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## Hitler

Adolf Hitler was a very complex man. The Nazis revered him as a God, while the western allies despised him and suspected he might even be Satan in human form. However, no human being is black or white; no one is as simply good or evil as Hitler was made out to be. Hitler was much more complex than anyone ever expected, and by looking at his childhood, his attributes as a leader, and his religious dogma, people can come to a greater understanding of Hitler, who in spite of his evil acts, was still a man.

Hitler was born on April 20, 1889 in a small village just across the border of Bavaria. As he grew up, he experienced more concern and embarrassment from his family than anything else. One of the reasons for Hitler's concern about his family stemmed from the fact that it was "remotely possible that Adolf Hitler's grandfather was Jewish"(Historyplace,P.3). Hitler never really knew who his grandfather was, but he did find out that his father,

Alois Schicklgruber, had changed his name to Alois Hitler in honor of his mother's family. Ironically, the name was a misspelling in the record book; the name should have been Hiedler, not Hitler (source, p2). Young Adolf Hitler was born fourth out of six kids, but he was the first to be healthy and the first to survive. Because of the lost children, Hitler was much loved by his mother; his father kept busy with work. When his mom died of cancer, Hitler's whole life went down hill due to his powerful attachment to his mother.

Many people feared and despised Hitler because he was a very strong and dependable warrior. During World War 1 Hitler joined the German Army where he served in the ranks of the Sixteenth Bavarian Infantry Regiment. While Hitler served in his platoon, he was a dispatch runner for his Lieutenant. During his dispatch services "Hitler proved an able, courageous soldier, receiving the Iron Cross (First Class) for bravery, but did not rise above the rank of Lance Corporal" (Wistrich, P.5). After receiving his award, Hitler was wounded twice and spent several months in the hospital in Pomerania. The German revolution of 1918 compelled Hitler to pull Germany out of the rut it was in. He decided to lead Germany out of its humiliating defeat by the world. In 1921 Hitler declared himself to be the self-

appointed leader of the National Socialist German Workers' Party. After he declared himself leader, he introduced the "swastika" as its symbol and the "Heil" as the salute or the greeting to other members. Hitler's abilities as a soldier and a leader propelled him into the forefront of German politics and eventually into leadership of the infamous Third Reich.

Many people have believed in the past that Hitler was either an atheist or a humanist; however, we now know that Hitler was neither. He was actually a Christian, who believed he was following the will of God. Hitler once said, "Hence today I believe that I am acting in accordance with the will of the Almighty Creator: by defending myself against the Jew, I am fighting for the work of the Lord" (Walker, p.1). Hitler was raised as a Catholic, even though the Catholic Church would oppose his ideas. In his later years, he was more influenced by the Protestant church due to their strong support of his ideas in politics. Many Catholic priests opposed his views to rid the world of Jews, but Hitler proclaimed himself a Christian and unashamedly spoke of the biblical God. Hitler's anti-Semitism came out of his Christian education in which he was taught to hate the Jews. Not many people like to think of the demonized Hitler as someone, who even believed in

God. But even the worst of men have a few "good" skeletons in their closets.

Many factors contributed to Hitler's different, cruel and complex way of thinking. His clever intellect is evinced clearly through his planning before and during the World Wars. Hitler was much more complex than anyone ever expected, and by looking at his childhood, his religious dogma, and his attributes as a leader, people can come to a greater understanding of Hitler, who in spite of his evil acts, was still a man. Hitler was taught the ideas he applied during his political reign; his childhood was altered by teachings that weren't morally right, and he was respected by lots of people due to his military service. The thought that Hitler was influenced by outside factors holds true due to the reasoning laid forth. Hitler was a wicked dictator, but a smart dictator, as well, and only a man.