/09).

QUESTION: Between Matthew 13:30 and Revelation 14:14-19 there seems to be a conflict as to which will be harvested first—the weeds or the crops. Matthew 13:30 says it is the tares, while the passage in Revelation seems to say something else. Which is it?

RESPONSE: As to whether the weeds will be harvested prior to the crops (Mt 13:30 vs. Rv 14:14-19), we would suggest that in the full context of Revelation 14 it is the weeds that are indicated here as well. For example, verse 19 tells us that the objects of this “harvest” are “cast into the great winepress of the wrath of God.” This clearly cannot be the main crop (i.e., true believers). May the Lord encourage us with the consistency of His Word.

QUESTION: Can you please explain the difference between a sect and a cult?

RESPONSE: A “sect” has been defined as a group that has preserved the essentials of the gospel but who has a particular distinctive teaching creating a separation

between the group and other members of the body of Christ.

A “cult,” on the other hand, may deny nearly every fundamental teaching of the Bible and often attacks the deity of the Lord Jesus Christ. They may do this by directly denying it or by presenting it in a way contrary to the teaching of Scripture. For example, Herbert W. Armstrong taught that the Godhead was a polytheistic family of “gods.” Joseph Smith and Brigham Young taught similar things. On April 9, 1852, during a sermon in the Salt Lake City Tabernacle, Brigham Young proclaimed that Adam was, in fact, “our Father and our God, and the only God with whom we have to do.”

In 2 Peter 2, addressing false teachers, Peter lists the characteristics of these individuals. These “false prophets” (2:1) are “wells without water” (v. 17). A well without “water” (“water” being a consistent biblical metaphor for the Holy Spirit) has the same appearance as a genuine well unless one looks inside (1 Sm 16:7). These false teachers are not guided by the Holy Spirit and speak with their own words, repeating the counterfeit teachings of the adversary. As pointed out above, the Lord warned the church of cultic teaching that was going to come.

Mormons attest that their revelations began with the appearance of an angel to a young man named Joseph Smith. Paul warned in Galatians 1:8, “But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.”

Joseph Smith spoke with an entity who identified himself as the angel “Moroni.” Catholics around the world flock to alleged appearances of “Mary.”

Often, cults have a leader who has the ability to charm and sway those he deceives. His teaching, when shown to be unbiblical, is said to be a “new revelation,” or a new insight that transcends Scripture. He may teach that he and his followers are the possessors of information lost to everyone else. The leader is the recognized authority, often teaching that he is God’s voice for this generation.

As time goes on, a cult may become very protective and closed, believing they are under imminent threat from anyone outside the group. What a contrast to the church, of whom the Lord Jesus promised, “I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it” (Mt 16:18). To keep ourselves from deception, let us follow the example of the Bereans who “...searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so” (Acts 17:11).

News Alert.....

CNSNEWS.com 4/30/10: The United States and 12 other Western democracies kept silent this week as Iran was nominated for membership of the United Nations’ Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), thus enabling Iran to get the seat. In the four-year period beginning in 2011, Iran will help set U.N. policy on gender equality and the advancement of women.

Iran’s unchallenged election, at a meeting in New York Wednesday, came just over a week after Iranian media quoted a senior Islamic cleric in Tehran as saying that immodest dress and behavior by women was to blame for an increase in earthquakes.

More than 200 Iranian women’s rights activists sent an open letter to the U.N. earlier this week, warning that Iranian membership would be “a serious threat” to the CSW’s “goals and mission,” and that the government would use it “to curtail progress and the advancement of women.”

The task of electing members to the CSW is carried out by the 54-member Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), the principal coordinating organ for the U.N.’s socioeconomic and related work. Among 11 CSW seats up for grabs Wednesday, two were set aside for states in Asia, and the Asia regional group put forward just two candidates to fill them – Iran and Thailand.

Had one of the Western countries in the chamber – or any other ECOSOC member – protested, a secret ballot vote would have been called for, putting to the test Iran’s ability to win the required majority of at least 28 votes. But the U.S., Canada, Australia and 10 European countries raised no objection, and the meeting elected Iran “by acclamation.”

Iran’s treatment of women has frequently drawn criticism from human rights advocacy groups and Western governments. Three board members of the National Iranian American Council, Dokhi Fassihian, Hadi Ghaemi, and S.B. Anderlini, wrote Wednesday that the Iranian government “has taken every conceivable step to deter women’s progress and institute a regressive regime against gender equality.” Iran getting a seat on the CSW, they said, was “indicative of the ways in which women’s rights are continually sold down the river in exchange for political favors and horse trading on other issues at the U.N.”

[*TBC: There has never been any doubt that the UN is an insane asylum. Here is one more testimony to the fact that the inmates are running it.*]

Speaking Schedule

Jun 6 (TA)	Candlelight Fellowship Coeur d'Alene, ID (208) 772-7755
Jul 9-11	TBC Conference Bend, OR (800) 937-6638
Aug 13- Sep 2 (TA)	Ireland/UK Tour More details to follow
Sep 8-11 (TA)	Great Lakes Prophecy Conference Appleton, WI (920) 735-1242

Letters

Dear Dave,

This short message ["Reflections on a Reasonable Faith," TBC, 4/10] is the most significant piece that you have written—for me personally—in all the time that I have received *The Berean Call*. I am carrying it in my Bible until I have re-read it and meditated upon the verses—until I carry it in my heart. Thank you and may God abundantly bless you. CH (email)

TBC,

I just wanted to let you know that the article T.A. wrote on the film *Avatar* [5/10] was nothing short of outstanding! I'm conducting a "study" about the film in an upcoming youth service and regular adult service, and I must say that Mr. McMahon's contribution has greatly helped me in implementing information [from] the newsletter into the presentation. Many Christians buy into this end-time deception and don't take the time to examine [whether] they are introducing deadly venom into their system. This film is nothing short of political, ecological, and paganist propaganda....I was...disgusted at the constant indoctrination and nature worship in the film. Aside from this, *Avatar* was an attack on our military and on advanced civilization as we know it. Thanks again and keep up the good work! JC (email)

Dear Brothers Hunt and McMahon,

Thank you so much for the work you do! As a pastor and student of God's word, I am constantly finding nuggets of knowledge and wisdom that I had never seen before....[Your radio] series on psychotherapy reaffirmed what I had always thought concerning it. Again, thank you! JS (email)

TBC,

Every month when I receive your newsletter, I sit down and read it from cover to cover....I treasure the wisdom, insight, and challenge of *The Berean Call*. This month, when I read "The White Box" by Barbara Romine [TBC Extra, 4/10], I was deeply

touched by the well-written message of faith and trust in the midst of a great trial. I cried as she shared her journey through the heartache of breast cancer. It is a message that **MUST** be shared with other women who face the trial of breast cancer. Thank you, Barbara, for your honesty. Thank you for telling us about the white box under your bed....and for the reminder to trust the Lord..."that His grace and strength will be there for me at exactly the time that I need it." God is going to use your article to touch many women around the world. What some thought was for evil will be used for good, as only God can do. BF (WA)

Dear TBC,

I've been a fan of Dave Hunt for a few years now, but I wanted to email you because I read that really encouraging story you put in your [5/10] *TBC Extra* about the arthritic, blind, lame, and partially deaf man whom God greatly used because of his faith and willingness to serve. I want to go into ministry one day as a missionary (God willing), and reading that was very encouraging to me. Like that man, all I have to do is make myself available to God and he'll take care of the rest. Wow. Can you publish more stories like that in future *Berean Calls*? RJ (email)

Dear Dave,

I just want to say thank you. I came across something called Christian Hedonism and wanted to find out about it. It just didn't seem right and I was trying to explain that to my boys but I couldn't put my finger on what it was exactly. Thank you for your website. I was hoping you would have something on it and you did!! Now I have some information to help explain why it didn't seem quite right. The Lord bless you for all you and your team do! CH (email)

Dear Dave,

My husband and I want to thank you for being a strong influence for truth in our ignorant, lazy times. You have been our mentor, our "discipler," our teacher...for years and years. I am now in a position of leadership and influence in our large church. Because of God's work in you and Tom (and all others at Berean Call), I am equipped to be a voice for biblical truth. I am in the minority, for sure, but God uses small, weak vessels filled with Him and His treasure....We are forever grateful "children" in the faith—fellow servants who honor and love you. PM (OK)

Greetings,

I was led to your site by the mention of your name while "checking up" on my leading by the Spirit [regarding] Chuck Missler's book *Kingdom, Power & Glory* [see 11/09 Q&A]. My wife and I were encouraged to read others' same reaction to this book.

There is no doubt that this not only presents a work-based system of salvation but also integrates a prideful basis for position in Jesus' Kingdom....Thank you for your work and I would like to encourage you to warn others or at least keep this in the "light" for others. AE (email)

T. A. McMahon,

The Bible seems to say that everyone loves themselves. You contend that even someone who commits suicide loves themselves. However, why do some people choose to *swallow corrosives* whereas there are so many painless ways to kill oneself?

In the same verse the Bible also says that everyone takes care of their bodies. Is that what people who burn themselves with cigarettes do? And mental illness doesn't exist? Get real. SJ (email)

TBC Notes

Spiritual "Lettuce"

More and more today we are being advised by various health and medical associations to eat more fruits and vegetables. That's a good thing. Yet our spiritual health is even more important. Therefore, "let us" not forget to feed upon the Word of God's spiritual "lettuce."

Here are some morsels: "Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us" (Hebrews 12:1); "Let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name" (Hebrews 13:15); "Let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth" (1 John 3:18); "Let us love one another: for love is of God" (1 John 4:7); "Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light" (Romans 13:12); "Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another" (Roman 15:19); "Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (2 Corinthians 7:1); "Let us also walk in the Spirit" (Galatians 5:25).

T.A. MCMAHON
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Berean Call is a nonprofit 501 [c] [3], tax-exempt corporation registered in the State of Oregon. It is overseen by an independent board which has full and final authority over all corporate assets, personnel, and affairs. (6/10)



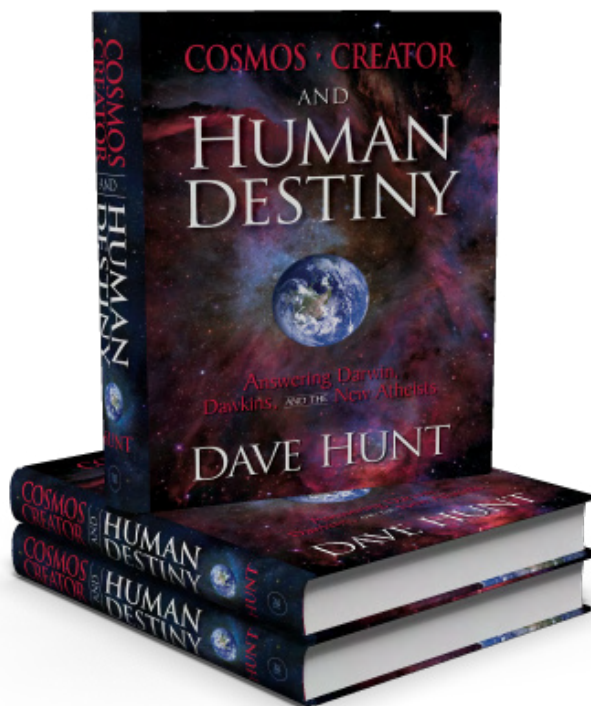
IN HIS LATEST impeccably researched volume, Dave Hunt skillfully dethrones the Darwinian imagination that has exalted itself against the knowledge of God—and in the process reveals fatal flaws in the logic of both cosmic and secular humanism. But this myth-busting volume is not typical of Creationist literature in recent decades. It reaches far deeper than science can look, probing the heart and mind to provide soul-shaking answers to the questions of human destiny that have not only plagued atheists and skeptics, but at various times, even a majority of Bible-believing Christians.

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As Dave has repeatedly said, "This is the book I set out to write: an exhaustive scientific treatise dealing with the physical evidences. Neither is it a volume that requires a degree in astronomy."

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G EXPOSÉ of Darwin and Dawkins is the Dave Hunt *magnum opus* you've been waiting for. All of Dave's seminal works—whether on occultism, Catholicism, Calvinism, evolution, have all been, at the time of their publication, his "most important page refutation of Darwinian evolution (as championed by Richard Dawkins, and his aggressive "New Atheists") is no exception!

and throughout the production of *Human Destiny*, "This is not just a book." For one reason, it is not an average purely with innumerable academic micro-focused academic astrophysics to understand. That every Christian can and science-boosting for believers, the skeptic's worldview. It is at the heart of the human philosophy. With shatterproof attacks upon themselves, and illuminating the irrefutable truth in every "corner" of the leading scientists and atheists alone worth the price of this presented hardcover.

Readers will recognize that this is a "must" in appearance. Missing academic endorsements of leading scholars. Dave's impeccable research. Even the jacket copy (see below) crafted to pique the interest. The reason is simple: though

the book is being sold primarily through distribution channels catering to Christians, Dave personally wants to give scoffers, skeptics, and non-believers every reason to pick up the book and crack it open. This magnificent hardcover volume was designed to reach your friend, neighbor, co-worker, brother, sister, mother, father, teacher, and professor with reason, logic, passion, and compassion.

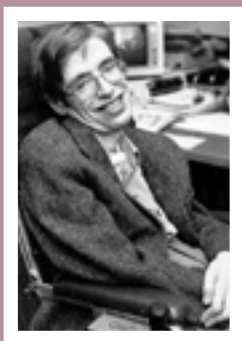
But make no mistake: Though Dave's unique approach will hold the attention of ardent critics, this book is also an indispensable armory for the serious high school, college/career, and adult believer. And, as one can expect from a Dave Hunt book, the author does not avoid the Scriptures but skillfully weaves the historicity of God's Word and the gospel throughout, with unmistakable clarity and conviction.

In a world increasingly hostile to the truth that "sets one free" and which may be "clearly seen," *Cosmos, Creator, and Human Destiny* is one book you'll want to read, share, and prayerfully consider using for your home, church, or college/career study group. Hardcover, 608 pages.

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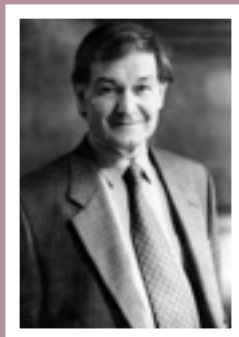
"Why does the universe go to all the bother of existing? . . . It is difficult to discuss the beginning of the universe without mentioning the concept of God."

S. Hawking

ROGER PENROSE

"There is a certain sense in which I would say the universe has a purpose. It's not there just somehow by chance. Some people take the view that the universe is simply there . . . and we happen by accident to find ourselves in this thing. . . . I think that there is something much deeper about . . . its existence, which we have little inkling of at the moment."

Roger Penrose



WHAT **DARWIN** FAILED TO ANSWER...
WHERE **DAWKINS** FEARS TO TREAD...

This volume explores the fascinating reaches of our fragile human existence in the magnificent yet mysterious space-time continuum that Charles Darwin failed to address and where Richard Dawkins fears to tread.

Plagued by the failure of modern science to explain the most pressing questions of human existence, "Why are we here?" and "What is our destiny?" many of today's postmoderns are once again boldly going where man *has* gone before in a desperate final quest for the hidden "holy grail" of cosmology.

Erwin Schrödinger, the famed Austrian theoretical physicist who received the Nobel Prize in 1933 for his contributions to quantum mechanics, confided: "[Science] knows nothing of . . . good or bad, God and eternity. . . . Whence came I and whither go I? That is the great unfathomable question. . . . Science has no answer to it."

Echoing this dilemma, British astrophysicist Sir Arthur S. Eddington, famous for his work on the theory of relativity in the early 20th century, also reasoned: "Thus, in the physical world, what a body does and what a body ought to do are equivalent; but we are well aware of another domain where they are anything but equivalent. . . . There is a clear distinction between natural law, which must be obeyed, and moral law, which ought to be obeyed. Ought takes us outside of physics and chemistry."

Today's postmoderns take pride in their perpetual pursuit of knowledge—but the questions for readers now holding this book are clear: How will you recognize the seemingly elusive chalice of "ultimate truth" when it actually appears? And finally, what will you do with it when this coveted cup is within your grasp?

In a sweeping panorama of inquiry and exploration, the timeless quest within these pages leads grail-seekers and skeptics alike to a destiny-altering consideration of the cosmos—and the question of human existence.

[COSMOS front flap copy]

I woke up and realized that all my life I had been duped into taking evolutionism as revealed truth in some way.

—COLIN PATTERSON, “EVOLUTION AND CREATIONISM,”

SPEECH AT THE AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY, NEW YORK (NOVEMBER 5, 1981)

DESTROYING THE DELUSIONS

Excerpts from Dave Hunt’s myth-busting 608-page hardcover book, *Cosmos, Creator, and Human Destiny* . . .

WHEN RICHARD DAWKINS SPEAKS, the world listens. He’s the expert, the one-time Simonyi Professor of the Public Understanding of Science at the University of Oxford. We are charging Dawkins with betraying that trust by giving the public misinformation about science. He does so in a number of his books, speeches, and debates, a fact that we will continue to document in the following pages. He is the *de facto* leader of the New Atheists, who gave themselves this name to call attention to the fact that the “old atheism,” once headed by Madalyn Murray O’Hair, was far too mild. As we’ve already mentioned, the New Atheists call themselves “the brights” and the implication is that anyone stupid enough to believe in God is a dimwit.



Dawkins’s life and career are devoted to destroying any belief in any god, especially the God of the Bible, for whom he reserves a special hatred. He admits that “All of us share a kind of religious reverence for the beauty of the universe, for the complexity of life, for the sheer magnitude of geological time. It’s so tempting to believe that living things . . . or that stars or mountains or rivers have all been made by something. It was a supreme achievement of the human intellect to realize that there is a better explanation . . . that these things can come about by purely natural causes. . . .” Dawkins recognizes that what he is saying contradicts our normal feelings when we behold the beauties of nature.

This is a damning admission for atheists. It ought to be embarrassing that the theory of evolution is what Dawkins admits is counterintuitive. How could that be? He is confessing that there is something inside us that can act contrary to our genes. . . . Well, then, this “intuitive” feeling that runs counter to the theory of evolution can’t originate in our genes. It can’t be physical. Where could this free-will, rational impulse come from, this desire for something so at odds with natural selection?

It cannot be true, as atheism’s natural selection would force us to believe, that our thoughts are simply the result of the motions of atoms in our brains that all began with a “big bang” and have been proceeding without guidance ever since. Isn’t this an admission that materialism does not have the answers to everything, unlike what atheists would have us believe and as Dawkins so often asserts?

So Dawkins states repeatedly with unabashed certainty

that “we know essentially how life began.” On the contrary, we don’t even know what life is, so how could we know how it began? Until atheists can explain what life is, it is an outright deceit to pretend to explain how it “evolved.” Atheists and evolutionists are playing a game of pretense, trying to build a natural-selection structure in the air without first laying the foundation. It’s just a dream. As C. S. Lewis so ably argued: “If minds are wholly dependent on brains and brains on biochemistry, and biochemistry (in the long run) on the meaningless flux of atoms, I cannot understand how the thought of those minds should have any more significance than the sound of wind in the trees.”



In spite of Dawkins’s wishful thinking, “ordinary processes of physics and chemistry,” which are purely physical and not biological, will never create life. All physics and chemistry have to work with is dead matter. The law of biogenesis declares that dead matter cannot produce life. “Spontaneous generation” was proved to be a superstition without one iota of truth. This delusion was abandoned nearly 150 years ago as a result of Pasteur’s discovery that when microorganisms are killed by heat no life can arise; but in the name of “science,” this folklore has been promoted to the status of fact in order to defend atheism.

No matter how many or how large the new “stable forms of atoms” that are produced, they are still composed of dead matter. Dead matter does not bring forth life, regardless of how large the molecules it forms, even if “natural selection” has produced them. The only way Dawkins can continue to spin his yarn of uncreated life is to ignore the law of biogenesis. He can only bring his tale to a happy ending by a violation of that law. But universal laws of science, including the law of biogenesis, are called “laws” because they allow no exceptions. They cannot be broken.

As Dawkins admits, life requires DNA, and that contains encoded information written in words—“a digitally coded data base,” as he calls it. *Information, written in words and encoded, that gives directions for constructing and operating every cell in the body*—all of this incredibly detailed and complex data, beyond our capacity to understand, was devised and imprinted on DNA by natural selection? It is merely a theory, and it certainly neither thinks nor plans. That theory gave birth to Dawkin’s “digitally organized

For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds; casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God. . . .

—2 CORINTHIANS 10:4-5A

of DARWIN AND DAWKINS

... a brilliant and devastating exposé of evolution that leaves atheists without excuse and leads them to a loving Creator

data base” of information that is beyond our capability to explain? Now *that* takes faith!

Bringing life out of dead matter is more amazing than any miracle the Bible presents. Primitive self-replicating molecules cannot create information—that process takes nothing less than an intelligence. In referring to the information provided by the DNA for constructing and operating the body—all of it on the single cell from which each human begins, Dawkins declares, “When you were first conceived you were just a single cell, endowed with one master copy of the architect’s plans.”

Architect’s plans without an Architect? Dawkins has to acknowledge that DNA contains detailed, written instructions for building and operating millions of incredibly complex and ingenious nano-chemical machines in trillions of cells joined together, each in its proper place and relationship to the others and to the whole. These amazing blueprints couldn’t possibly be conceived and encoded into language except by an Infinite Intelligence. But Dawkins’s “definition” turns mindless matter into an engineering genius via his god, “natural selection.”

Richard Dawkins dares to say, “I show that all the alternatives to Darwinism that have ever been suggested are in principle incapable of . . . explaining the organized complexity of life. . . . My reasoning, if it is correct, tells us something important about life everywhere in the universe.” *If it is correct?* He acknowledges that this is just a theory, and a shaky one at that—but that doesn’t prevent him from proceeding as though it were true because he has no other hope to explain life on earth. It *must* be correct—this is the best his atheism can offer—and atheism is the one thing he will not abandon under any circumstance.

Has he shown us that Darwinism can “explain the organized complexity of life?” No, he hasn’t even come within miles of doing that. Darwinism fails completely in this respect. Nor has Dawkins ever shown that creation by God could not account for the “organized complexity of life. . . .” In fact, it is the only alternative that can! But he won’t even consider that possibility. So the *religion of atheism* hampers the scientist in research and judgment because it restricts him to only one point of view. . . . The atheist cannot be this open-minded. He cannot “allow a

Divine Foot in the door,” and that restricts his research and intellectual honesty. There is no such person as an “atheistic theist” who would be comparable to a theistic evolutionist.

Richard Dawkins admits that “Darwin’s answer to the question of the origin of species was . . . that species were descended from other species.” This is no answer at all! It’s a far cry from *origin* of species, as the title of Darwin’s first book promised, and as Dawkins claims Darwin achieved. What was the first species, and how did it come into existence? Darwin doesn’t tell us, nor does Dawkins. . . . Evolutionists/atheists are now telling us that the law of biogenesis isn’t really a law. It has been violated not just once but millions of times all over the universe! To accept Darwinism is tantamount to rejecting the very foundations of science itself. Everything is up for grabs.

And when we come to the question of origins, the lips of science are tightly sealed. Science can’t explain the origin of either matter or life. We have merely substituted new words to cover our ignorance and pretend we’ve made an advance. As far as ultimate reality is concerned, however, we are still where primitive man was before “science” deluded us with false hope. . . . The more we investigate, the clearer it becomes that the New Atheists are trying to force upon the entire world a rejection of God that is contrary to what the majority are willing to believe, at least at this point.

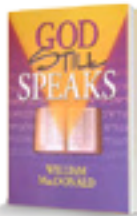
Dawkins concedes, “There are still gaps in our understanding. We don’t understand how the cosmos came into existence in the first place. . . .” This is Dawkins’s standard escape hatch whenever he is confronted with the many questions for which atheism and evolution have no answer. Instead of admitting that science has nothing to say about what is good, what is evil, what is beautiful, what is ugly, where did we come from, where are we going, etc. (as many of the greatest scientists have frankly confessed), Dawkins sings the same worn-out song, “We’re working on that.”

Dave’s prayer, and TBC’s, is that the hundreds of quotes and examples in Cosmos will not be used to condemn the lost, but to save them: “I was found of them that sought me not; I was made manifest unto them that asked not after me” (Romans 10:20b).

TBC BOOKSHELF — WILLIAM MacDONALD



WILLIAM MACDONALD was Dave's close personal friend for more than 40 years. It was our privilege to have him serve on the board of TBC. He was the author of more than 85 books translated into about 100 languages. They have been for many years (and will continue to be) a source of correction, comfort, edification, inspiration, and encouragement to multitudes. To the very end of his long and fruitful life, Bill was still writing. Sorely missed down here by those who knew and loved him, we are certain he has received a royal welcome from our Lord, the saints, and angels above.



God Still Speaks

MacDonald—God has spoken in varied ways to us—by creation, conscience, and circumstances. He has used people, angels, even animals to make His message known. In this highly readable book, the author tells more than 30 remarkable stories in which the Lord has spoken to people through Scripture. Gospel Folio Press, 160 pp.

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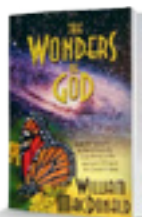
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TBC BOOKSHELF — A.W. TOZER



A.W. TOZER was 66 when he died of a heart attack on May 12, 1963. Buried in a small cemetery in Akron, Ohio, his tombstone simply and appropriately reads, "A Man of God." He left behind many books that continue to give Christians encouragement and guidance. His writings are as fresh today as when he was alive because, as a friend commented, "His books reach deep into the heart." His honest and colloquial humor has been known to sweep up congregations in gales of laughter, and his wisdom has left them silent and stunned. Today all who read his works benefit from an enduring legacy of a 50-year walk with God.



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Tozer—In this 12th book in a series of editorials, Tozer covers such topics as the steps to revival, the needed reformation, the Christian's hope, and the causes of religious confusion. WingSpread, 168 pp.

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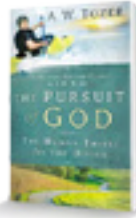
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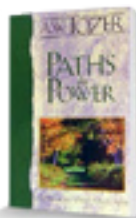
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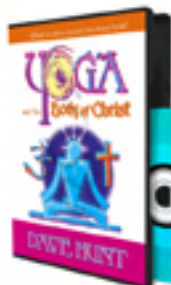
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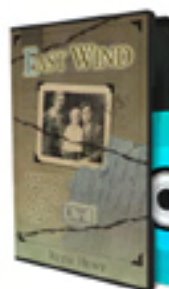
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