



Beware of 'Eastern Lightning'

By

Mark McGee

Have you heard of Eastern Lightning? If not, hang on because it's quite a story.

Eastern Lightning is also known as the Church of the Almighty God, Church of the True God, Church of the Everlasting Fountain, and Real God and it's a growing *cult in mainland China, Hong Kong, Korea, Laos, Vietnam, Australia, Europe, Canada and the United States.

*Cult – “a small religious group that is not part of a larger and more accepted religion and that has beliefs regarded by many people as extreme or dangerous” (Merriam-Webster)

Even though Eastern Lightning is believed by some to have more than a million members in mainland China, it is small in comparison with China's population of about 1.4 billion people. (Some estimates are less than 100,000 adherents in China)

EL (as it is sometimes referred) is a relatively new cult and uses deception, sex and violence to grow bigger and flex its muscles on the back of a middle-aged Chinese woman that church members believe is the 'Almighty God' on earth.

The purpose for this post is simply this – be warned.

The Founder

The cult is reported to have begun about 25 years ago by Zhao Weishan **. He proclaims that the Almighty God has come to earth in the form of a Chinese woman and bases that claim on what Jesus said almost 2,000 years ago:

“For as the lightning comes from the east and flashes to the west, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.” Matthew 24:27

The Female Christ

The woman's name is Yang Xiangbin and is also known as the “female Christ.” According to recent reports, Yang and Zhao fled to the United States about 15 years ago and currently lives in New York City's Chinatown and run Eastern Lightning's international organization online (with Chinese headquarters in Zhengzhou). They teach that God is now guiding mankind for a third time through Yang. According to Yang and Zhao, God's first guidance was in the Old Testament as Yaweh and His second guidance was in the New Testament as Jesus Christ.

As with most cults, Eastern Lightning has its own 'holy book,' known as *The Word Appears in the Flesh: The Word Uttered by God Who Came Hiddenly in the End Time*. The date of original writing is February 28, 1992. The English translation is dated January 29, 2008. That translation includes: Preface, Attached Pieces 1-3, The Interpretation of the Mystery of God's

Word (Attached Pieces of God's Word 6-14), and The Words of the Incarnated Son of Man During His Walk in the Churches.

The book is deceptive in that the truth of what the cult believes is hidden from clear view. Instead of using the name Yang Xiangbin, the book addresses a correct response to God and His "Christ." The "Christ" of Eastern Lightning is Yang Xiangbin.

The Origin

Here is how Eastern Lightning explains how this came to be in "[The Origin and Development of the Church of Almighty God:](#)"

"In 1991, Almighty God—the last Christ—who was incarnated in China began to work, uttering his voice and speaking. He has expressed millions of words and started the work of judgment before the great white throne in the end time ... The Church of Almighty God came into being because of the returned Lord Jesus—the end-time Christ, Almighty God's appearing and work, and also under Almighty God's righteous judgment and chastisement."

As we read through The Church of Almighty God website, we read quotes from both The Word Appears in the Flesh and the New Testament of the Holy Bible as if they are on equal footing as the inspired Word of God.

** Some believe Eastern Lightning may have had its theological beginnings as far back as Witness Lee. (Interesting article about personal experience with Eastern Lightning by William Bennett)

The Beliefs

Jesus Christ is a created being.

The Trinity is a false doctrine.

Jesus Christ did not complete His work on earth, so God sent a woman (Jesus' sister?) to complete His 6,000-year plan to save humanity.

Because Jesus did not complete His work on earth, salvation through the sacrifice of Jesus on the Cross is not effective in saving a person's soul. Jesus did not rise from the dead and will not return again.

God has already returned to earth as a Chinese woman (Yang Xiangbin)
The Bible is outdated and not authoritative.

The Christian mission organization China For Jesus details some of the beliefs of Eastern Lightning here.

The Methods

The cult is known for using deception, coercion, entrapment, kidnapping, sex and violence to gain new converts. There are many reports about Eastern Lightning's acts of violence ([here](#), [here](#) and [here](#)). One of its methods for getting access to many of the true Christian house churches in China is "Spying and Paving the Way" – a method of infiltrating orthodox churches.

China for Jesus explains The Characteristics of the Eastern Lightning Cult at Its Different Stages along with recommended countermeasures. The stages include The Primitive Stage, The Violent Stage, The Sexual Enticement Stage, The Crafty Stage and a Fifth Stage that was unnamed when the report was written.

The Media

Eastern Lightning is savvy in working with media: including books, video, stage plays, musicals, audio, photos, art and websites – including live chat. They also have special media aimed at reaching children. Books include *The Word Becomes Flesh*, *The Lightning Comes from the East*, *The Holy Spirit Speaks to All the Churches*, and *God's Work through His Secret Appearing*.

Eastern Lightning presents itself as the “persecuted church” in China and has almost 100 video “Persecution Experience Testimonies.” The church’s premise is that “judgment begins with God’s family” and that the government of China – which Eastern Lightning calls the “Great Red Dragon” predicted in Revelation – is the persecutor of the church.

The Conclusion

Eastern Lightning is a dangerous ‘cult.’ It is not part of orthodox Christianity and should not be trusted. Christians should beware of the danger involved – spiritual and physical.

Read more about Eastern Lightning by clicking on these links:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20011115032352/http://www.time.com/time/asia/news/magazine/0,9754,181681,00.html>

<http://www.apologeticsindex.org/191-lightning-from-the-east>

<http://www.apologeticsindex.org/192-indepth-report-on-eastern-lightning-cult>

http://www.chinaforjesus.com/EL_development.htm

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eastern_Lightning

<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-china-28641008>

<http://www.vice.com/read/the-chinese-cult-who-kidnap-christians-and-paint-snakes>

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/china/11046155/Inside-Chinas-most-radical-cult.html>

<http://www.ibtimes.com/chinas-cult-crackdown-what-church-almighty-god-1747990>

<http://www.cnn.com/2014/06/06/world/asia/china-eastern-lightning-killing/>

<http://asiaharvest.org/sound-doctrine-and-poisoned-cows/>

<http://asiaharvest.org/when-chinas-christians-wish-they-were-in-prison/>

http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2014-06/25/content_17615554.htm

<http://www.news.com.au/world/asia/church-of-almighty-god-or-eastern-lightning-in-australia-fears-the-terrifying-chinese-cult-is-gaining-ground/story-fnh81fz8-1227031629018>

<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2014-06-03/china-police-detain-five-cult-members-for-murder-in-mcdonald-s>
