

Based on the film's climactic concluding dialogue, could we not draw from this Hollywood motion picture a supernatural forecast? Why couldn't one suppose this a prophetic word and that the exaggerated claims of divine impartation, spurious signs and wonders, and financially motivated and humanly orchestrated revival aptly demonstrated by the Nightengale character would literally and actually locate in Pensacola? After all, less than three years after Martin's role hit the big screen, the so-called "Pensacola Outpouring" began at the Brownsville Assembly of God with, like Nightengale, grandiose claims of God's miracles and wonders. It all fits so well — nearly perfectly.

You see, like the quatrains of Nostradamus, we can see whatever we want in interpreting a personal dream, a major sporting event, or a dramatic scene from a feature motion picture. However, we have a Bible that lays such teaching and insight all out clearly and perfectly for us. We have no need to look for truth in such ambiguous places as a College Bowl game, World Series games, NASCAR, Stanley Cup playoffs, or Hollywood. Peter's second epistle assures us that all we need for life and godliness is found in Scripture. Some biblical writers may have gotten good illustrations from first century sports, but never omens and prophecies. Theater and Greek sports were ignored, if not condemned, by the early Jews as well as Hebrew Christians.

Subjectively creating after-the-fact prophecies and meanings — all just derived from an overactive imagination — is not much different than the ancient pagan societies' obsession with divination from arrows and entrails of animals. When the Word of God is ignored, people become crazed with their own imaginations and imaginary meanings in things. Any guessed meaning could have any other number of unlimited possibilities or interpretations.

In his classic, *Biblical Demonology*, Merrill F. Unger discusses occult practices that began in Babylon, passed into Greece and Rome, and are still fashionable today in parts of Africa, Burma (Myanmar), and Borneo among pagan tribes. Meaning is imagined and interpreted from looking into various parts of an animal's liver for divine revelation and the will of the gods.

Unger says further: "Belomancy, or divination by arrows is represented by Ezekiel as being practiced in Babylon. ... (Ezek. 21:21). ...augury was deduced by the way they fell to the earth" (pg. 132).

A neater, cleaner, more sanitized version of augury is practiced by today's "prophets." It is not as disgusting as poking around in the bloody entrails of a dead animal and certainly sports themes sell well with the sports crazed American public. But what is the real difference? It is still fallen subjective imagination hard at work. On what basis could we be sure that the imaginings and interpretations are not given by demonic suggestion? After all, they are never brought to the Word of God for verification. Certainly our minds could be better used in a study of God's Word.

Christians need to retreat from the foolishness of such mysticism, paganism, Gnosticism, and subjectivism and get back to the objective Word of God. It has been said many times before, but bears repeating: "The Bible: Nothing more, nothing less, nothing else."

"And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts" (2 Peter 1:19).

The Bible is sufficient. We need not look for supernatural messages from the mundane or the bizarre.

—MKG

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## NEWS UPDATES

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Dake first published his *Dake Annotated Reference Bible* in 1963. The Bible contains the authorized King James text with extensive notes and commentary written by Dake. It has been hailed as "The Pentecostal Study Bible," but critics, including PFO, have labeled the work dangerous. The volume's explanatory notes are seedbeds for all types of heretical teaching, including an unscriptural view of God, open theism (or finite theism), a distorted Christology, corrupt views of salvation and faith, racism, and foundations for Word-Faith teaching. Some of faith healer Benny Hinn's most provocative theological declarations have been derived from Dake's writings.

Other prominent Charismatic and Word-Faith proponents have likewise expressed praise for the Dake Bible. Joyce Meyer said the Dake Bible "has made it easier for [her] to teach God's Word," and Pastor Rod Parsley calls the work "one of the greatest literary works ever made for Pentecostal and Charismatic believers." Similar acclaim for the Dake Bible comes from Creflo Dollar, Marilyn Hickey, and Ralph Wilkerson.

Following several significant criticisms of the Dake Bible in the 1990s, the publishing firm began quietly changing the Bible's commentary thereby modifying the very notes which were cited in the critiques as unorthodox, but claimed by Dake Publishing as within the realm of orthodoxy.

—MKG

## CATHOLICS DISAVOW LDS BAPTISM

The Vatican has announced that Roman Catholics will no longer accept as valid, baptisms performed by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. According to a news report posted on the Eternal Word Television

Network (EWTN) web site, "the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith determined that the faith of Mormons is sufficiently different from Christian doctrine so that the baptism conferred by that sect has a different significance."

Catholicism teaches that the legitimacy of the sacrament of baptism does not rely upon the virtue of the person administering the ordinance. The Council of Trent, held in the 16th century, determined that anyone, even a heretic, could bestow a valid baptism if it was executed "in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit," and with the intention of baptizing the individual into the Christian faith.

Father Luis Ladaria, a Jesuit theologian, indicates the judgment of the church is "a change from the past practice" wherein Catholics consider Mormon baptism as acceptable. The committee cited the LDS belief that God the Father is an exalted man with a celestial wife who procreated Jesus Christ. "The Vatican concluded, therefore, that 'this is not the Baptism that Christ instituted,'" the EWTN report stated.

Members of the Mormon faith have also been proxy baptized for Roman Catholic saints, including Saint Francis of Assisi and Joan of Arc. However, the church's decision made no direct verdict concerning the LDS baptisms for the dead. In April 1995, the LDS church agreed to remove from its baptismal records the names

of 380,000 Jews who died in the Nazi Holocaust and who had been baptized by proxy in Mormon temples.

—MKG

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## BOOKS IN REVIEW

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The NOI's holy book is the Qur'an. Although the Bible is considered to be a book of poison, "both can teach truth if interpreted by Elijah Muhammad, who in turn received proper interpretation from Allah (Fard)" (pg. 111). The white race is looked upon as being the devil. The NOI teaches the white race was "made (grafted) from the original black race by the will of Allah, who desired to test his people and then destroy the wicked whites" (pg. 118). It claims that "Christianity is the religion of whites and not the true religion of Allah" (pg. 124).

The last chapter, "A Christian Answer to the Nation of Islam," gives helpful, practical advice on how to knowledgably respond with understanding and truth. This work is a must read for those seeking to reveal God's Word effectively to people involved with or interested in the Nation of Islam.

—AMG

## PERSONAL FREEDOM OUTREACH — STATEMENT OF BELIEF

- I. THE BIBLE AS THE DIVINELY INSPIRED, INERRANT WORD OF GOD: IT IS IN ITS ENTIRETY THE SOLE AUTHORITY FOR ALL MATTERS OF CHRISTIAN BELIEF AND PRACTICE.
- II. THE ONE TRUE GOD. IN THE ONE TRUE GOD THERE EXIST THREE PERSONS, BEING: THE FATHER, THE SON JESUS CHRIST, AND THE HOLY SPIRIT.
- III. JESUS CHRIST: HIS DEITY, HUMANITY, VIRGIN BIRTH, SINLESSNESS, DEATH AND BODILY RESURRECTION; WHO WILL PERSONALLY AND VISIBLY RETURN AGAIN TO EARTH.
- IV. THE PERSONALITY AND DEITY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.
- V. THE EXISTENCE AND PERSONALITY OF SATAN, HIS TOTAL OPPOSITION TO GOD, AND HIS POWER OVER THE UNREGENERATE.
- VI. THE COMPLETE AND TOTAL DEPRAVITY OF ALL MEN WHICH MAKES THEM HOPELESSLY LOST WITHOUT THE NEW BIRTH OBTAINABLE THROUGH FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST.
- VII. THE FINAL ESTATE OF MAN: FOR THE SAVED, EVERLASTING LIFE IN THE PRESENCE OF GOD AND FOR THE UNSAVED, EVERLASTING PUNISHMENT BECAUSE OF THEIR UNBELIEF.
- VIII. THE GOSPEL BY WHICH WE ARE SAVED BEING SUMMED IN THE DEATH, BURIAL, AND RESURRECTION OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.
- IX. THE CHURCH BEING THE BODY OF CHRIST, UNITED IN THE HOLY SPIRIT, CONSISTING OF THOSE WHO HAVE RECEIVED JESUS CHRIST AS SAVIOR. A LOCAL CHURCH IS AN ORGANIZED ASSEMBLY OF BELIEVERS UNITED FOR THE PURPOSE OF CARRYING OUT THE GREAT COMMISSION OF CHRIST.
- X. THE GREAT COMMISSION OF CHRIST BEING TO PREACH THE GOSPEL TO ALL MEN, BAPTIZING AND DISCIPLING THOSE WHO HAVE BELIEVED.