



BY JOHN KENNEDY

VANCOUVER (CUP)—Jesus, Moses, Buddha and Mohammed are being kept alive by an advanced method of cloning, says a book by the leader of the Raëlian religion.

Last week in downtown Vancouver, the local branch of Raëlianism hosted an information seminar for the public explaining their 20th-Century religion.

Based on the belief that all humans are actually products of a perfected form of genetic engineering, the religion says it is based on a period before the time of Jesus, who himself was the child of Mary and one of the Elohim, according to Raël's book, *The True Face of God*.

Elohim is the term used by the Raëlians to refer to the seven billion aliens living in outer space who they say created the earth, the plant

life and all living creatures here many years ago.

Raël, whose real name is Claude Vorilhon, established the religion based on the initial contact he had with Yahweh, the leader of the Elohim, in France back in 1973. From there he went on to re-interpret the Bible.

The meeting with Yahweh,

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the 25,000-year-old leader of the Elohim, lasted for six days, one hour each day. Raël, who was 27 at the time, was given the opportunity to write down the correct interpretation of the Hebrew version of the Bible.

Fast forward 27 years, and

Raël, who claims to have since travelled to space with Yahweh and met Jesus, Mohammed and Buddha, now resides in Quebec, and has over 50,000 followers who subscribe to his movement.

The central way in which the Raëlian religion differs from Judaism or Christianity, say followers, is how the Bible was interpreted from its original Hebrew version.

"'Elohim', translated without justification in some Bibles by the word 'God' means in Hebrew 'those who came from the sky,'" Raël states in his book.

He goes on to explain that the word 'Elohim', which is the plural of 'Eloha,' appears in the Bible, but has been translated to mean singular, when in fact there was not just one God, but many — those who came from the sky.

From Yahweh, Raël received the correct translation and interpre-

THOSE WHO CAME FROM THE SKY

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tation of the Hebrew Bible. The new version radically differs from traditionally accepted versions.

Recognizing this fact, Raël assures us in his book that he is in fact telling the truth.

"I wish to emphasize to skeptics of all kinds that I never drink alcohol and sleep very well at night," he writes.

"One can neither dream for six consecutive days, nor invent all this. If being a visionary means having seen the light, then I am quite willing to be called a visionary. It is better to be called a visionary and know the truth than to be called clear-minded and not know the truth."

The interpretation of the Bible that Yahweh gave to Raël is lengthy and re-evaluates many biblical passages, and introduces many new ideas.

"The time of the end of the

world has arrived," said Yahweh, explaining to Raël how the gospel applies to the world as we know it today.

"Not the end of the world as in a catastrophe destroying the Earth, but the end of the world of the Church, which has completed its work. As you have noticed, the Christian church is dying. It is the end of this world because its mission has been fulfilled, albeit with quite a few mistakes because it tried for so long to deify the creators."

In discussing when the Raëlian religion will overcome other religions on Earth, Fabrice Thay, Raëlian guide for Vancouver, said there is no set date.

"Probably in this millennium, that's when it will be the dominant [religion]," he said.

As to when the Elohim will return, he replied, "no later than 2035."



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