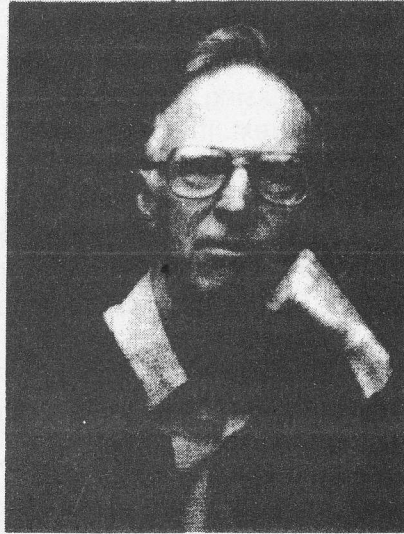


Christianity vs. the New Age — Where Lies the Truth? Part IV

by Dr. James Deardorff

In this series I discuss aspects of a New Age document—the Talmud of Immanuel (TJ)—and how it allows us to determine precisely where and why Christianity went astray. The TJ emerged from the Meier UFO-contactee case in 1978. Although that case has undergone strenuous debunking attempts by those who cannot accept the possibility of either an alien presence made manifest through contactees or of Christianity's basic beliefs being in error, the interested reader can be directed to refutations of the false claims involved by visiting my web site at: <http://www.proaxis.com/~deardorj>

Within the Christian church year the Transfiguration story is listed as being commemorated in August, at least within the Lutheran Church (LCA), of which I was once a member. So I may be only a month tardy if I choose this topic as an example of a Christian fallacy brought out not only by the TJ, but by "mainstream" Christian scholars. To begin, however, let us page back within the Gospel of Matthew (MT) from the Transfiguration (MT 17:1-13) to Jesus' tribute to John the Baptist. At the latter point we find a verse (MT 11:14) that is highly suggestive of Jesus having spoken about reincarnation: "and if you are willing to accept it, he [John] is Elijah who is to come." The TJ indicates in a parallel verse how



the original text read here, which the writer of Matthew altered in forming his gospel: "And if you want to accept it, he [John] is Elisha who will come again in his future life." Clearly, in the TJ this was referring to reincarnation.

The alteration was few in words, but great in meaning. By omitting the last phrase "in his future life," the writer of Matthew thought he was removing all implications of reincarnation, which even early Christianity could not condone (contrary to what one reads in certain New Age literature). By altering Elisha into Elijah—a small change—he was giving his own meaning to the idea that Elijah would "come again." Since Elijah had supposedly not died, but had been carried up into "heaven" within a whirlwind (2 Kings 2:11), he was believed

available to "come again." This concept within Judaism, which was the religion of the writer of Matthew before he converted to early Christianity, is known as "translation"—Elijah was "translated" up into heaven. To make clear what he meant, however, the writer invented the Transfiguration story in which Elijah appeared, along with Jesus and Moses. Elisha, Elijah's successor, did not undergo this kind of experience.

In the Transfiguration, after six days Jesus and three disciples climb a high mountain apart where Jesus suddenly appears transfigured, radiating bright white light, and then talks to Moses and Elijah, who make an appearance. God speaks to them out of a cloud, essentially repeating what was earlier spoken at the Baptism (MT 3:17). Later in the story, the writer explains that Elijah had already come (as John the Baptist), and the Transfiguration then indicated he was available to come still again, in support of MT 11:14.

Most mainstream scholars conclude the story is a myth because:

(1) The phrase "after six days" in MT 17:1 has no reference point in time, but rather appears to hark back to the Old Testament verse where Moses spent six days atop MT. Sinai and then the voice of God (or Yahweh) spoke to him *out of a cloud*.



The writer of Matthew held Moses in the highest esteem, as indicated by several allusions to Moses in his gospel, and wished to show that Jesus was even greater in stature.

(2) When Moses had come down from MT. Sinai, the skin of his face had shone because he had spoken with God (Exodus 34:30). (Ufologists may wish to liken this to the redness or rash experienced by some who have had too close an encounter.) The radiance in the Transfiguration story appears to relate to Moses's experience.

(3) In the story a "bright cloud overshadowed" them, with a voice (of God) then speaking out from it. This relates to the voice of God speaking to Moses atop MT. Sinai from the midst of a cloud (Exodus 24:16).

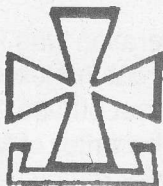
(4) As the four come back down from the "high mountain apart," they inexplicably find a crowd of people awaiting them.

There are more objections, for which the interested reader could access the commentary on Matthew by scholar Francis Beare. I should mention that such scholars, of the majority school of thought, believe that the Gospel of Mark came before Matthew, and tend to work this belief into their analyses. Here I can only direct the reader interested in this question to my website for links to articles indicating Matthew has priority over Mark, just as attested by the tradition on this dating back to the second century. One minority school of thought within scholasticism does support the traditional Synoptic Gospel

priority of Matthew-Mark-Luke, while another minority school supports Matthew-Luke-Mark. The criticisms listed above are independent of any belief on Gospel priority, however.

The TJ indicates that the Transfiguration story is no more than a myth invented by the compiler of Matthew simply by not possessing any traces of it within its text. It indicates the same for the healing which follows immediately thereafter, for which the crowd had inexplicably gathered beforehand, and for the rest of Matthew's chapter 17.

The New Age theme of reincarnation is only peripheral to the Transfiguration story, since the writer of Matthew utilized the story not only to explain Elijah's "translation," but also to express the Christian belief in resurrection. But reincarnation, and especially the subject of evolution of the human spirit or soul, is a basic, recurring theme within *The Talmud of Jmmanuel*.

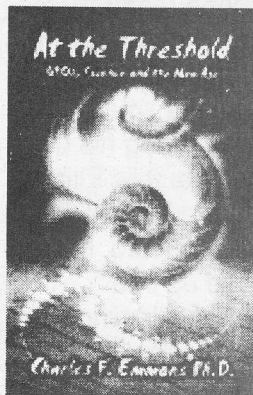


About...

Dr. James Deardorff holds a Ph.D. in meteorology from the University of Washington and served 16 years on the scientific staff of the National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR) in Boulder, Colorado, and as an Atmospheric Sciences professor at Oregon State University.

By 1980 Deardorff had become interested in the UFO phenomenon, and began studying the Meier UFO-contactee case. In 1985 he met Meier, examined his UFO photographs contained in four large volumes, and interviewed secondary witnesses. His interest in the importance of this UFO case and its associated documents, especially the *Talmud of Jmmanuel*, led him in 1986 to retire early from academia. Since then he has authored several scientific articles on UFO phenomena as related to the likelihood of ETs being in our vicinity and having strategies of dealing with us covertly. Most of his time since 1986, however, has been spent on becoming a New Testament scholar so as to better analyze the authenticity of *The Talmud of Jmmanuel*. His book, *Celestial Teachings: The Emergence of the True Testament of Jmmanuel*, is the result of six years of research on that topic that is still on-going.

Both *The Talmud of Jmmanuel* and *Celestial Teachings* are available from Wild Flower Press at 800/366-0264.



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