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[Return to Home Page](#)

[Return to List of Articles](#)

THE MIRACLE MINERAL SOLUTION

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In the vanishingly unlikely event that something happens between now and my demise that elevates my status to that of ‘celebrity’ and the editors of the Oxford Dictionary of Quotations feel obliged to include in its pages something that I have said, I should like it to be this:

‘If you survey healing throughout history and across contemporary cultures, and even within our own culture, you will encounter an extraordinary and fascinating range of human behaviour and beliefs, bounded only by the healer’s own imagination and the compliance of those seeking to be healed, and therefore unbounded. I think this is more so than in any context other than religion’ (*note 1*).’ (*Is this the best you can do?—Ed*).

So now think what happens when healing and religion get together.

In previous issues of the *Skeptical Intelligencer* the ‘Of Interest’ columns have reported the promotion and sale of a substance more commonly used as an industrial bleach, under the guise that it provides a cure for an extraordinary range of diseases and conditions including cancer, HIV/Aids, and malaria. It is also promoted as a cure for autism. This panacea is known as Miracle Mineral Solution or Master Mineral Solution (MMS). MMS contains sodium chlorite, a chemical used mainly as a textile bleaching agent and disinfectant. The sodium chlorite is mixed with an acid, such as the juices of citrus fruits, producing chlorine dioxide, a toxic chemical that can cause nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea, low blood pressure and renal failure.

Recently (*note 2*) Robert Baldwin, an American pastor from New Jersey, backed by a British ‘former clairvoyant’ called Sam Little, has been running a network that has given MMS to up to 50,000 Ugandans. On 23.5.19 the Ugandan police arrested Little at a village church in Kitembi in western Uganda. According to Wikipedia; ‘Baldwin operates under “Global Healing”, the ministry he founded, which uses “the power of Almighty God ... to greatly reduce the loss of life”. Baldwin offers smartphones to clerics as an incentive to spread the “miracle cure”.’

This is not the only religious connection. In October 2016 a man who calls himself ‘the archbishop’, Mark Grenon of the ‘Genesis II Church’, claimed that MMS cures virtually every illness and disease, including breast cancer, diabetes, HIV, autism, leukaemia and herpes ‘just with the one drop an hour’ (*note 3*). Despite his exposure by ABC News, he is still making a good living promoting MMS worldwide. Also in October 2016, in Ireland a leading Co Kildare member of the Genesis II Church, ‘Bishop’ Patrick Merlehan, was convicted at Naas District Court of manufacturing MMS not in accordance with the Health Products Regulatory Authority and with placing MMS on the market, contrary to market regulations (*note 4*).

Later, in November 2018 in Canada, Stanley Nowak of Riondel, B.C. pleaded guilty to 17 charges related to the sale of MMS. He is the first person convicted under Canada’s Food and Drug Act for marketing, packaging and selling the product (*note 5*). More recently the Netherlands Food and Consumer Product Safety Authority has issued a ban on the sale of MMS and has advised the health minister to encourage stricter regulation of MMS in Europe.

In June 2019 it was reported from Texas that the mother of four autistic children filmed herself feeding one of them for the first time with the bleach solution (*note 6*). A police review of social media posts revealed that throughout the last year, she had given regular doses to two of her children, aged 27 and 28.

In fact, according to *Business Insider* (*note 7*) hundreds of videos that promote MMS as a cure for autism have been discovered on YouTube, some appearing in the top three search results for ‘autism cure’. *Business Insider*

also reports that MMS has caused dozens of injuries and two deaths in the US. YouTube removed most of the videos after they were reported by the publication.

How has it come about that the poor and the sick are being persuaded to swallow bleach in the name of religion? The name Miracle Mineral Solution was coined by a former Scientologist Jim Humble in 2006 in a self-published book *The Miracle Mineral Solution of the 21st Century*. On his website he says this:

‘I want to tell you about a breakthrough that can save your life, or the life of a loved one. In 1996, while on a gold mining expedition in South America, I discovered that chlorine dioxide quickly eradicates malaria. Since that time, it has proven to restore partial or full health to hundreds of thousands of people suffering from a wide range of disease, including cancer, diabetes, hepatitis A, B, C, Lyme disease, MRSA, multiple sclerosis, Parkinson’s, Alzheimer’s, HIV/AIDS, malaria, autism, infections of all kinds, arthritis, high cholesterol, acid reflux, kidney or liver diseases, aches and pains, allergies, urinary tract infections, digestive problems, high blood pressure, obesity, parasites, tumors and cysts, depression, sinus problems, eye disease, ear infections, dengue fever, skin problems, dental issues, problems with prostate (high PSA), erectile dysfunction and the list goes on. This is by far not a comprehensive list.’ (note 8)

Humble by name

There is, incidentally, a disclaimer at the bottom of the website stating, ‘The protocols described on this site are official sacraments of the Genesis II Church of Health and Healing.’

Notes

1. Heap, M. (2002) Healing and therapy in the age of mass affluence. *Skeptical Intelligencer*, 5, 3-13.
2. <http://tinyurl.com/y3u83txx>
3. <http://tinyurl.com/hbvlqhw> and <http://tinyurl.com/y4medq2w>
4. <http://tinyurl.com/jz38dse>
5. <http://tinyurl.com/y7cmdres>
6. <http://tinyurl.com/yxlu6xuz>
7. <http://tinyurl.com/y6qnlur4>
8. <https://jimhumble.co/>