

A Christian Counselor



Exposing the JDS Heresy

- Did Jesus Redeem Man on the Cross or in Hell?
- Did Jesus Become Sin on the Cross or a Sin-offering?

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CHAPTER 1

THE JDS HERESY: EXPOSING THE FALSE DOCTRINE: JESUS DIED SPIRITUALLY

The question under consideration is: Did Jesus actually become "sin" at Calvary and experience spiritual death? The teachers of the JDS heresy insist that He did, whereas God's Word states repeatedly that His death was physical. We are redeemed "...through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ..." (Heb. 10:10).

Several years ago when this doctrine first began to be stressed by certain charismatic teachers, I designated this error, for the sake of brevity, as the JDS DOCTRINE (Jesus Died Spiritually). Therefore, it will be referred to as JDS in this book hereafter.

Did Jesus literally become "sin" on the cross as the JDS ministers teach, or was He a Sin-offering? Are you aware that the Bible clearly shows that Jesus was a Sin-offering, holy, and pure, just as the Old Testament type foreshadowed?

Did Jesus go to Hell for three days where He was united in nature with Satan who became His master? The JDS Doctrine teaches this error. The Bible, however, states that at death Jesus went to be with His heavenly Father, not to be with Satan in the Pit. As He died He said: "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit" (Luke 23:46).

Did Jesus redeem man in Hell or on the cross? The advocates of the JDS Doctrine teach that redemption was accomplished in the Pit! Jesus, however, contradicts this error with His own words from the cross, which indicate that He had completed His redemptive work there, for He said, "It is finished." Whatever deluded men may say to the contrary, these three words stand as a permanent rebuke to the JDS error.

Did the sinless Son of God become unregenerate and lost at Calvary? Did He have to be to be born again and justified from sin as the JDS ministers teach? The JDS position on this matter indicates the enormity of their delusion, for we are told again and again that the sinless Son of God was lost on the cross and had to be born again-in Hell of all places!

Not only is such teaching heresy, but we also find that the JDS Doctrine does not solve the problem of the redemption of sinners, it only creates a new problem: Who, then, died for Jesus to redeem Him from His unregenerate state and provide for His justification? Who provided an atonement for Him if He literally became sinful with sinful humanity?

Did the blood of Jesus atone for sin? This is the central purpose for the sacrificial shedding of blood in Scripture. Here once more the JDS teaching is shown to be totally out of harmony with the Word of God, although it is in line with the teaching of the religious cults and of Liberalism. One of the leading proponents of the JDS heresy states: "When his blood poured out, IT DID NOT ATONE, it did away with the handwriting of the ordinances that were against us" (Col. 2:14). He then adds that Jesus redeemed man, not on the cross, but in Hell.

Are you aware that one of the central doctrines of religious cult teaching is a denial of the blood atonement of Jesus Christ (See my book: Every Wind of Doctrine)? This statement alone from this "charismatic" minister, stating that the blood of Jesus did not atone, should be enough to alert any Bible-believing Christian to the source of such heresy. Even though the JDS teachers make some reference at times to the blood of Jesus from a seemingly biblical standpoint, nevertheless, they have destroyed its power to cleanse from sin by teaching that Jesus became an unholy sacrifice on the cross.

Again, was it total identification with sinners by Jesus on the cross, or was it a substitution for sinners? The distinction is important. The JDS ministers confuse the identification of Jesus with the human race at His birth with His substitution for sinners on the cross.

If He became literal "sin" and was lost and unregenerate at Calvary, then He would have been an unacceptable offering to God for the sins of others; whereas, if He remained pure and holy, as the Scriptures show, then God could accept Him as a substitute on the behalf of sinners. Only in this way could He fulfill the Old Testament type, whereby the animal for the sin-offering had to be spotless and without blemish. Moreover, the sin-offering was regarded as most holy even after its death.

This, then, is a general outline of what will be discussed in more detail in the following pages. Why should you be concerned about whether Jesus did or did not die spiritually? Because the Bible shows that your eternal salvation rests upon what you personally believe about the blood atonement of Jesus Christ! It is here-at the cross-not in the pit of Hell, that your salvation either stands or falls.

Those who currently embrace the false doctrine concerning the Atonement are guilty of heresy of the most serious kind. Its seriousness stems from the fact that if one believes this perverted doctrine he will find that in the end he has been robbed of the blood atonement on his behalf.

The Bible is emphatic on this matter. A sinner cannot redeem another sinner, especially if both are lost! One would think that this fact is too obvious to need any explanation. The guilty can only be redeemed by someone who is guiltless, and remains so both during and after the work of redemption. In such a case, the guiltless individual could then act as a substitute, suffering the punishment for which the guilty party is liable. He could not do so, however, if he himself had become guilty by identifying with sin as the JDS doctrine contends.

In this case, the guiltless, who had become guilty by identification, could no longer act as an acceptable substitute. The main thrust of the entire Old Testament sacrificial system, is to show that Jesus was a guiltless Substitute, Who, like the Old Testament type, remained pure and holy both on the cross and after His death.

Finally, it is suggested that the reader observe all the footnotes which will also set forth important information on certain texts cited by some of the JDS teachers. Such information was put in the footnotes when it was believed best not to overburden the discussion with too much detail.

CHAPTER 2

WHAT CONSTITUTES HERESY CONCERNING THE DOCTRINE OF CHRIST?

According to the Scriptures, heresy with regard to the Son of God is any doctrine or teaching which does not remain true to the Doctrine of Christ as set forth in the Word of God.

In 2 John 7-11, we are informed that those who deviate from the biblical teaching concerning Jesus Christ have departed from the truth and are designated as "deceivers." This is such a serious offense to God that we are warned to avoid these individuals because such deceivers have the spirit of antichrist. Read 2 John 7-11, and here you will see that those who ignore this solemn warning do so to their own peril. Merely to give them greeting makes one a partaker with them of their evil, and by implication such individuals will also partake in their judgment.

This passage is not simply to be limited to a test of whether or not one believes in the incarnation of Christ (as, for example, the denial of His eternal deity by the Modernists, the religious cults etc.),¹ but it encompasses the entire Doctrine of Christ.

The test for belief in the incarnation is found in verse 7 (cf. 1 John 4:1f.), whereas the full Doctrine of Christ test is in view in verses 9-11.

1. The early forms of Gnosticism also denied that the Christ became incarnate in Jesus. Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God (vs.9).

The Doctrine of Christ involves everything concerning Jesus Christ as contained in the Word of God: the O.T. prophecies; incarnation; virgin birth; sinless life; deity; substitutionary blood atonement; His resurrection; ascension; the Second Advent, and so on.

It should be understood from the outset that the JDS supporters do not adhere to the scriptural Doctrine of Christ, but have grossly perverted it, especially with regard to His blood atonement, and to the sinlessness of the Son of God during the period of the cross until His resurrection.

The seriousness of their departure from the biblical Doctrine of Christ is seen in the fact that the JDS Doctrine portrays Jesus as unregenerate on the cross and in Hell. In Hell He is said to have been born again, providing redemption from the Pit. The Scriptures, however, prove that Jesus Christ was always sinless and holy, fulfilling the Old Testament type, and that He completed the work of redemption on the cross. On the cross He declared, "It is finished," and at death He confessed that He was going to His heavenly Father, not to Satan in the Pit, saying "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit."

Thus, the false JDS Doctrine is plainly condemned by the Word of God. In an attempt to avoid the clear meaning of these passages, as well as others, the JDS teachers have been forced to change their obvious meaning to try to harmonize them with their erroneous doctrine. For example, although Jesus clearly stated that His work of redemption was finished on the cross, the JDS teachers boldly contradict Him by telling us that the redemptive work was not finished then, but was only beginning, inasmuch as it was to be completed in Hell. Moreover, like all others who deviate from the truth, the JDS proponents begin, not with the Word of God as a basis for their teachings, but with their erroneous doctrine, and then

leapfrog through the Bible searching for some alleged "proof texts" in an attempt to find support for their doctrine.

In addition to the warning in 2 John 7-11 concerning those who pervert the Doctrine of Christ, there are others also. The Apostle Peter warns of those who are "unlearned and unstable," and, as a consequence, wrest (twist, distort) the Scriptures unto their own destruction (2 Peter 3:16). The Apostle Paul speaks of those who in the latter days "...shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and the doctrines of demons" (1 Timothy 4:1). This does not necessarily mean such individuals always depart from religion, but from Bible faith and truth.

But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily (craftily) shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of (2 Pet. 2:1-2).

The warning is clear. False teachers will arise who craftily introduce heresies which deny the scriptural view of the Lord (which is precisely what the JDS teachers are doing in their denial of Christ's sinlessness on the cross, and by their perversion of the blood atonement). Moreover, it is predicted that many will believe these errors and follow them, just as it is happening today!

CHAPTER 3

WHAT HAPPENED FROM THE CROSS TO THE THRONE?

In an attempt to support the erroneous teaching that Jesus went to Hell and not to Heaven when He died, and that He redeemed sinners while in the Pit, the JDS ministers have concocted an imaginary "War-in-Hell" story, supposedly based upon Colossians 2:15.

The remarkable thing about this story is---there is not one shred of evidence in the Bible for such a fictional account, not even in the passage in Colossians to which they refer!

Colossians 2:15 reads:And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it.

From this one verse, which refers to the victory of Jesus being accomplished on the cross and not in Hell, the "War-in-Hell" story was invented. This fantasy is usually related with great emotion by its misty-eyed storytellers. While the War-in-Hell narrators are in general agreement on its major aspects, the details seem to vary from one storyteller to another, as some seem to vie with others in the embellishment of the heart-rending scenes which supposedly took place in the Pit.

It is easy to see why this is the case. With no basis in Scripture for their tale which might otherwise place some limits on their fertile imagination, and since the War-in-Hell tale has been passed along largely by word of mouth, the storytellers feel at liberty to fantasize almost to their heart's content.

A typical War-in-the-Pit version, gathered from the literature and recordings of the JDS ministers, runs in essence as follows:

Jesus became sin on the cross when he yielded himself to Satan. He swallowed up the evil nature of Satan, thus becoming one in nature with the Adversary. Jesus became the Serpent lifted up (John3) when he took on the diabolical nature of Satan himself. At this point he was a "lost" man, crying, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" He had now died spiritually.

Upon his physical death (he died twice), his spirit was taken into the Pit of Hell, where he was chained with the fetters of sin, disease, and with all the evil of Satan. The Devil stood before the choir of Hell directing the demonic hosts who gleefully chorused: "We have won; we have conquered the Son of God!"

There followed a gala celebration in the Pit, inasmuch as Satan now believed he had triumphed over God. However, what he did not know was that Jesus, when he became sin and took on Satan's evil nature, was acting as a substitute for sinners by identifying as a lost man with them. He was, therefore, abandoned by God who was no longer his Father, inasmuch as Satan was now his master.

Jesus suffered agonies beyond description in the Pit for three days as all the hosts of Hell were upon him. Then suddenly--he was justified! From his throne in heaven, Almighty God arose, put his hands to his mouth and screamed: "It is finished, it is enough!" Jesus was now born again and made spiritually alive once more.

Hell itself was shaken; Jesus shook off his chains of sin, sickness, and evil. He walked over to the Devil, grabbed him and threw him to the ground. As the Devil cowered and trembled on the floor of the Pit, Jesus put his foot on top of him and took the keys of death, Hell, and the grave from Satan.

At this juncture, the Holy Spirit kicked open the gates of Hell and raised Jesus from death. He then ascended to the Father and announced: "I have paid the price; the prison is now open."

It was a born again man who defeated Satan. Jesus is the firstborn from the spiritually dead. Thus, it was when Jesus was made alive down in the Pit that the believer was also made alive. The Church had its origin in the Pit of Hell when Jesus was begotten from the dead as the "firstborn among many brethren."

Is this what happened from the cross to the throne? Is this what lies hidden beneath the surface of Colossians 2:15? Are you puzzled that you have never read such an amazing account in the pages of your Bible? Then do not be, for the preceding story is fiction from the beginning to end. It has its origin, not in the Bible, but in the fertile imagination of the deluded and gullible JDS teachers.

If one cares for the facts, without any dramatic embellishment, they are quite simply stated by the Apostle in Colossians 2:15. Here he states that the work of redemption was accomplished on the cross, not through some imaginary "War-in-Hell" piece of fiction concocted by the JDS in the Blotting out [of] the handwriting of ordinances that war against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, **NAILING IT TO HIS CROSS**: having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them **IN IT**.

In both verses we are informed that the work of redemption was completed on the cross. In verse 14 the Law which had declared us as guilty and demanded our eternal death was removed, being figuratively nailed to the cross when Jesus was nailed to the cross and died on our behalf.

In verse 15 we are informed that it was also on the cross, not three days later in the Pit of Hell, that Jesus triumphed over the principalities and powers of Satan's kingdom. This is seen in the Apostle's words "triumphing over them **IN IT**" (or by it). The words "in it" obviously refer to "His cross" of verse 14.

Besides the King James version, other translations express the fact that Christ's triumph was on the cross, not in the Pit. The last part of verse 15 is variously translated as follows:
...and he held them up to open contempt, when he celebrated his triumph over them on the cross. 1

...he made a public display of them, triumphing over them by the cross. 2

...he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross. 3

1. 20th, Century N.T.

2. The N.T., Williams.

3. NIV; Greek-English N.T., Marshall. The NASV along with some other versions translates "in it" as "in him." Supporters of the JDS Doctrine like this better as they feel that they can fit it into their "War-in-Hell" theory, since it leaves open the question as to **WHEN** Jesus triumphed over Satan.

The Greek is 'ev avtw which can be translated either as "in it" or "in him." However, in view of the fact that the context is the cross, several of the versions have expressed this by translating the phrase as "in it" (the cross), or "by the cross." Cf. also Amplified Bible.

CHAPTER 4

A REFUTATION FROM SCRIPTURE OF THE BASIC JDS ERRORS

In the preceding discussion the general scope of the JDS heresy was set forth in order to give the reader an overall view concerning the unbiblical nature of this doctrine. Now there will be presented a scriptural refutation of the basic teachings regarding the JDS errors which are based upon their contention that Jesus literally became "sin" with mankind's sinfulness and died spiritually.

Contrary to JDS teaching, the Scriptures clearly show that Jesus remained pure and holy, both on the cross and in His death.

Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things...but with the precious blood of Christ, as a lamb without blemish and without spot (I Pet. 1:18-19).

If one knows anything at all concerning the typical nature of the Old Testament sacrifices, especially the sin-offering, then the erroneous nature of the JDS contention, which states that Jesus actually became "sin," is all too evident. The JDS teachers and their supporters reveal a serious lack of understanding concerning the meaning and nature of the biblical sacrifices. Following the Old Testament type, Jesus did not become "sin"--He was a sin-offering. The sin-offering was MOST HOLY to God. This important fact will be evident in the discussion which follows.

Point 1

SIN, OR A SIN-OFFERING AT CALVARY?

If Jesus literally became sin as the JDS Doctrine teaches, this would have violated the Old Testament type.

The Old Testament animal type, which was to die as a substitute for the sinner, had to be without spot or blemish (Lev. 4:3, 27-28; (:3; Deut. 15:21). This requirement, which was stated again and again, was for the purpose of teaching Israel (and the Church) the lesson, which is apparently lost to the JDS teachers, that a substitute which would be acceptable to God had to be holy and guiltless itself in order to bear the punishment for the guilt of the sinner.

This truth was ritually depicted in the Old Testament requirement that the animal substitute must be without spot or blemish; this fact was actually realized in Jesus, the Lamb of God, who "...offered himself without spot to God..." (Heb.9:14).

When the JDS teachers insist that Jesus literally became sin and had to be born again, they expose the basic flaw in their heretical doctrine which stems from their apparent ignorance of the nature of the Old Testament sacrifices, especially the sin-offering. In addition, as will be shown, there seems to be a lack of knowledge of the Hebrew and Greek languages of the Bible which is also reflected in their erroneous teachings.

As the Old Testament clearly shows, the sin-offering at no point became an unholy sacrifice, either before or after its death. Obviously, this fact is diametrically opposed to the JDS Doctrine which contends that Jesus actually became "sin" (2 Cor. 5:21) by taking upon Himself Satan's evil nature, and became an unholy sacrifice consigned to Hell.

In Leviticus 6:25-29 we are clearly informed that the sin-offering was MOST HOLY to God both before and after its death. In fact, even after its death in substitution for the sinner it

remained most holy. Only the anointed priest could touch it and eat it (he could not touch or eat anything unclean), and it was to be eaten in the Holy Place of the Tabernacle. Moreover, anything or anyone that touched the sin-offering after it had been sacrificed also became holy!

This fact alone is evidence of the sacredness of the sin-offering in God's sight, for even after its death it remained most holy to Him. JDS teaching which attempts to make Jesus unholy and unregenerate is clearly out of harmony with the Word of God. For example, in Leviticus 6 God says:

Speak unto Aaron and to his sons, saying, this is the law of the sin offering: In the place where the burnt offering is killed shall the sin offering be killed before the Lord: it is most holy.

The priest that offereth it for sin shall eat it; in the holy place shall it be eaten in the court of the tabernacle of the congregation.

Whatsoever shall touch the flesh thereof shall be holy ...All the males among the priests shall eat thereof: it is most holy (Lev. 6:25-29; cf. 7:1f.)

1. In the case of the sin-offering for the priest, it was burned in clean place without the camp, signifying it was holy. It was burned without the camp and not on the altar to keep from confusing it with the whole burnt-offering. Although the sin-offering of an individual was eaten by the priests, he could not eat of his own as it was most holy to God, and so it was burned in a clean place (Lev. 4).

This passage in itself is sufficient to disprove the false which teaches that Jesus became sin with man's sinfulness and had to be born again. He was a Sin-offering, not sin, and was, therefore, holy in the cross and after His death in fulfillment of the Old Testament type. Why all the stress on the Old Testament animal type being holy unto God if the antitype, the Lamb of God, was to become "sin" and constitute an unholy sacrifice?

The JDS Doctrine does not have Jesus fulfilling the Old Testament prophetic type at the most vital point--in His sacrificial death as a holy, sinless Substitute for sinners. The Word of God states clearly that the sin-offering, a type of God's Lamb, was most holy to God in its death; the JDS Doctrine teaches that the antitype, the actual Lamb of God, became sin and unholy, and was totally abandoned and rejected by God in His death. The contradiction between God's Word and man's theories should be evident to all.

THE HEBREW TERM

The JDS Doctrine overlooks another fact which has to do with the Hebrew term for "sin" and "sin-offering." Evidently the JDS teachers are unaware of the fact that these two English terms are one and the same term in the Hebrew language!

As a consequence, the JDS ministers stress the "letter" of the word as used in 2 Corinthians 5:21: "For he hath made him sin, who knew no sin..."

However, the Apostle Paul knew, as did every other Hebrew, that when one spoke in the Hebrew language about the sin-offering he used the Hebrew term, chatta't, 1 which was also the word for "sin."

1. Transliterations in this book follow the modern Hebrew (Sefardic), rather than the "classical" pronunciation generally taught in religious schools, because of the revival of spoken Hebrew (sefardic) in Israel.

That is, the term translated as "sin-offering" and "sin" in one and the same in Hebrew. It was the context in which the term was used which expressed whether one was speaking about the sin-offering or sin itself.

For example, if the context concerned the subject of sacrifices, then the "sin-offering" was understood to be meant by the Hebrew term *chatta't*; the sacrifice was called by the name of the offense (sin) for which it was to die on the sinner's behalf. 1 If sin itself was under discussion, then the same term, *chatta't*, could be used, but in this instance with the obvious meaning of "sin," not the sin-offering. 2 In Leviticus, for instance, the term *chatta't* is used for sin itself on several occasions, but it also stands for the sin-offering over 50 times.

As an Israelite, the Apostle Paul clearly had the sin-offering in view in 2 Corinthians 5:21, inasmuch as the term for sin and the sin-offering is identical to Hebrew. The Apostle simply follows here the customary practice of the Jewish translators when rendering Hebrew into Greek.

This is confirmed also by the Jewish Septuagint translators who used the Greek term for "sin," *hamartia*, to translate the Hebrew term for the sin-offering in their translation of the Hebrew Old Testament into Greek (cf. Lev. 5:11; 6:25, and 7:27 in the Greek Septuagint).

No Jewish Christian, unlike the JDS teachers, would have confused "sin" with the sin-offering, even though they are expressed by the same term in Hebrew. This is also true with regard to the terms trespass and trespass-offering;

1. The term "curse" (Gal. 3:10-13) is also to be understood in this sense. Death was the curse of the Law (Deut. 28). Thus, Christ was made a "curse" in the sense that He suffered the curse of the Law (death) on our behalf. However, He was not cursed as sin as the JDS Doctrine erroneously teaches.

2. Other Hebrew terms meant: "iniquity"; "transgression"; "rebellion," and so on. the basic term, however, was *chatta't*, meaning sin or sin-offering.

They are the same term in Hebrew--'asham. The substitutionary offering of Christ is called a trespass-offering ('asham in the Hebrew of Isaiah 53:10). The KJV and the ASV translate this term as "an offering for sin," indicating thereby that His death on the cross is to be regarded as a "trespass-offering" for sinners, not that He Himself became a "trespass" of "sin" as the JDS teachers incorrectly assert (note ASV margin: Heb. "a trespass-offering").

In addition to the Septuagint translators using the Greek term for "sin" to translate the Hebrew term for "sin-offering," this usage is also found in the Book of Hebrews. This is evident from Hebrews 10:6 where we read: "In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin..." Here again only the Greek term for "sin" occurs in the Greek New Testament, but it is used in the sense of "sin-offering." The translators of the English version are aware of the fact, inasmuch as they translate the term "sin" as meaning "sin-offering." This is evident in that they supply (in *Italics*) the word "sacrifices," signifying that the term "sin" is being used by the writer of Hebrews to express the sacrifice for sin (sin-offering) and not actual sin itself.

This is in harmony both with the context in which burnt-offerings are mentioned, and with common Hebrew usage as shown earlier. Likewise the ASV (margin) on Romans 8:3 also supplies the words "as an offering" for sin. The Apostle Paul here, as he does no doubt in 2 Corinthians 5:21, uses the term "sin" in the sense of the "sin-offering."

Furthermore, in support of this usage some of the versions either translate 2 Corinthians 5:21 as "sin-offering," or as the equivalent choice in the margin. 1

1. The N.T., Williams; R.V., NIV; Greek-English N.T., Marshall.

It is significant that the Apostle Paul states in I Corinthians 1:30 that Christ was made, not sin, but "righteousness" unto us in a passage where he deals with the cross (cf. 1:18). 1 Since he obviously would not contradict himself, then 2 Corinthians 5:21 should have been translated according to Hebrew usage as "sin-offering."

For he hath made him a sin-offering for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

The sin-offering did not typify something sinful at death to the Jews as the JDS ministers depict Christ, but it typified a sinless sacrifice for sin. This is precisely the New Testament view concerning the death of Jesus Christ Who "...offered himself without spot to God..." (Heb. 9:14; cf. I Peter 1:18-19). 2

1. Another example of how the JDS teachers twist the intended meaning of a passage is seen here. They substitute for the statement that Christ has become our righteousness the erroneous concept that He had to be made righteous Himself since he had become sin! The Apostle is clearly stating here that Jesus is our means of right standing with God.

2. The KJV rendering Hebrews 9:28 as Jesus will "...appear the second time without sin unto salvation" is clear in meaning. However, the term "without" is *choris* in Greek with the meaning here of "apart from." That is, the First Advent was to bear away sin; the Second will be with reference to the realization of our salvation. Many versions give a clearer translation of the Greek term as: "apart from sin"; "not to deal with sin"; "not as a sin bearer," etc.

Point 2

IDENTIFICATION, OR SUBSTITUTION ON THE CROSS?

The JDS teachers contend erroneously that Jesus had to become "sin" on the cross in order to identify with sinners at all points. Only in this way could He redeem them.

This inaccurate conclusion also stems from a lack of understanding concerning the meaning of the Old Testament sacrifices. The second lesson God was teaching Israel (and the Church) through the sin-offering, as well as all the sacrifices, was the Doctrine of Substitution--not identification. The distinction is very important.

Aside from the obvious fact that God's Word shows that no sinner could redeem another sinner (seen in the O.T. requirement for the animal substitute to be without spot, as well as the N.T. stress upon the holy, spotless nature of Jesus and His sacrifice, Heb. 9:14), the Scriptures do not teach identification with sinners on the cross, but substitution. No

acceptable substitute could possibly identify with the sinful, guilty individual he was to redeem.

Jesus identified with mankind in His birth when the Son of God took upon Himself human nature; but in His sacrificial death He became the sinner's substitute.

The Scriptures clearly teach that He identified with humanity at His birth, not in His death. This is seen, for example, in Hebrews 2:14-18. Verse 14 reads: Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same...

This passage shows that the Son of God took upon Himself human nature for two reasons: (1) so that through His endurance of temptations He could succour us in our temptations; and (2) so that He could offer His body as a sacrifice in order to reconcile man to God.

The Scriptures just as clearly teach that His death signifies substitution FOR sinners, not identification WITH sinners.

But God commendeth his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us (Rom. 5:8).

It was substitution, not identification at Calvary, "...the just for the unjust..." (I Peter 3:18). While we were sinners, Christ, the sinless One, died for us. Nothing could be clearer. A sinner on the cross would be dying for his own sins; thus, Jesus became a sin-offering, not sin, in order to fulfill the Old Testament type.

If Jesus actually became "sin" with our sinfulness on the cross He would have been dying for Himself. This is such an obvious fact that one JDS teacher was compelled to admit this conclusion. This individual said:

Jesus did not merely die for us, He died for himself. He died twice--once for himself when he became sin, and once for us.

Of course, this teacher did not see the glaring contradiction in this statement. Anyone who had to die for himself because he had become sin would thereby be disqualified to be a substitute for other sinners. But then, the whole JDS Doctrine is a contradiction to the biblical Doctrine of Christ and His substitutionary Atonement. Identification with sinners? What saith the Scripture? God's Word declares that Jesus was ...holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners(Heb. 7:26).

Thus, the JDS teachers erroneously misuse the terms "substitution" and "identification." They teach that when Jesus became "sin" He identified with sinners; then, as unregenerate and sinful in nature, He suffered God's punishment in Hell as the sinner's substitute. That is, contrary to the biblical requirement that the substitute be (and remain) holy, the JDS Doctrine teaches that Jesus substituted Himself as the unregenerate, guilty person, Who took into His spirit all the sin and evil of the human race, and was punished in place of the sinner.

On the contrary, the Scriptures show that Jesus, as the Old Testament type also indicated, did not become "sin," but was a holy sin-offering. He did not identify with sinners, but was a sinless substitute for them on the cross. Jesus was not a SUBSTITUTE SINNER, but the SINNER'S SUBSTITUTE on the cross.

The JDS teachers contend, on the basis of Numbers 21, which presents the account of the lifting up of the brazen serpent for the healing of those bitten by the fiery serpents, that Jesus was also lifted up as a "serpent" when He was made "sin" on the cross and took on the evil nature of Satan. Quoting John 3:14, "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up," they contend that Jesus became one with the serpent, Satan, and died spiritually.

The account in Numbers 21, however, does not support this fantasy. God sent fiery serpents as punishment against the rebellious Israelites. As a result of the intercession of Moses, God directed him to make a figure of a serpent, in brass, to be elevated on a pole so that it could be seen from all quarters in the camp. All who looked in faith in its direction were healed. The brazen serpent did not produce healing; it was merely an emblem. It spoke of their sin and the nature of divine judgment sent to punish it. Their faith in God's promise to heal brought deliverance when they obeyed this requirement. Without question, merely to look upon an inanimate object, the serpent of brass, would not have produced healing for an individual unless faith was also present.

By analogy, if Jesus became a "serpent" in nature as the JDS error teaches, then healing was provided by Satan, the Serpent, in Numbers 21, and not God, since healing came as they looked to the serpent on the pole! Clearly, then, Jesus had reference to the manner of His death in John 3:14--He was to be "lifted up" on the cross; he was not referring to a change in His nature, from holy to unholy and sinful. 1

1. JDS teachers sometimes cite Ephesians 2:5, "Even when we were dead in sins [God] hath quickened us together with Christ" as meaning that Christ, as we, also being dead in "sin" had to be made alive! However, verse 6 indicates clearly that the Apostle speaks here of the resurrection.

This fact is clearly stated in the same Gospel of John and proves that the phrase "lifted up" has reference to the manner of His death, not a change in nature, from sinless to serpent. He was signifying that He was to be "lifted up" on a cross.

And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.
This he said, signifying what death he should die (John 12:32-33).

The reader should not be deluded by the use of biblical terminology at times by the JDS teachers, such as the use of terms like "substitution," "blood atonement," "identification," "justification," "firstborn," "Abrahamic covenant," and so on. This caution is necessary because the JDS ministers most definitely do not use these terms and concepts according to their biblical meaning and usage many times. For example, they destroy, by their erroneous interpretations, the validity of these terms and concepts in their scriptural sense when they teach that Jesus was sinful "substitute"; or that Jesus' death fulfilled the "Abrahamic Covenant," when in actual fact it was the fulfillment of the Mosaic covenant of the Law as will be shown. By teaching that Jesus was a sinful substitute, Who identified with sinners on the cross, the biblical meaning of the term "substitute" is perverted; and by making Jesus evil in nature Who needed to be born again Himself, they have robbed His blood of its purity and atoning power.

WHAT CONSTITUTES BEING A SINNER?

To answer this question will indicate why Jesus was not identified with sinners, becoming one in nature with them, on the cross. What constitutes being a sinner?

□ (1) He is sinful by nature. All men are said to be "...by nature the children of wrath..." (Eph. 2:3; cf. Rom. 3:9-23; 5:12f.).

However, Jesus, in His human nature, was holy. His birth did not come through Joseph, but was supernaturally wrought by the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:33-35).

□ (2) He is sinful in his actions, thoughts, and speech. According to the Scriptures men sin in thought, word, and in deeds (Gen. 6:5; Ps. 14; Rom. 1-3). However, Jesus lived without the commission of any act of sin (Heb. 4:15).

Jesus, therefore, lacks the "qualifications" to act as the sacrifice for the JDS teachers; they wou have to look elsewhere than to the sinless Son of God! Their "substitute" is precisely that--a substitute--who is not the Jesus of the Bible.

Confronted with this fact, some JDS ministers have begun to say, "Well, Jesus did not personally sin; he was made to be sin by God. He took upon himself the sinfulness of the human race and became evil in nature with Satan's nature."

This is impossible inasmuch as sin is a personal act of disobedience to the will of God. Jesus never once disobeyed His Father, and most certainly not on the cross, for here He was in God's perfect will (John 3:16), and in nature, He was sinless.

And yet, it is here--on the cross that the JDS teachers make Him to be sin and unregenerate. Moreover, they actually charge the heavenly Father with the act of making His Son to be "sin." However, if God, according to His own Word, cannot tempt any man to sin (James 1:13), then how could He conceivably be charged with making His sinless Son to become actual sin?

Sin is moral in nature. Jesus could not have become immoral or unregenerate merely by a divine fiat; it would require Him to commit an act of sin personally by His own choice. One cannot arbitrarily make someone else a sinner or cause him to become sin simply by declaring it to be so, ipso facto, as the JDS supporters attempt to do with regard to Jesus on the cross.

Sin is not something tangible like a coat of black paint with which God painted His Son; nor is it like an inoculation of germs which some scientist could inject into the bloodstream as the Nazis did to some of their victims during the last World War. Sin is an act, whether in deed, word, or thought, which one must personally commit. This rules out all possibility that Jesus could be made "sin." He was a holy "sin-offering" unto God just as the Old Testament type depicted.

Furthermore, if, as the JDS teachers contend, Jesus were required to become "sin" so that He could identify with the fallen human race at all points, then He failed to accomplish such a complete identification. Why? Because He would have had to submit to temptations and to commit some sin during His lifetime just as all men do--if He were required to identify with men at all points. But the Scriptures are emphatically clear on this matter--Jesus Christ was without sin (John 8:46; Heb. 4:14-15). The JDS teachers completely ignore this fact.

In addition, it would have been necessary for Jesus to have identified with sinful humanity at His birth also. He would, like all men, have had to be born with a sinful, fallen nature; that is, if

identification at all points is required in order to make Him a "substitute sinner," instead of a "sin-offering," for sinners.

However, as Hebrews chapter 2 teaches, it was only required, in order to redeem man, that Jesus clothe Himself with human nature (not sinful nature) so that as man He could experience death by offering His body as a sacrifice to God. His birth was supernatural; it was a virgin birth wrought by the holy Spirit. Thus, He did not partake of man's sinful fallen nature, although He did clothe Himself with human nature. It will be shown later in this study that God's Word teaches that Jesus died only physically as a "sin-offering," not spiritually as sin.

Point 3

RIGHTEOUS, OR UNRIGHTEOUS ON THE CROSS?

The JDS position is, of course, that since Jesus became sin on the cross He was unrighteous until born again in the Pit of Hell.

However, Isaiah 53 depicts Jesus Christ on the cross as God's righteous Servant Who was sent to be our substitute and to suffer the punishment due us for our guilt.

He is declared to be innocent Himself and dying for our transgressions in verses 5-6 and 9.

He is declared in verse 10 as an "offering for sin," not sinful as the JDS Doctrine asserts (the literal Hebrew is "a trespass-offering").

He is called by God while on the cross "my righteous servant" in verse 11.

Finally, in verse 12 God states that while on the cross Jesus, "made intercession for the transgressors,; which he could not have done had He been counted as a transgressor or sinful Himself at this time. He suffered as an offering for sin; He suffered the punishment for the guilt of our transgressions.

His righteous state on the cross is also seen in the fact that one of the thieves crucified at this time was saved while Jesus was dying on the cross! Jesus promised him salvation, saying, "Today, shalt thou be with me in paradise," It should be evident that if, like the thief, Jesus were also at this time righteous (as JDS Doctrine teaches), then he could not have granted salvation to another sinful, lost individual. According to JDS teaching, redemption was purchased in Hell, not on the cross. Following their view, then Jesus made the thief an empty promise by telling him he would go to paradise with Him that same day, when actually, in order for the thief to be with Jesus, he too would have had to go to Hell for three days where the JDS teachers send their Jesus!

It is important to note also that Jesus did not manifest an unregenerate or unrighteous nature on the cross. In contrast to the other thief who railed at Him, Jesus prayed for His enemies, saying, "Father forgive them." Since the JDS teachers insist that Jesus took on Satan's evil nature, then this is hardly what we would expect from someone who had become unregenerate as "sin" and who had the Devil's evil nature. Satan's nature, it hardly needs to be pointed out, is the antithesis of love and forgiveness.

It should be evident, therefore, if Jesus became sin with our sinfulness, then He would have had no righteousness to impute to us. But Jesus was righteous on the cross according to Scripture: "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous..." (I Peter 3:18). This means He was righteous while He suffered on the cross, contrary to the JDS Doctrine which teaches that Jesus became sin and was unrighteous at Calvary. However, God called Him "My righteous servant" while He hung on the cross (Isa. 53:11).

THE DOCTRINE OF IMPUTATION OF SIN AND RIGHTEOUSNESS

In the study of biblical theology, the Scriptural doctrine of imputation shows that sin or righteousness can be imputed or charged to another's account in a legal sense. In the case of Jesus and His sacrifice as a sin-offering, it indicates that He did not actually become "sin" but remained sinless so that He could bear the punishment for our guilt, which was imputed to Him.

Only a brief summary of the subject will be given here in order to indicate the unscriptural nature of the JDS Doctrine which erroneously teaches a literal transfer of "sins" to Jesus whereby He became sinful with our sinfulness, whereas it was the punishment for the guilt of our sins which was imputed to Him that He bore on our behalf on the cross. For a detailed study of Imputation, Justification, and the Atonement, my Biblical Theology tapes are available.

The JDS teachers state that Jesus actually became sin with our sinfulness and had to be made righteous again. But the term in Hebrew and Greek for righteousness or justification does not mean to make righteous or just, whether used with reference to God or man. Inasmuch as God is righteous, then He could not be made righteous. And with regard to the believer, God's righteousness is imputed or charged to us through our faith in Jesus Christ. To impute means to charge something to one's account legally. Our faith, the Scriptures declare, is accounted unto us for righteousness (Rom.4:22-24). Righteousness was imputed to Abraham because of his faith, according to Genesis 15:6, And he believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness.

The entire chapter of Romans 4 deals with the subject of imputation, as it applies to Abraham and the Christian believer. In speaking of Abraham's faith the Apostle states:
And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness.
Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe...(Romans 4:22-24).

Thus, through faith in Jesus Christ and His blood atonement God counts us as righteous by imputing His righteousness to us--That is, He charges Christ's righteousness to our account. He then treats us as if we had fulfilled His Law (Rom.8:4). Our faith is counted unto us for righteousness which we do not inherently possess in ourselves. He has become our righteousness (I Corinthians 1:30;cf. Phil.3:9; Rom.3:10, 21-22).

In the Old Testament, when offering a sin-offering, the sinner first laid hands upon the animal to symbolize the transference of the liability for punishment for the guilt of his sin upon his innocent substitute. Obviously, this was not a moral transfer of the actual sin or guilt, but a legal transaction in which the substitute became liable for the punishment of the guilty party.

In much the same way, a person who is innocent may assume legal guilt and liability for punishment for a friend who has violated some traffic law and is unable to pay his penalty or fine. In this case, the person, who is innocent himself, becomes his substitute and suffers the penalty in his place. The substitute does not become actually guilty; he merely assumes the legal liability for the punishment of the guilty party.

In this sense, the punishment for our guilt was laid upon Christ, our sin-offering and substitute. the Prophet Isaiah confirms this, saying, "All we like sheep have gone astray...and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all" Isaiah 53:6. In verse 11 God speaks of Him, as noted previously, as "My righteous servant," Who would bear the punishment for our iniquities.

The biblical doctrine of imputation means that the punishment for our guilt was imputed to Christ on the cross; and, conversely, His righteousness is imputed to us upon the exercise of faith in Him and His substitutionary death. Imputation signifies something which is reckoned, charged, or placed to someone's account.

As shown previously, just as the biblical term for "righteousness" does not mean to make righteous, neither was Jesus actually made sin. This is the basic flaw in the entire JDS SYSTEM, indicating once more a failure to comprehend the nature of the Doctrine of Atonement from the overall viewpoint of the Scriptures.

The term "righteous" means, with respect to God, that He IS righteous. It is always a declarative statement of the fact that He is righteous in nature; God cannot be made righteous. And in reference to the believer it means that he is counted as righteous by virtue of having Christ's righteousness imputed or charged to him; that is, charged to his account.

In precisely the same sense as His righteousness is imputed to us legally, so the liability for the punishment of our guilt was legally and vicariously imputed to Him. He bore the liability for the punishment for our guilt or sin; it is in the sense that "...the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all..." Isaiah 53:6. As an innocent substitute, He became our sin-offering which remained most holy unto God even in death (Lev. 6;25f.), unlike the "Jesus" of JDS teaching, which became actual "sin" with the world's sinfulness.

The imputation of the punishment for the guilt of our sins has reference only to the legal liabilities which Christ assumed on our behalf. Imputation does not imply a transference to Him of our actual sins whereby He became sinful and had to be born again. Our sins, as regards their moral character, were our own; they could not, by imputation, become someone else's. However, the legal liability of our sins could be imputed to Christ with regard to their punishment. This is sometimes figuratively spoken of as the transference of the sins themselves (Isa. 53:6), which presents no problem to any Christian who views the Doctrine of the substitutionary atonement from the entire context of Scripture, and not merely from a verse here and there based upon some English translation.

The imputation of our sins to Jesus Christ was, therefore, not a transference of the actual transgressions themselves, which, as has been shown, is morally impossible. Just as seen in the death of the Old Testament sin-offering, Christ made Himself liable to endure the penalty for our sins. On the cross and in His death, He was a holy, spotless sin-offering, not sinful with our sins; this would have violated the Old Testament type (Lev.6), and would have disqualified Him as an acceptable substitute to God. The Doctrine of the substitutionary blood atonement, as set forth in Scripture, is clearly out of agreement with the Doctrine of atonement taught by the JDS fraternity.

Point 4

JUSTIFIED, OR THE JUSTIFIER

The JDS teachers appeal to I Timothy 3:16 in their search through the Scriptures in an attempt to find a verse here or there which may use some term that seems to lend support to their erroneous doctrine. Since this verse uses the term "was justified" in reference to Jesus (in the English translation), they have jumped to the conclusion that this must mean that Jesus had to be justified or made righteous from sin. This conclusion is, of course, based upon their own Doctrine of the atonement in which their "Jesus" is sent into the Pit having been made "sin" and possessed with an evil, satanic nature. As such he had to be made righteous once more, justified, and born again.

The verse in question reads: And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in [the] Spirit...

Anyone who has studied the Greek language of the New Testament is aware that the term translated as "was justified" in this verse means as the Greek lexicons indicate, "to declare as righteous," or to show to be righteous." For example, Thayer's Greek Lexicon translates this verse in this sense: Jesus was "evinced to be righteous as to his spiritual nature."

As shown in the preceding discussion, with regard to the doctrine of Justification in Scripture, the term "dikaioo" does not mean "to make someone righteous or just," but means "to announce or declare as righteous or just." The Old Testament usage indicates this fact also.

Thus, this verse does not teach that Jesus Christ was made to be righteous (for He never ceased to be), but that He was shown to be righteous; namely, by His holy life and because of His resurrection from the dead.

Because this is the sense of this term, the translators of several of the versions seek to indicate this fact by translating this verse as follows:

- was vindicated by the Spirit 1
- was declared righteous in spirit 2
- was pronounced righteous in spirit 3
- in the Spirit was attested [as righteous] 4
- was proved righteous by the Spirit 5
- was given God's approval in the spirit 6
- was proved spotless and pure in His Spirit 7

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1. The N.T., Williams.
 2. The Emphasized Bible.
 3. 20th. Century N.T.
 4. N.T. in Modern English
 5. Weymouth's N.T. in Modern Speech.
 6. N.T. in Basic English
 7. Living Letters: The paraphrased Epistles (Taylor). NIV is also same as Williams.

Even without a knowledge of Greek or biblical theology, one would have thought that the JDS ministers would have at least availed themselves of what the translators of some of the versions believed I Timothy 3:16 means. It could have saved them, in this case at least, from such an inexcusable blunder or teaching that the Son of God had to be justified and made righteous, and then appealing to a verse which does not teach it in an attempt to prove it!

Further evidence that this term is used with reference to Jesus Christ in I Timothy 3:16 as meaning "was shown to be righteous in spirit" (the article "the" is not found in the Greek here) is seen from the use of this same term with reference to God the Father in Luke 7:29-30. The account speaks of John the Baptist's message:

And all the people that heard him, and the publicans, justified God, being baptized of him. But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him.

Here, we are informed that all those who believe the message of repentance which John preached and who were baptized justified God. Clearly, God does not need to be justified in the sense of being made righteous or just. The sense here, just as it is in I Timothy 3:16 with reference to the Son of God, is that God is shown or declared to be righteous (i.e., right) by the people's response to John's message. That is to say, the people who believed and acted on John's message vindicated God, thus witnessing to the fact that He was right in His declaration that they needed to repent.

Additional evidence that I Timothy 3:16 means that Jesus "was shown to be righteous in spirit" (not "was justified in the spirit") is found in the fact that this meaning is supported by New Testament syntax and usage.

It can be noted in the Greek grammars and lexicons that in the absence of the article ("the"), as in the phrase "in spirit" in I Timothy 3:16, such a Greek prepositional phrase is stressing the qualitative aspect of the noun ("spirit"). In this instance, it emphasizes the righteous nature or quality of Christ's spirit, precisely the opposite to what the JDS teachers seek to prove from the English translation. 1

1. See, for example, Dana & Mantey, A Manual Grammar of the Greek N.T., pp. 149-151 (1957); Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon, p. 437 (1965).

THE JDS DOCTRINE PROVIDES NO SCRIPTURAL BASIS FOR JUSTIFICATION

When one asks the JDS fraternity just how God justified Jesus, since He is said to have been made "sin" with mankind's sinfulness, they can give no scriptural basis at all. Without any scriptural support, they state: "Suddenly, God justified Jesus in the Pit, and he was born again."

One is compelled to wonder if the JDS people have ever really studied the Word on the doctrines of the atonement, imputation, and justification, inasmuch as their statements on these subjects are so often totally out of harmony with the Scriptures. There must be a basis for justification of a lost, unregenerate individual. That basis, the Scriptures clearly show in both the Old and New Testaments, is the substitutionary blood atonement of Jesus Christ Himself. The Bible states we are justified by His blood (Rom. 5:9; Isa. 53). For centuries this truth had been emphasized in the Old Testament sacrifices, especially the sin-offering, as the type of Jesus' sacrifice.

Thus, God could not just arbitrarily wave His hand over the JDS "Jesus" in Hell and say: "Be thou cleansed," and, as a consequence, as JDS Doctrine teaches, Jesus was suddenly justified (made righteous), born again, and restored to Sonship

with the Father. There is absolutely no scriptural basis for the Jesus-died-spiritually doctrine. On the contrary, God Himself declares in His Word that: "The soul that sinneth, it shall die" (Ezek. 18:20). Again, according to Proverbs 17:15, we are clearly warned: "He that justifieth the wicked...[is an] abomination to the Lord." That is, he that declares the wicked to be righteous would have no basis for this, and such a "whitewashing" of the unrighteous is completely opposed to God's method of dealing with sinners or the unrighteous. Contrary to JDS teaching, God requires a sacrifice for sin as a basis for justifying any lost and unregenerate person. Since the JDS "Jesus" is lost and unregenerate in Hell, where is the basis for his justification? Who provided an atonement or sin-offering for him? An

unregenerate, sinful Jesus would need a basis for his justification as much as any other lost individual. JDS Doctrine proves no basis for their statement: "Suddenly, he was justified!"

Thus, the confused, unscriptural nature of the JDS Doctrine is all too evident. Jesus was not "sin," but a holy, righteous sin-offering. He was not justified from sin, but His holy sacrifice was the basis for our justification from sin.

Point 5

ABANDONED BY GOD, OR WAS GOD IN CHRIST AT CALVARY?

The JDS ministers teach that when Jesus became "sin" with our sinfulness the Father totally rejected and forsook His Son for the three days He was in the Pit, having given Him over to Satan who became His master.

The quotation of Psalm 22:1 by Jesus on the cross is cited as proof of this abandonment by the Father. Among other statements from the cross Jesus also uttered the words from Psalm 22, saying, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

On the basis of all that we have previously shown about the meaning of the death of Jesus, it should be evident that this statement should be placed within the context of the entire teaching of Scripture concerning the atonement before we jump to some erroneous conclusion as the JDS supporters have done. Such a study will clearly show that the words of Jesus from Psalm 22:1 do not indicate the total abandonment of the Son by the Father. He speaks here of a legal separation, as the Father gives up His Son unto death on behalf of sinners. Jesus is God's own offering for sin Whom the Father gives up unto death to suffer the punishment for our guilt.

That Jesus was not totally abandoned by God is evident for several reasons:

(1) Jesus was God's own sacrifice and chosen by Him (John 1:29; 3:16; Isa. 53), and such was never out of divine favor for one moment. In fact, He was never more pleasing to God than at Calvary, for there He is called "...an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour" (Eph. 5:2).

This is, of course, in perfect harmony with the Old Testament teaching that the sin-offering was MOST HOLY to God (Lev.6). It should be evident that the viewpoint of the Bible concerning the death of Jesus and the theory of total abandonment by the JDS teachers, who stumble over the "letter" of the word (e.g., Ps. 22:1; 2 Cor. 5:21), while ignoring the rest of Scripture, are irreconcilable.

If Jesus on the cross was a fragrant offering and holy sacrifice unto God, then it is inconceivable that He could fit the description given Him by the JDS fraternity of that of a lost man, the serpent, unregenerate, one who was made sin with mankind's sinfulness, possessing Satan's evil nature, and was, therefore, totally rejected as God's Son and abandoned by Him!

Contrary to the sinful "Jesus" of the JDS teachers, the Jesus of the Bible is described by the Father Himself while He hung on the cross as "MY righteous servant" (Isa. 53). It was while on the cross that He was designated as a fragrant offering unto God (Eph. 5:2).

(2) The quotation by Jesus from Psalm 22:1 did not indicate total abandonment whereby God ceased to be His Father, secondly, because it is impossible to separate the three eternal manifestations of the Godhead: Father, Son, Holy Spirit.

According to Colossians 2:9, it is said of Jesus Christ:

For in him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead in bodily form.

The Church has always held, as the Scriptures teach, that the Godhead cannot be divided, inasmuch as God is one Divine Spirit eternally manifested as the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Therefore, the JDS ministers, by making Jesus sinful, lost, and needing a new birth, have made the entire Godhead sinful, lost, and in need of a new birth!

By their failure to comprehend the nature of the Godhead, the JDS ministers have painted themselves into a corner by their unscriptural logic. What is their solution? They simply divide up the Godhead for three days by sending the Son of God to Hell, totally abandoned by the Father and the Holy Spirit.

We are informed by these "theological surgeons" that Exposing the JDS Heresy "Did Jesus Redeem Man on the Cross or in Hell? Did Jesus Become Sin on the Cross or a Sin-offer

One is compelled to wonder if the JDS teachers have ever studied even the most elementary doctrines of the Bible, especially the nature and being of God, the nature and meaning of Old Testament sacrifices, and the doctrine of the Atonement. The clear fact that the Godhead cannot be separated or divided is one of the basic doctrines of the Christian faith. As previously noted, concerning Jesus we are informed that "...in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily" (Col. 2:9). In John 14:16-23, Jesus promises that when He sends the Holy Spirit to indwell the believer that both Jesus and the Father also come to abide in him. How can this be? It is because God is ONE Divine Spirit, and to have the Holy Spirit in you also to have the Father and Son indwelling you (cf. John 10:30; 17:1f.). 1

A study of Church History will disclose that those who taught error concerning the Godhead, including any attempt to divide or separate the Godhead as the JDS teachers do, were considered to be heretics. The supporters of the JDS heresy may want to avail themselves of such information concerning the attitude of the Christian Church historically regarding attempts to tamper with the biblical Doctrine of the Godhead.

1. A detailed study of all the Bible Doctrines, including the nature of the Godhead, is available in my Biblical Theology Studies on tape from Faith Ministries.

(3) The matter is clearly settled anyway in the same passage which the JDS teachers appeal to for their "total abandonment" theory; namely, 2 Corinthians 5:19-21.

As mentioned earlier, because they lack understanding concerning the nature of the Old Testament sacrifices, which were always holy to God, and apparently unaware that the usage of the biblical languages indicates that the term "sin" can stand for the "sin-offering," they take the term "sin" to mean "sinful" in 2 Corinthians 5:21, instead of sin-offering. However, their "total abandonment" error is clearly evident in this passage, for we are informed that "...God was IN CHRIST (at Calvary) reconciling the world unto himself" (2 Cor. 5:19).

This should settle the matter for anyone sincerely wanting scriptural answers to the JDS error. Since the Godhead cannot be divided (unless one believes in three Gods), and in view of the clear statement here in 2 Corinthians 5:19, stating that God was in Christ on the cross, then how could he have been totally forsaken?

What occurred was a legal separation as the Father gave His Son up unto death on our behalf. The Scriptures show that Jesus was holy, fragrant offering unto God at this time, according to Ephesians 5:2, Hebrews 9:14, and I Peter 1:18-19, which fulfilled the Old Testament type. The sin and trespass-offerings were MOST HOLY unto God (Lev.6-7).

Remember too, the Father speaks of His Son while on the cross, not as "sin," but as "My righteous servant" (Isa. 53:11).

The following considerations should also be noted as to the reason why Jesus would use this particular expression on the cross, saying, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

This utterance was not merely spontaneous, but Jesus was aware that He was reciting a quotation from a prophetic passage, Psalm 22:1. These were words which David first uttered in the midst of some of his trials, but which were also to have an application to the Messiah, as do numerous other Old Testament texts. In fact, the entire Psalm is prophetic, having reference to the crucifixion of Christ.

Thus, in view of its prophetic nature, such statements are said to be foreordained expressions to fulfill Scripture. Moreover, this was not the only Old Testament prophecy from which Jesus recited an utterance on the cross in fulfillment of Scripture.

In John 19:28 we are informed: "After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst." This utterance from the cross is based upon another Old Testament prophecy, Psalm 69:21, which is likewise a direct reference to the crucifixion.

This is not to imply that His utterance from Psalm 22:1 was merely a rhetorical question; nevertheless, it must be understood that Jesus was not asking a question from which He expected a reply from heaven, for He Himself repeatedly spoke of the necessity of His death on behalf of sinners.

Thus, in His agony He is aware that He is fulfilling Old Testament prophecies, including those He specifically quotes from which give physical descriptions and events surrounding the crucifixion, and which also contain certain of His foreordained utterances.

Furthermore, by these foreordained expressions from the cross He is identifying Himself as the One of whom the Old Testament prophecies, spoke, and is also indicating why He cannot come down from the cross as He had been challenged to do in order to prove that He was the Son of God. Those who later examined the Old Testament Scripture saw this. Some interpreters suggest also that Jesus may have recited all of Psalm 22, as well as other prophecies concerning Him, while He hung on the cross for several hours.

After all, as everyone knows, not all that Jesus said or did is by any means recorded; in fact, only a small portion (John 21:25). This fact is evident when one considers that two of the Gospel writers (Luke and John) do not even record this quotation from Psalm 22:1--a crucial passage to the JDS teach

ers--which they doubtless would have done if the "total abandonment" were true.

Certainly Jesus did not believe in the "total abandonment" theory, in which He expected to be totally forsaken by the Father in Hell for three days, for He had just previously promised the thief: "Today, thou shalt be with me in paradise." Only

the inconsistencies of the JDS teaching could put Jesus in Heaven and Hell at the same time.

It should be noted also, in view of all this, that when Jesus first uttered these words, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" the religious leaders and the people of His day misinterpreted them, saying, "This man calleth for Elijah." It is not without significance that these same words of Jesus are still being misinterpreted by the JDS supporters today.

Remember, Peter warned that the unlearned and unstable wrest (distort, misinterpret) the Scriptures to their own destruction (2 Pet. 3:16). One of the ways in which this is done is by adhering to the mere "letter" of the Word in an attempt to prove some preconceived idea or doctrine. That is, such individuals search through the Bible looking for some term or verse which seems to fit their theory, while they either ignore or are ignorant of the context or teaching of all the Scripture on the matter. This method of "proving" one's doctrine is always self-defeating in the end, as such individuals ultimately find their position contradicted by some other portion of the Bible.

One or two examples should suffice to indicate the theological problems to be encountered when one takes merely the "letter" of what was said and overlooks the intent of the speaker, or chooses to ignore the rest of Scripture on the matter.

In Matthew 19:16-17, the rich young ruler asked Jesus: "Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?" Now, if you were to take the mere "letter" of Jesus' words in reply, you could have Him saying that he Himself was not good, for he answered: "Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is God" (Matt. 19:17). 1

Following the JDS logic, this would also make Jesus unrighteous before His death on the cross, just as they claim that He was unrighteous on it. This clearly indicates how some conclusions can end up as erroneous and out of harmony with the rest of Scripture when one takes merely the bare "letter" of some passage, rather than its meaning in light of the whole Bible.

Another example is found in Hebrews 5:8 where it is said of Jesus: "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered." Again, as the Liberals and cults do, one could cite the "letter" of these words in support of the teaching which states that Jesus is not divine or perfectly sinless, but is a mere human subject to the same imperfections as all men. However, in the light of the whole teaching of Scripture concerning Jesus Christ, we know that the meaning here is simply that Jesus, in His humanity, had to experience by being obedient in the midst of His trials and sufferings. By His perfect obedience He gave evidence of His qualifications to be God's substitute for sinners. This is the sense in verse 9: "It was after He proved Himself perfect through His obedience, that He became the author of eternal salvation..."

1. Although some versions omit "that is, God," it is implied.

These two examples should be sufficient to illustrate the doctrinal dangers of "out of context" and mere "letter" interpretations of God's Word, which can be found in cult teaching, as well as the JDS Doctrine.

Forsaken by God? No. Jesus' quotation from Psalm 22:1, saying, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" does not mean total abandonment. The implication here is that God had temporarily "turned away" in that instead of delivering His Son from death, which the Gospels show He did on several occasions, the Father delivered Him up unto death when He became "sin" (a sin-offering) for others.

Jesus Himself did not believe in total abandonment on the cross, for He confessed a few hours before His crucifixion:

Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own,

and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me (John 16:32).

He could say this because "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself" (2 Cor. 5:19).

However, the JDS teachers ignore this fact and look only at the mere "letter" of the word in verse 21, and concluded that Jesus actually became "sin," ignorant of the Old and New Testament usage of this term in connection with sacrifice in which it means "sin-offering." They overlook too the nature of the sin-offering which was always most holy, and a sweet-smelling savour unto God (Lev. 6-7; Eph. 5:2).

Point 6

ONE, OR TWO DEATHS ON THE CROSS?

Another misunderstood term used by the JDS supporter is found in Isaiah 53:9 where it is said: "...he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death."

They cite the fact that the term translated here as "death" is actually the plural "deaths" in the Hebrew in this verse. From this they deduce that Jesus must have died twice, both physically and spiritually!

Again, it needs to be pointed out that the teachers of the JDS Doctrine have arrived at still another erroneous conclusion, which, in this instance, stems from a lack of knowledge of the Old Testament Hebrew language and its usage.

Although the term in the Hebrew in Isaiah 53:9 is the plural (deaths), this by no means implies, as the JDS theory incorrectly contends, that the use of the plural form here denotes some unusual usage, or that we should look for some mystical and profound theological significance which the form in the singular does not have.

On the contrary, as a former teacher of the Old Testament and Hebrew in the seminary, I can attest, as anyone else can who has a working knowledge of the Hebrew, that the use of such plural nouns, where one might expect a singular noun (when the pronoun, verb, etc, are singular), is quite common in the Hebrew of the Old Testament.

Such plurals quite often do not signify numerical plurality at all (e.g., the plural "deaths" allegedly signifying two deaths), but they are used frequently for emphasis concerning some matter, as in signifying the violent nature of death by crucifixion, or death by fire, or by the sword, and so on. Every Hebrew grammarian is aware of the frequent usage of such plural nouns in the Hebrew language.

This stresses the importance of possessing a working knowledge of the biblical languages and their usage; that is, of one presents himself as an authority in the meaning and usage of Hebrew and Greek terms as the JDS teachers do concerning such terms as "deaths" (Isa. 53:9), and "sin" (2 Cor. 5:21), and such like. This would often prevent such unscriptural conclusions as those proposed by the JDS teachers, which generally are based merely upon the English translations (which often disagree), and upon the "paperback theology" of some religious writers. These are poor credentials for a Bible teacher, especially if he proposes to set forth some "new theology" about the Doctrine of Christ and the Atonement, as the JDS writers and teachers have done.

Obviously, we do not speak here of acquiring merely an intellectual knowledge about the Bible, but of the necessity of being knowledgeable in the Holy Scriptures to a much deeper

degree than one can obtain merely from the commentaries, Bible school correspondence courses, and the various bible versions and paraphrases.

besides the words in the Hebrew which normally occur in both the singular and the plural forms (e.g., man, house, tree, etc.), a number of words are used only in the plural and never occur in the singular form in Hebrew usage, such as: heavens, waters, and faces, although they are occasionally translated as singular (Eccles. 5:2). The word "life" is usually plural also. For example, the Old Testament speaks of one's "faces" (pl.) in reference to the fact that the face has two sides.

By comprehending such uses of the plural in Hebrew, the reader will be able to understand better other unique uses of the plural noun in the Hebrew language, such as the use of the plural term "deaths" in Isaiah 53:9, and, as a result, understand why the use of the plural in this verse does not mean two deaths, but is used in the plural for emphasis.

Therefore, some words are used in the Hebrew language, not to express the idea of numerically plurality when used in the plural form, but are used to denote such concepts as intensity (as violent death), majesty (in reference to God, or a king), magnitude (greatness), excellence, virtue, amplification, and so on.

For example, where in English one would use an adjective to express the magnitude of something, such as, abundant blessing, or thick darkness, the same idea is often conveyed in Hebrew by the use of a plural noun without an adjective. Thus, in the Hebrew the idea of abundant blessing can be expressed merely by using the plural noun "blessings," as in Psalm 21:6. this is designated as "a plural of magnitude."

The following are some examples of the use of such plurals, which grammatically would ordinarily require the use of a singular noun. It is important to keep in mind that in the Hebrew such usage does not denote numerical plurality, but these nouns are used in the plural for emphasis of one kind or another.

(1) Plural of Majesty.

some of the Divine names occur in the plural to denote the majesty and dignity of God.

A. God (Elohim). The Old Testament name translation as "God" is the plural form. When this term is used of the pagan gods it generally denotes a plurality of gods (the god of Egypt, "Exod. 12:12). however, when this plural form is used of Israel's God, the other parts of speech in the sentence (verbs, pronouns, adjectives, participles) are almost invariably singular forms. The inspired writers are indicating by this that in this instance the plural noun for God is not a numerical plural, but a plural denoting majesty. For example, in Genesis 1:29, the plural noun "God" (eolhim) is used with singular verbs in the Hebrew.

B. Lord (adonai). Literally, the form means "my Lords" (pl.) but it translated in the Old Testament as "Lord" (singular), signifying again " a plural of majesty."

(2) Plural of Rank.

The plural form of "lord" is used to address King Saul, thus denoting respect for his position and rank in I Samuel 22:12. Literally it is "my Lords" in Hebrew. Moses is also addressed as "lords" (pl.) out of respect in Exodus 32:22, being translated, of course, as "lord" into English.

(3) Plural of Magnitude.

The might of God us written as a plural in Isaiah 40:26 in the Hebrew. The idea of (abundant) prosperity is denoted by the use of the plural form in Psalm 68:7.

(4) Plural of Excellence.

True righteousness (Isa.33:15), and full knowledge (I Sam. 2:3) are conveyed by the use of

plural nouns in the Hebrew in these passages. The adjectives "true" and "full" do not occur, of course.

(5) Plural of Intensity.

The use of the plural noun denotes such things as intense feeling, emotion, or experience, and so on, as the following examples illustrate: Wrath. the plural form denotes fierce wrath in Proverbs 22:24.

Reproach. An indication of utter reproach or contempt is implied by use of the Hebrew plural (Dan. 12:2).

Darkness of the Pit. In this instance, the plural form "darkness" denotes deep or thick darkness (Psa. 88:6).

Death. When used of a single individual's death, as in Isaiah 53:9 and Ezekiel 28:8-10, the plural noun "deaths" is used to express the idea of violent death. This usage is to contrast such an experience with that of a normal death, in which case the singular form "death" would have been used to refer to the demise of but one individual.

The plural of Intensity is used to express vicious and violent death, such as death so painful and extreme (as death by the sword, fire, crucifixion, etc.) that it is like dying repeatedly--thus the use of the plural noun "deaths."

Further evidence that the plural "deaths" does not mean the person died twice (as the JDS supporters allege) when this form is used to denote the death of one individual is seen in the use of the plural "deaths" to describe the violent death of still another person, the King of Tyre, in Ezekiel 28:8-10. The KJV actually translates the Hebrew literally in this passage as "deaths" (plural).

Addressing Himself to the King of Tyre, God foretells his violent death, saying: They shall bring thee down to the pit, and thou shalt die the deaths [plural] of them that are slain in the midst of the seas.

Wilt thou yet say before him that slayeth thee, I am God? but thou shalt be a man, and no God, in the hand of him that slayeth thee.

Thou shalt die the deaths [plural] of the uncircumcised by the hand of strangers: for I have spoken it, saith the Lord God.

The plural of intensity is used in this passage to describe the King's violent death just as it is in Isaiah 53:9 in reference to the death of Christ by crucifixion. Obviously, there is no suggestion in Ezekiel 28 that the King of Tyre would die more than once! Nor can the use of the plural "deaths" imply that he was to die both physically and spiritually (a la JDS), inasmuch as he was already spiritually dead.

The JDS teachers need to explain why it is that they do not refer to this passage in Ezekiel also, inasmuch as the plural "deaths" is used here of just one single individual just as it is in Isaiah 53:9. The reason is obvious--it would expose their false doctrine that asserts that Jesus died twice, which teaching they base upon the use of the plural noun "deaths" in Isaiah 53:9.

No Hebrew grammarian, however, would make such a blunder over the use of plural nouns in the Hebrew language. As Davidson likewise observes in his book, Hebrew Syntax, such plurals "express an intensification of the idea of the singular."

The references which have been given in this study concerning the usage of plural nouns in Hebrew to denote such things as majesty, excellence, magnitude, intensity, and so on, are

but a few of the many which could be cited. the author is confident, however, that these are more than adequate to disprove the false JDS Doctrine which teaches that Jesus died twice, both physically and spiritually. This erroneous assumption stems from a lack of knowledge of the Hebrew language and its usage.

For those who may have studied some Hebrew this unique usage of plural nouns can be noted in the more advanced Hebrew grammars as well as the lexicons. A few are: Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar; Handbook to the Old Testament Hebrew, Green; Hebrew Syntax, Davidson; A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament, Gesenius, etc.

For English readers, Commentary on the Old Testament, Keil and Delitzsch, is one example which also notes this unique use of the plural in Hebrew in Isaiah and Ezekiel. Here it is pointed out that the plural noun "deaths" in Ezekiel 28 and Isaiah 53 is a pluralis exaggerativus (an exaggerated emphasis) and is used to denote "a violent death, the very pain of which makes it like dying again and again." The Septuagint translators render the term "deaths" as a singular noun, "death," recognizing this as its proper sense in Isaiah 53:9.

Point 7

PHYSICAL, OR SPIRITUAL DEATH AT CALVARY?

Again, in teaching that Jesus died spiritually, as well as physically, in order to have Jesus identify with sinners who are spiritually dead, we find that the JDS position is out of line with the Word of God.

and that He was put to death "IN THE FLESH."

Not once do the Scriptures state that Jesus died IN HIS SPIRIT. On the contrary, note the following passages which declare that Jesus, like the Old Testament type, offered His BODY as a sacrifice: Who his own self bare our sins IN HIS OWN BODY on the tree...(I Pet. 2:24).

...being put to death IN THE FLESH, and quickened by the Spirit {i.e., as in Rom. 8:11 raised from the dead by the Spirit} (I Pet. 3:18).

Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us IN THE FLESH...(I Pet. 4:1).

And you...hath he reconciled IN THE BODY OF HIS FLESH through death...(Col. 1:21-22).

I am the living bread which came down from heaven...and the bread that I will give is MY FLESH, which I will give for the life of the world (John 6:51).

...we are sanctified through the offering of the BODY OF JESUS once for all (Heb. 10:10).

Having abolished IN HIS FLESH the enmity, even the law of commandments...(Eph. 2:15).

In addition to these clear texts which indicate that the sacrifice of Jesus constituted the offering up of HIS BODY OF FLESH, there are others. When Jesus said to the opposing religious leaders, "Destroy this temple, and in three day I will raise it up," we are informed that "...he spake of the TEMPLE OF HIS BODY" (John 2:19-21). When Jesus spoke of His approaching death it was always with reference to the offering of His BODY not His SPIRIT. This is clear from John chapter 6 where Jesus spoke of giving HIS FLESH to provide life for the world, and again when He introduced the communion of the bread at the last supper and gave it unto His disciples, saying, "This is my BODY which is given for you" (Luke 22:19; Read also I Cor. 10:16; 11:24-29; Eph. 2:15; Rom. 7:4; Heb. 10:19-20).

The Scriptures intentionally stress repeatedly that Jesus offered up His BODY and His FLESH as a sacrifice for sin--not once is it said that He died in His spirit. The JDS teachers

willfully ignore this clear fact of Scripture. Why? Because to say what the Bible says about the nature of Christ's death would discredit and disprove their erroneous theory.

God cannot die spiritually; this is why the scriptures state that the Son of God needed a body of flesh so that He could die physically on behalf of sinners like the Old Testament type. This necessity for the incarnation of the Son of God is clearly set forth in passages such as Hebrews 2; Phillipians 2; Galatians 4:4-5; John 1, 3, and Colossians 1, 2. The JDS VIEW is that if Jesus only died physically, and that if the physical death of Jesus paid the penalty of sin, then every man could have died for himself.

Such a position on the Atonement reveals a total lack of comprehension of the meaning and nature of the Old Testament sacrifices. As it has been shown previously, the sin-offering remained even in death MOST HOLY to God. Moreover, to say that if the physical death of Jesus (with our His spiritual death also) paid the penalty for sin, then every man could have died for his own sins overlooks the fact that the essential requirement in the sin-offering was that it had to be pure and sinless in order for God to accept it as a suitable substitute. This was typified in the requirement that the Old Testament type had to be spotless and without blemish; and it was literally fulfilled in the case of Jesus Christ (Heb. 9:14; I Pet. 1:18-19).

The JDS teachers so demean the physical death of Jesus and the shedding of His blood that they make His death on the cross almost insignificant. If, as one JDS minister said, "when His blood poured out, it did not atone," then why the need of the cross at all? If redemption is provided by Jesus identifying with sinners through His 'spiritual death,' and not by the shedding of His blood as the Atonement, then Jesus could merely have committed some act of sin, by submitting to some temptation as the first Adam did, whereupon He would have then died spiritually as the first Adam did without the need of death by crucifixion.

The low view of Jesus' physical death and the blood of His cross is reflected in the teaching of one expounder of the JDS error who advises us that Jesus bled just a few drops. He contends that most people who sing about the blood of Jesus do not know what they are talking about, for they think that Jesus bled all over the place! In the Old Testament the shedding of the blood of the animal typified the spiritual death of Jesus; it was his spiritual death, like Adam which proved redemption. The physical death was only for the purpose of the resurrection--so that Jesus could be the "firstfruits from the dead" (I Cor. 15:20-23). The blood of Jesus was still in His body when He died; he bled only a few drops from His wounds for the blood almost immediately coagulated and he stopped bleeding. Jesus died by an act of his own will when he wanted to, with respect to his physical death.

There is no need to reply to such an attack upon the biblical view of the physical death of Jesus and the blood of His cross for such contemptible teaching condemns itself. However, it should be noted that it is obvious to all that this individual was not present at the crucifixion to know just to what extent Jesus bled, and, moreover, the efficacy of the Atonement did not depend upon how much blood was shed on the cross. The Atonement's validity depended only on the fact that the Son of God shed His spotless blood and died on our behalf. The Old Testament animal type did not bleed to death on the altar; only a few drops of blood were sprinkled on the altar as an atonement (Lev. 1:5); or, in the case of the sin-offering, the priest merely dipped his finger in the blood and applied it to the horns of the altar (Lev. 4:25).

Those who demean the significance of the Blood Atonement, as the JDS teachers do, need to be warned that the Scriptures declare that "...without shedding of blood {there} is no remission of sin" (Heb. 9:22), and that anyone who perverts the Doctrine of Christ in any way has the spirit of antichrist (2 John 7-11).

Therefore, this is precisely why the physical death of Jesus was absolutely essential; so that Jesus could bear the punishment for our guilt IN HIS BODY (I Pet. 2:24), when He was put to death IN THE FLESH (I Pet. 3:18). We are told that we were redeemed, not by His spiritual death, which never occurred, "but with the precious BLOOD of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot (I Pet. 1:19). The Bible states that Christ's physical death was necessary to provide the blood for the Atonement. 1

It should be kept in mind, as pointed out earlier, that even when the JDS supporters use biblical terminology, such as "blood of Jesus," "the cross," "the atonement," and so on, it is obvious that they do not always mean by such terminology what the Scriptures do.

1. One "spiritual-death" teacher quotes Jesus in the Garden when He said, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death" (Matt. 26:38), as meaning He was expressing His awareness that He must die spiritually!

On the contrary, Jesus has no reference here to His spirit dying, but speaks of the travail of His soul due to deep grief He is suffering. Such usage is common in Hebrew: Job 30:25, "was not my soul grieved?"; "my soul shall weep" (Jer. 13:17); "bitterness of soul" (Prov. 31:6; KJV, "heavy hearts"); and Hezekiah speaks of the "bitterness of my soul" in reference to the physical death he almost experienced (Isa. 38:15).

Bitterness of soul in such instances expresses the deep emotions of sadness, grief, travail, etc., since the soul is the "seat" of the emotions.

Furthermore, the soul often signifies the person himself in Hebrew thought and usage, and is often so translated. Jesus is saying in essence, "I am exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." The term "soul" is often translated as "I" or "Me," and signifies the person himself. In Judges 16:30, Samson said, "Let me die with the Philistines." The literal Hebrew is: "Let my soul die." In Jeremiah 37:9, "deceive not yourselves" is literally "deceive not your souls." Any Hebrew lexicon will give many examples of such usage, indicating Jesus' statement did not have any reference to spiritual death.

Point 8

THE FIRSTBORN, OR THE FIRST BORN AGAIN?

The JDS teachers cite Colossians 1:18, where Christ is called "the firstborn from the dead," in support of their claim that Jesus Christ was the first man to be born again.

Jesus, they claim, was born again in the Pit of Hell, and was the first man to be born again under the New Covenant.

Another passage which they cite, that is said to indicate the new birth of Jesus in Hell, is Acts 13:33. Although the passage is speaking of the physical resurrection of Jesus, the JDS teachers place great stress on the term "begotten" in this verse.

God...hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day I have begotten thee.

Why did Jesus need to be "begotten" from the dead? Because He had died spiritually, the JDS supporters teach. He was the first begotten from spiritual death. In support of this

erroneous theory, they also cite Revelation 1:5 where Jesus is said to be "the first begotten of the dead" (KJV).

One JDS proponent actually goes so far to say that Jesus instituted the Church in Hell, when He was born again in the Pit! Jesus became the "firstborn among many brethren" we are told (Rom. 8:29). In God's wisdom, according to this delusion, He did not wait until later, but started the Church in Hell. One wonders, in view of such unscriptural assertions, to what lengths their false doctrine will ultimately lead them.

Jesus, we are informed, was righteous, then on the cross became unrighteous and went to Hell, and in the Pit was made righteous once more. If so, then how could He be the Jesus of the Bible Who is said to be unchangeable? According to Hebrews 13:8 the writer states: "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever." It is all too evident that the "Jesus" of the JDS fraternity is "another Jesus" spoken about in 2 Corinthians 11:3-4 and Galatians 1:6-9. Note also Malachi 3:6.

In dealing with the question under consideration "Is Jesus the firstborn, or the first born again?" One important fact should be noted first of all. Although there are two different terms used by the KJV translators, which the JDS teachers cite, namely, "firstborn" and "first begotten," the latter term does not occur in the Greek New Testament.

The term "first begotten" (Heb. 1:6; Rev. 1:5) does not occur; the term which is used in Hebrews 1:6 and Revelation 1:5, as well as in several other passages, is "firstborn." Furthermore, the meaning of the term "begotten" in Acts 13:33 is clearly stated to be a reference to the physical resurrection of Jesus, and completely rules out, therefore, the fanciful notion that this passage implies that Jesus was born again in the Pit. One JDS teacher, without any scriptural basis whatsoever, dogmatically states that Acts 13:33 speaks of two resurrections--one physical and one spiritual! He contends this in spite of the clear fact that this passage speaks of Christ's physical resurrection from the dead, not His re-birth in the Pit.

In verses 28-29, Paul speaks of Christ's physical death and the burial of His body in a sepulchre; and in verses 30 and 33 he speaks of His physical resurrection from the dead. The resurrection of Jesus in the Bible always has reference to the resurrection of His body, not His spirit, since His spirit did not die (1 Cor. 15:20-23; Luke 24:36-46). The JDS teachers superimpose the erroneous idea of an additional "spiritual" resurrection upon such passages.

THE BIBLICAL MEANING OF "FIRSTBORN"

Inasmuch as Acts 13:33 has been shown to be a reference to the physical resurrection of Jesus, not His "rebirth," and since it is the term "firstborn," NOT "first begotten," which occurs in the Greek of the New Testament, we next turn to the biblical meaning of "firstborn," and its misuse by the JDS teachers.

The term "firstborn" in Scripture is used not only to refer to the physical birth of the first child to be born into a family, but the term also speaks of position and inheritance rights. Thus, the term refers not merely to birth, but also to birthrights, as well as to position or status.

Because the firstborn were preserved among the Israelites in Egypt when the Egyptian firstborn were slain by God at the time of the inauguration of the Passover, every firstborn male (man and beast) was consecrated unto the Lord (Exod. 13:2). From this, we are clearly shown the special position the firstborn held in God's sight--they were His and had to be consecrated unto Him.

Moreover, in Israel the firstborn son possessed special rights and privileges. He succeeded his father as the head of the house, and received a larger portion of the inheritance; these were his birthrights. The nation of Israel is called God's firstborn and was, therefore, entitled to special privileges and blessings, as compared to the heathen nations (Exodus 4:22). In this, same sense Jesus Christ is called the firstborn (Rom. 8:29; Col. 1:15; Heb. 1:6).

The term in such passages speaks of position, rank, legal rights, and special privileges. It NEVER has any reference to the new birth or being born again; such a concept is completely not the Bible.

In Colossians 1:15, Jesus is said to be the creator of all things. It is in this context that He is called "the firstborn of every creature" (literally "of all creation"). Immediately following this declaration, the Apostle states: "for by him were all things created...by him, and for him" (1:16).

The clear implication here is that, as Creator of all things for Himself, Jesus Christ has the "firstborn rights" to all creation. The terminology speaks of His dominant position and rank as the first Heir to all creation. This fact is also clearly stated in Hebrews 1:2, where we are informed that God has appointed Jesus "heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds." Again, the Messianic reference in Psalm 89:27 also speaks of God making His Messiah "...my firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth." 1

Thus, the New Testament speaks of the firstborn rights of inheritance, and of the exalted position of Jesus, not of His rebirth. Colossians 1:18 makes this fact plain:

And he is the head of the body, the church...the firstborn from the dead; that in all things HE MIGHT HAVE THE PREEMINENCE.

Again, we find that their reliance solely upon the English translations has resulted in the JDS teachers basing their doctrine on a term that does not actually occur in the Greek New Testament (i.e., "first begotten") in passages they cite in an effort to prove Jesus had to be born again, or "begotten spiritually" from the dead. Likewise, their error is compounded in their failure to understand the biblical meaning and usage of the term "firstborn," which refers to birthright and position, not to the notion that Jesus was the first born again.

1 David here, as in many passages, is a type of the Messiah.

Point 9

REDEMPTION IN HELL, OR ON THE CROSS? FINISHED, OR UNFINISHED AT CALVARY?

Once more it is evident that the JDS teaching is at variance with the teaching of Scripture, inasmuch as the words of Jesus from the cross are contradicted by those who contend that Jesus died spiritually. Several of His utterances at Calvary would have to be ignored or reinterpreted in order to accept the JDS Doctrine.

In the first place, the promise of Jesus to the repentant thief when He said; "Today shalt thou be with me in paradise,:" is contradicted by the JDS supporters who insist that Jesus went to Hell for three days, not to heaven. How they manipulate His words will be noted later.

Secondly, when Jesus declared as He died, "Father into thy hands I commend my spirit," the clear implication is that His spirit went to the Father in heaven, while His body was in the

sepulcher. The JDS teaching contradicts this, however, and asserts that when Jesus died He gave His spirit into the hands of Satan who became His master, and that Jesus was united in His spirit with the Adversary!

If the words of Jesus cannot be relied upon to mean what they clearly say, then why do the JDS supporters believe that they can rely on anything that He said, such as His promise of eternal life in John 3:16, the resurrection from the dead in John 11:25, or the promise of His return in John 14:1-3? The JDS efforts to manipulate and change the meaning of the utterances of Jesus from the cross in an attempt to make them conform to their erroneous doctrine are plainly self-defeating.

Thirdly, we are informed by these teachers that when Jesus said, while on the cross, "It is finished," He did not mean that He had finished the work of redemption at Calvary; on the contrary, this work was only the beginning. Jesus redeemed sinners in Hell, where as "sin" He suffered as their substitute, after which He was born again.

The JDS Doctrine asserts that when He said, "It is finished," this does not mean what most Christians think that it did; Jesus was merely referring to the fulfillment of the Abrahamic Covenant as an Israelite. When the veil of the Temple was rent at His death, this was the "rending" of this covenant; Jesus had fulfilled the covenant and was the last sacrifice under the Old Covenant.

However, the Scriptures do not support such an interpretation. Jesus had just fulfilled, not the Abrahamic Covenant, but the Mosaic Covenant of the law by His sacrificial death as the Lamb of God. The Law of Sacrifice, which provided an atonement for sin, had been given to Moses at Mount Sinai, not to Abraham.

This is another instance in which the JDS teachers reveal their insufficient knowledge concerning the Old Testament, inasmuch as they confuse the Covenant made to Abraham in Genesis 12_17 with the Covenant of the Law given to Moses centuries later as recorded in the Book of Exodus. They fail to distinguish properly between these two different and separate covenants.

One author, who is the source of many of the JDS ERRORS, states that the Abrahamic Covenant was what constituted Israel as a nation, and gave to the nation its Law, sacrifices, blood atonement, priesthood, temple, and the Ten Commandments! Nothing could be farther removed from the facts as this contention.

The Covenant given to Abraham, of which circumcision was the outward sign, concerned God's promises of blessings. It most definitely was NOT a covenant of Law and Sacrifice, including the priesthood, temple, and Ten Commandments. God's covenant made to Abraham was three-fold.

1) Abraham's descendants were to become a great nation; however, Israel's national life began centuries later under Moses with the revelation of the Law at Mount Sinai (Exod. 19-24).

God made Israel a nation under Moses, not in Abraham's time (Exod. 19:6), and entered into a Covenant of Law with Israel at this time (Exod. 24:1-8). Although the promises made to Abraham included the prediction that a great nation would descend from him, its actual fulfillment came about under the Mosaic Covenant.

2) God promised that the families of the earth would be blessed through Abraham (the Scriptures and the Messiah would come through Israel).

3) The land of Palestine would be given to Abraham and his seed forever. The Abrahamic Covenant was one of promises of blessings to Abraham, his descendants, and to the world; it was not a covenant concerned with the Law and sacrifices.

The Old Covenant of the Law and Sacrifice, which was given to Moses and Israel at Sinai, was the Covenant which was fulfilled and done away with at Calvary by the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ, as the New Testament clearly shows (Matt. 5:17-19; Col. 2:13-14; Heb. 8-10).

The cross did not signify the fulfillment and demise of the Abrahamic Covenant; that Covenant was not based upon the Law and sacrifices, but concerned the covenant promises of blessing.

In fact, those promises in the Abrahamic Covenant which have particular reference to Israel as a nation are still in effect! Some are just now in the process of their complete and final fulfillment, while others are yet to be fulfilled.

Because of Israel's sins and rejection of the Messiah, the final and complete fulfillment of these promises was postponed when God temporarily set Israel aside as a nation until the latter days. However, according to Scripture, the final fulfillment of these promises is assured on the basis of the covenant promises God made to their fathers---Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Notice that this is precisely what is stated to be the fact in the New Testament: And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob. For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins.

As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes; but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes [Abraham, Isaac, Jacob].

For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance (Rom. 11:26-29).

Clearly, the Abrahamic Covenant was not done away with at Calvary as the JDS Doctrine alleges. The covenant promise made to Abraham in Genesis 12-17 that the Promised Land was given to him and his descendants forever is just now in the process of its final and complete fulfillment, which began with the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948. How, then could the Abrahamic Covenant (confused by the JDS teachers with the Mosaic Covenant) have been fulfilled at the cross? The future fulfillment of the covenant promises regarding the nation's salvation and restoration to the Promised Land is reiterated again and again in Scripture. Israel constitutes a people eternally bound to God by the covenant made to Abraham (Rom. 11:26-29), and Israel's national restoration and salvation is promised over 140 times in the Scriptures!

A few of these references which may be noted are: Deuteronomy 4:27; Joel 3:1f; Amos 9:1; Zechariah 2:4-13; 12:10-12; Isaiah 2:1-4; Acts 1:6-7 with Romans 11:26-29. Note also Galatians 3:28-29 where even Christians are called "Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise," indicating again that the covenant promises made to Abraham are still in effect (cf. Gen. 12:3).

Furthermore, it needs to be noted that the JDS contentions that Jesus was "the last sacrifice under the Old Covenant," and that "when His blood poured out, it did not atone," are in direct contradiction with the biblical teaching concerning the death of Jesus.

First of all, it should be clear to anyone who has ever read the Bible that the blood of Jesus, in fulfillment of the Old Testament type, most certainly did atone for sin (Acts 20:28; Rom. 3:24-25; Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:14, 20-22; Heb. 10:19-20; I Pet. 1:18-19; Rev.5:9).

What of the JDS teaching which states that Jesus' death constituted "the last sacrifice under the Old Covenant"?

Although the sacrifice of Jesus fulfilled the Old Testament type of the sin-offering, His death is not to be limited to its relation to the Old Covenant, for this obscures its vital relation to the New Covenant which it introduced. Jesus, as well as the Apostles, clearly stated this fact.

At the last supper Jesus said: "...This cup is the NEW COVENANT in my blood" (Luke 22:20 cf. I Cor. 11:25; 2 Cor. 3:6; Heb. 12:24).

In addition to providing an atonement for all who would thereafter believe on Him, the New Covenant sacrifice of Jesus was also necessary in order to validate the promises of forgiveness which God had given to the Israelites under the Old Covenant of the Law. Read Hebrews 9:14-15, Romans 3:21, 24-25 with Leviticus 4:32-35, where it is shown that while God granted "forgiveness" to the repentant Israelites through the Old Covenant sacrifices, nevertheless, their sins were not actually purged away until atoned for by the sacrifice of Jesus, the Lamb of God, under the New Covenant in His blood.

The reason the JDS supporters contend that Jesus' death constituted the last sacrifice under the Old Covenant, and that His blood did not atone on the cross, is that such an interpretation is required by them to support their doctrine that the New Covenant of Redemption was made later in Hell, not on the cross!

Point 10

FINISHED OR UNFINISHED AT CALVARY?

In an attempt to overcome the insurmountable problem which the JDS teachers are confronted with by Jesus' words to the thief, "Today shalt thou be with me in paradise," they have resorted to a dishonest manipulation of His words, and to the substitution of their own ideas for the obvious meaning of His statement.

They do this because they have placed Christ in Hell for three days as unregenerate until He was born again, citing Psalm 16:10 and Acts 2:31 from the King James Version. In this translation, Acts 2:31 reads: "...his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption." On the basis of this translation, the JDS teachers repeatedly stress that "Jesus went to Hell for three days"; "Jesus redeemed sinners in the Pit"; "Christ was reborn in the Pit of Hell"; "Jesus became sin and was the substitute sinner in Hell," and so on.

One would think that even if they did not understand that the term translated "hell" in the Old Testament is incorrectly translated in the KJV in Psalm 16:10 as "hell," at least some of the other versions should have informed them of this fact. The term translated "hell" in Psalm 16:10 should have been rendered as "Sheol," while the term "hell" in Acts 2:31 is the Greek word "Hades," and should have been so rendered.

In both instances, the terms Sheol and Hades have essentially the same meaning--"the place of departed spirits." This is seen in the fact that the term "Hades" is used in Acts 2:31 to translate the term "Sheol" in Psalm 16:10. Moreover, the Greek translation of the Old Testament, the Septuagint, translates Sheol with Hades.

From both the Old and New Testaments we are shown that in the realm of the dead the wicked and the righteous are separated. For example, in the Old Testament the wicked are said at death to go to sheol (the realm of departed spirits), but are consigned to the "Pit" (Isa. 14:15; Ezek. 32:17f.), whereas the righteous, who also go to Sheol, enter the presence of God (Pss. 49:25; 73:24; Gen. 5:24).

In the New Testament, the term Hades is the translation for Sheol, which is also the place of departed spirits. Again, the lost are shown to be in Sheol/Hades in a place of torment (Luke 16:19f.), whereas the righteous who enter the realm of the dead are in Paradise ("Abraham's bosom"), a place of comfort (Luke 16:22-25; 23:43; cf. 2 Cor. 12:1-4). Moreover, the righteous at death are said to be "with the Lord" (Phil. 1:23; 2 Cor. 5:8).

Thus, when the Messiah in Psalm 16:10 (quoted in Acts 2:31 by Peter) says, "For thou wilt not leave my soul in Sheol/Hades," He meant that God would not allow Him to remain in the realm of the dead or the departed spirits, not that He was going to Hell as unregenerate!

Moreover, as to just where He was going in this realm of departed spirits, He clearly tells us-- He was going in spirit to the Father in Paradise. This is plain enough from His utterances from the cross, saying: (1) "Today shalt thou (the thief) be with me in Paradise; (2) "It is finished" (finished on the cross, not three days later in Hell); and (3) "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." ¹

In spite of His clear statements that His work of redemption was finished on the cross, and that He was going to the Father in Paradise, the JDS teachers insist on sending Jesus to Hell for three days. The English term "Hell," however, should only be used to translate, as most versions do, the Greek term Gehenna (Mark 9:43), which is equivalent to the Lake of Fire in Revelation 20:11-15, and will be the eternal bode of the wicked after Judgment Day. In view of this, it should be clear why Jesus could not have gone to Hell as the JDS theory contends. The mistranslated term "hell" in the KJV Old and New Testaments, with reference to where Christ went when He died, should have been rendered "Sheol" (Ps. 16:10), and "Hades" (Acts 2:31), as signifying "the realm of departed spirits."

1. On the basis of Romans 10:7, JDS minister implies that the term translated as "deep" here means "the abode of demons" (abyss), and that is where Jesus went; however, any Greek lexicon will show that this term also means "the abode of the dead," and is so used by the Apostle here.

The Apostle draws his idea from Deuteronomy 30¹¹⁻¹³, and is simply saying that Christ does not have to descend from heaven, die, and be raised from the dead again, as we already have the Gospel declaring this. Moreover, this same verse gives the meaning of the term "deep" as used here as referring merely to the "abode of the dead," saying, "that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead."

The JDS teachers' constant repetition of their statement that "Jesus went to Hell" is made no doubt for its psychological effect upon their audience, for to use the less dramatic sounding biblical terms, Sheol and Hades, would rob their "redemption-in-Hell" fiction of much of its impact.

Reference is sometimes made by the JDS teachers to Matthew 12:40 in which Jesus said: "For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish; so shall the Son

of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." Of course, as any unbiased reader knows, this is simply a reference to His burial in the grave or sepulchre. The JDS supporters insist, however, that His words "in the heart of the earth" cannot refer to His burial in a sepulchre, which would have been above ground; His words refer to His descent into the Pit of Hell.

It is rather common knowledge, however, that the sepulchre, tomb, or grave could be either above or below ground. Moreover, the Bible frequently speaks of a sepulchre, whether above or below ground, as a "burying place," and of the dead as "buried" in a sepulchre (or cave). Note Genesis 23:4 and 19. In 2 Kings 21:26, the King is said to have been buried "in his sepulchre in the garden," indicating that interment in a sepulchre, which here seems clearly above ground, was designated as a burial.

Sometimes reference is also made by the JDS teachers to Paul's statement in Ephesians 4:9-10, which they assert, supports their view that Jesus went to Hell after His death on the cross. The passage reads: Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above the heavens....

The phrase, "he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth," is equated with descending into the Pit of Hell by the JDS ministers. However, all the Apostle intends to convey here is that Christ descended from heaven to earth; it is a reference to the Incarnation, not to incarceration in the Pit.

There are several reasons why the expression "the lower parts of the earth" means simply the earth itself, not the Pit or Hell.

(1) The terms contrasted by Paul in this passage are not heaven and hell, but heaven and earth.

(2) The Apostle used an idiom from the Hebrew Old Testament, which sometimes refers merely to the earth itself.

Isaiah also uses this expression, "lower parts of the earth," to signify simply the earth itself. He calls on heaven and earth to rejoice because of Israel's deliverance from captivity, saying: Sing, O ye heavens; for the Lord hath done it; shout ye lower parts of the earth: break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein: for the Lord hath redeemed Jacob.... (Isa. 44:23).

(3) Several of the versions give the simpler and more likely meaning (as did Calvin, Hodge, and others). They render this statement concerning Christ's descent to "the lower parts of the earth" as:to the earth below. 1

1. W.J. Conybeare, The Epistles of Paul.

...from the height of Heaven to the depth of this world. 1

....into the world beneath. 2

....to the lowest level, down to the very earth. 3

(4) The notion that Christ went to Hell at death is generally derived from a late form of the so-called Apostles' Creed (which, of course, was not composed by the Apostles). This later

version of the Creed states that Christ at death "descended into Hell; the third day He rose from the dead."

However, the earlier and shorter form of the Creed did not contain this statement, "He descended into Hell," as well as some other statements found in the later form of the Creed. These were added at various times later over the centuries. 4

In view of all this, it should be evident that the JDS teachers' appeal to Ephesians 4:9-10 is simply another attempt to find some verse here and there in the English translation which uses terminology which they feel that they can apply to their Jesus-in-the-Pit error. 5

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1. J.B. Phillips, The N.T. in Modern English.
 2. The 20th. Century N.T.
 3. NEB.
 4. James Orr (ed.) International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, I pp. 202-206, and K.S. Latourette, A History of Christianity, pp. 135-136.
 5. Neither can I Peter 3:19-20 be appealed to for support of the JDS idea that Jesus went to Hell to suffer punishment as a "substitute" sinner. This passage states that Christ "...preached unto the spirits in prison." However, the JDS teachers do not have Him preaching to sinners, but suffering as "sin" and as a lost man Himself who had to be born again.

Moreover, all interpreters admit difficulty as to the exact meaning of this passage, and the views vary considerably. Some think that perhaps Peter meant that Jesus at death went into Hades, not to be punished Himself, but to announce the fact of Calvary to the lost so that they could be judged on the same basis as those who would hear the Gospel (and reject it) after Calvary. This view is based upon I Peter 4:6 "For this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit." Others conclude that the apostles who died continued to preach in the realm of the spirits, or that this refers to the "Spirit" of Christ preaching through Noah before the Flood because of Peter's reference to this in 3:10 and 2 Peter 2:5 (cf. 1:10-11).

Being unable to reconcile their erroneous theory which asserts that Jesus went to Hell for three days with the Lord's statements that His redemptive work was completed on the cross, and that He was going that same day to His Father in Paradise, the JDS teachers actually resort to the dishonest device of rearranging the punctuation in an attempt to change the meaning of the words of Jesus. Even without punctuation the meaning is clear in His promise to the repentant thief when He said, "Verily I say unto thee, TODAY shalt thou be with me in paradise."

In order to change the obvious meaning of His words, since it contradicts their redemption-in-Hell doctrine, they manipulate the comma and move it from after the word "thee" and place it after "today." In this very way it then reads: "Verily I say unto thee today, with me thou shalt be in paradise." 1

In other words, they now have Jesus saying: "I am telling you today, you will be with me in paradise."

1. It should, of course, be understood by the reader that the ancient Greek manuscripts were virtually without punctuation; it was added by the editors centuries later. However, in the Greek texts the editors are in agreement on the punctuation of this verse; that is, the comma is placed before, not after the word "today" (An English translator in his version might ignore the punctuation of the Greek manuscript, however; e.g., Rotherham who relegates the accepted reading to a footnote).

This eliminates the question of the time when Jesus and the thief would actually go to paradise, thereby enabling the JDS teachers to announce that it was after Jesus had spent three days in Hell. If so, then why did not Jesus simply say to the thief, "After three days you will be with me in paradise"?

Aside from this being dishonest to "wrest" the clear meaning of Jesus' words by such a distortion, it is also redundant to make such a statement as "I say unto thee today." The addition of the word "today" is unnecessary and is redundant, for obviously the thief was well aware that Jesus was speaking to him that very day--it could not have been the day before or after from his viewpoint. Since Jesus clearly said what He meant, then this attempt to change His intended meaning to fit their doctrine is another instance wherein Peter's warning concerning those who "wrest" the Scriptures to their own destruction is being fulfilled.

Moreover, the JDS surgery on God's Word is refuted by Hebrews 3:7-8, which reads: Wherefore as the Holy Ghost saith, Today if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts....

Observe again where the comma is placed--before, not after, the word "today," precisely where it is placed in Luke 23:43 in the promise of Jesus to the thief: "Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in paradise."

By manipulating the comma, as the JDS teachers do, the meaning can also be changed. It would then read: Wherefore as the Holy Ghost saith today, if ye will hear his voice....

However, it is obvious that the emphasis is not on when the Holy Spirit is speaking (i.e., today), but upon the need for the hearer's response to be immediate, i.e., today. That a comma should come before and not after "today" is made evident by what is said in verse 13 of this passage: "But exhort one another daily, while it is called Today; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin." It may be noted also in James 4:13 that if a comma is inserted after "today," instead of before the word, the sense is again changed.

Therefore, the JDS usage of "today" through manipulation of the punctuation ("I say unto you today,") is intentionally misleading.

Moreover, if the JDS teachers insist on sending Jesus to Hell in spite of what the Scriptures teach to the contrary, then they also have the problem of how to get Him out of the Pit, for according to the Word of God such a transition is impossible! Abraham in Paradise said to the rich man suffering in Hades (not Hell as in the KJV):

Between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us that would come from thence (Luke 16:26).

If Jesus actually became "sin" (instead of a holy sinoffering as the Bible teaches), and if He were unregenerate, and since God requires a blood atonement for sin, then the problem still remains, who died for Jesus and provided an atonement for Him? Without a sin-offering being made for Him, then He would still be suffering with the rich man in Hades and still be

unsaved. As shown previously, without a blood atonement for Him there would be no basis for His justification.

Contrary to JDS teaching, which states: "suddenly God justified Jesus," God says: "...I will not justify the wicked" (Exodus 23:7; 34:7). Inasmuch as the JDS teachers make Jesus to be "sin" with mankind's sinfulness, and wicked with Satan's evil nature, and then give no scriptural basis for His justification, they themselves are rebuked by God's Word, for the Scriptures say:

He that justifieth the wicked...[is an] abomination to the Lord (Prov. 17:15).

With a stroke of a pen the JDS teachers declare--suddenly God justified Jesus! They are charging God with doing what he plainly says He does not do--justify the wicked (without a basis; namely, a blood atonement, Exod. 23:7)--and they are guilty of doing themselves what God forbids man to do (Prov. 17:15).

In spite of all the foregoing evidence given in this book, nevertheless, the JDS supporters insist on placing Jesus in Hell with Satan as His master. We are informed that He "gave himself into Satan's hands without any resistance." Try, if you can, to reconcile that statement with Jesus' own words in John 14:30 a few hours before His death, when He declared: "...the prince of this world cometh, and HATH NOTHING IN ME."

The choice is clear--one must either take the words of Jesus here, as well as those from the cross, when He said, "It is finished," and that He was going that same day in the spirit to His Father in Paradise--or take the contradictory JDS doctrine, since the two can never be reconciled.

Deluded men may put Jesus in Hell for three days, but Jesus made it abundantly clear, not only from the cross, but also on several other occasions, that on His departure from this world He was going directly to the Father in heaven. In John 13:1 we are informed: Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that HE SHOULD DEPART OUT OF THIS WORLD UNTO THE FATHER....

In order to make His point clear as to where He was going when He left this world at death, He repeated His destination several times, saying, "I go to the Father." Note this in John 14:12; 28; 16:10, 16, 17, 28. This fact is repeated twice more from the cross, once in His promise to the thief, "Today shalt thou be with me in paradise," and finally, in His declaration, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit."

These statements, all made within the time context of the crucifixion, constitute nine times that His destination is clearly stated to be heaven, not hell. Nevertheless, as if it had never been stated even once, the JDS supporters insist on sending Jesus to hell for three days.

Evidence that Jesus completed redemption on the cross, not in the Pit, is to be found in John 19:28 where we are informed that when Jesus knew that "all things were now accomplished" (completed), He then said, "It is finished" (vs. 30).

It should be evident from this, as well as the foregoing study, that the JDS Doctrine is "another gospel" (Gal. 1:8-9), presenting "another Jesus" (@ Cor. 11:4).

When the JDS Doctrine is compared to Scripture, one is constrained to lament with Mary as she stood before the sepulchre:

They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him.