

EIGHT REASONS WHY I CANNOT BUY WHAT THE JEHOVAH WITNESSES ARE PEDDLING

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INTRODUCTION

Very few people have escaped a visit by Jehovah Witnesses peddling their cultic teachings which run counter to historic Christianity. Watch Tower Society statistics reveal that some 740 house calls are required to recruit each new member to its organization and there are close to 200,000 who join the Watch Tower Society each year.

The recruiting success of the Jehovah Witness Cult is no doubt based upon two things - their relentless method of door-to-door visitation and the lack of spiritual growth on the part of many professing Christians. W. J. Schnell, author of *Thirty Years a Watch Tower Slave* stated these reasons in his book:

The Watch Tower leadership sensed that within the midst of Christendom were many millions of professing Christians who were not well grounded in "the truths once delivered to the saints," and who would be rather easily pried loose from the churches and led into a new and revitalized Watch Tower organization. The society calculated, and that rightly, that this lack of proper knowledge of God and the widespread acceptance of half-truths in Christendom would yield vast masses of men and women, if the whole matter were wisely attacked, the attack sustained and the results contained, and then re-used in an ever-widening circle (19).

The purpose of the following pages is two-fold. First, to expose the unbiblical teaching of the Jehovah Witnesses Cult and then secondly to ground Christians spiritually so that they may not be led astray and taken captive by the devil at his will.

It should be understood that the Christian's fight is not against men or flesh and blood but against the dark powers which use men to ensnare other men through their false and unbiblical teachings.

Eight reasons why I cannot buy what the Jehovah Witnesses are peddling is aimed at the devil's false teachings.

I can't buy what the J.W.'s are peddling...

1 BECAUSE OF THE DISREPUTABLE CHARACTER OF THE FOUNDER OF THIS RELIGIOUS CULT

If one were going to follow the teachings of someone, especially when those teachings involved matters of morality and one's eternal destiny, one would want to check out the character of that teacher very thoroughly before he accepted anything he had to say. Someone has well said, "I'd rather see a sermon any day than to hear one."

So, who founded the Jehovah Witness organization and what kind of character did the founder demonstrate? This group was founded by a man named Charles Taze Russell. Russell was born on Feb. 16, 1852 and grew up in Pittsburgh and Allegheny, Pennsylvania. He was a member of a Congregationalist church but while yet a teenager he rejected the doctrine of eternal punishment and denounced all organized religions.

In 1870 at age 18, Russell organized a Bible class in Pittsburgh and continued to preach and teach his doctrine denying eternal punishment. Six years later Russell was elected the pastor of this group.

From 1876 to 1878 Russell worked as an assistant editor of a monthly magazine in Rochester, New York but was forced to resign because of a controversy which came about over his views on the atonement of Christ. After leaving the magazine position Russell founded the "Zion Watch Tower" in 1879 and published some 6,000 copies. By 1963 under the name of "The Watch Tower" 64 million copies were published. In 1884 Russell then founded the "Zion Watch Tower Tract Society" in Pittsburgh and began to publish his books entitled Studies in the Scriptures - Russell, no doubt, recognized the power of the pen and the press to spread his teachings. "The Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society" was then founded in 1896 which has become the central organization for missionary endeavors.

Russell died October 31, 1916 but when the seventh volume of his book was published in 1917 entitled The Finished Mystery, it caused a split in the organization. The smallest group became known as "The Dawn Bible Students Association" which now publishes The Dawn magazine. The larger group followed the leadership of Judge Franklin Rutherford and became known by their present name as "Jehovah's Witnesses."

But what kind of character did Russell himself demonstrate? The character of this man is evidenced first of all in his failed marriage relationship. In 1897 Russell's wife Maria left him after seventeen years of marriage (Martin 34-37). Six years later, in 1903 she sued him for a divorce because of "his conceit, egotism, domination, and improper conduct in relation to other women." According to Joel Groat's findings the courts severely censured Russell and called his conduct "insulting, domineering, and overbearing to a degree which made life intolerable to a

sensitive Christian women" (Groat 2). Much litigation followed over an alimony settlement for her. Finally in 1909 the matter was settled by a \$6,036.00 payment to Mrs. Russell.

The character of Russell may also be seen in his financial dealings concerning his religious activities. During the Litigation for alimony payments it was brought out that Russell's religious activities were carried out through several subsidiary societies. Money came in through these societies into a holding company in which Russell held \$990.00 of the \$1,000.00 capital and two of his followers held only \$10.00 each.

Russell's character is demonstrated also in his religious activities to finance his organization. Russell advertised repeatedly "Miracle Wheat" for sale in his Watch Tower publication. He claimed it would grow five times as much as any other wheat and he sold it for \$60.00 a bushel. When *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle* published a cartoon of Russell and his wheat, he sued the newspaper but lost his case because in government tests Russell's wheat actually proved to yield less than others (Martin 34-37).

Prior to the trial the *Eagle* had stated that it would show, "that Russell's religious cult was nothing more than a money-making scheme." During the trial this charge by the *Eagle* was also substantiated (Martin 36).

Russell's character is further revealed in the files of the High Court of Ontario in the trial of Russell vs. Ross "defamatory libel", dated March 17, 1913. Walter Martin stated the background for this suit as follows:

In June, 1912 the Reverend J.J. Ross of the James Street Baptist Church, Hamilton, Ontario, published a pamphlet entitled, "Some Facts About the Self-Style 'Pastor' Charles T. Russell" which minced no words in its denunciation of Russell, his qualifications as a minister, or his moral example as a "pastor." Russell promptly sued Ross for "defamatory libel" in an effort to silence the courageous minister before a pamphlet could gain wide circulation and expose his true character and the errors of his theology. Mr. Ross, however, was unimpressed by Russell's action and eagerly seized upon the opportunity as a means of exposing Russell for the fraud he was. In his pamphlet, Ross assailed Russell's teachings as revealed in "Studies in the Scriptures" as "the destruction doctrines of one man who is neither a scholar nor a theologian" (page 7). (Martin 38).

It should be noted that Russell was not able to prove that the charge made against him were untrue and the High Court of Ontario ruled in the March 1913 session that there were no grounds liable against Ross.

During this particular trial Russell committed perjury in stating that he knew the Greek alphabet but was unable to identify the letters when confronted with a copy of it. Although Russell had sworn earlier that he was an ordained minister and had knowledge of Latin and Hebrew, he was also proved a liar in these areas as well. The proceedings showed that he had never taken a course in Systematic Theology or attended any school of higher learning and had never been ordained by any religious group (Martin 38-40).

Russell's character was revealed as, "that of a man who had no scruples about lying under oath and whose doctrines were admittedly based on no sound educational knowledge of the subject in question" (Martin 40).

In addition to the many fraudulent claims of Russell *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle* published an article on page 18 of the February 19, 1912 issue which exposed more of his hypocrisy. It was entitled "Pastor Russell's Imaginary Sermons - Printed Reports of Addresses in Foreign Lands that He Never Made - One at Hawaii, a Sample." (Martin 36)

The evidence as to Russell's character is well documented in the issues of the *Eagle*. Walter Martin states that these issues may be obtained from the Montague Street Branch of the Brooklyn Public Library and points the doubtful inquirer to the following issues:

- (1) January 1, 1913, pages 1, 2. Miracle Wheat Scandal.
- (2) January 22, 1913, page 2. Testimony of Russellite beliefs.
- (3) January 23,24,1913, page 3. Testimony on wheat.
- (4) January 25, 1913, page 16. Financial statements proving Russell's absolute control, made by Secretary-Treasurer Van Amberg.
- (5) *Van Amberg's statement:*
"...We are not responsible to anyone for our expenditures. We are responsible only to God."
- (6) January 27, 1913, page 3. Government experts testify on "Miracle Wheat" and ascertain beyond doubt that it is not miraculous or overly excellent.
- (7) January 28, 1913, page 2. Prosecution and Defense sum-up.
Russell assailed, but not present to hear it.
- (8) January 29, 1913, page 16, Russell loses libel suit (36).

It is not surprising that the J.W.'s do not like to be called "Russellites" or identified with Charles Russell because of his disreputable character. But no matter how much they try to disassociate themselves from him, they are followers of Russell and his heretic teachings.

Charles Russell died October 31, 1916 on a train bound for Kansas City. His traveling companion Mr. Menta Sturgeon was with him at the time and William C. Irvine detailed the event as follows:

On Oct. 31 the conductor and the porter of the train were called in by Mr. Sturgeon, who said: "We want you to see how a great man of God can die." Alas, alas, he who had so well "staged" his system and "boomed" himself, failed in the drama of the last moment, and so passed into Eternity silent

and sombre. No "dawn" on his horizon, no farewell note of victory, no reconciliation to his divorced wife, no recantation of his numerous denials of the Deity of Christ, the value of His Atonement, His bodily Resurrection, the Second Coming, eternal punishment and other cardinal truths; no sorrow for the thousands whom he had turned from *light* to *darkness*, not even an admission that his prophecy that "The harvest of this age... ends with the overthrow of Gentile power in A.D. 1914" had passed unnoticed by God or man. Thus closed the career of one of the greatest of the "*many false prophets*" (1 John 4:1) of these last days (The Witness). (153).

This writer has some questions for the reader who would consider following a man with such character and credentials as demonstrated in the life of Charles Russell. If you were going on a trip across the Pacific Ocean would you want to get on board with a captain whose knowledge of nautical navigational methods was questionable? If you were diagnosed with heart disease and needed to have a heart transplant would you want someone to operate on you who had a limited knowledge of medical practice and procedure? Then how much more reluctant should you be to trust the eternal welfare of your soul to the teachings of such a man as Charles T. Russell?

I can't buy what the J.W.'s are peddling...

#2 BECAUSE OF THE WAY THAT THEY TRY TO DENY THE BIBLICAL DOCTRINE OF HELL

Following the teachings of Charles Russell, the Jehovah Witnesses reject the Biblical doctrine of eternal punishment for those who die unsaved. The J.W.'s argue that the Old Testament word for hell which is "*sheol*" has no meaning other than the grave, so they believe that hell is nothing more than the grave. According to their writings there is only one meaning for this word. Their reasoning is as follows:

Throughout the sacred Hebrew Scriptures this word occurs 65 times, but the translators in the *King James Version* rendered it 31 times "hell", 31 times "grave", and only 3 times "pit", and this without any good reason... If you were to translate a book from a foreign language into English and there you found the foreign word for bread 65 times, would you translate it 31 times bread, 31 times fish, and 3 times meat? Why? Because if you did your translation it would not be correct. For what is bread cannot at the same time be fish or meat and vice versa. The same holds true with the word *sheol*. If *sheol* is the grave, it is impossible at the same time to be a place of fiery torture and at the same time a pit (Let God Be True, 69-70).

To say, however, that a Hebrew word means only one thing and has no other area of meaning is faulty exegesis to say the least. The meaning of a particular word must be decided from the context in which it is used. Walter Martin pointed out this truth by using the very word which the J.W.'s use to support their argument. He stated :

In the Hebrew text, the word *lechem* is translated bread 238 times, 1 time as "feast," 21 times as "food," 1 time as "fruit," 5 times as "loaf," 18 times as "meat," 1 time as "provision," twice as "victuals," and once as "eat" (page 89).

It should be noted by the person seeking truth that the New World Translation is not consistent in its translation of the word for "bread." In Genesis 3:19 *lechem* is translated "bread" (page 12). In Leviticus 22:11 it is translated "grain" (page 148) and in Proverbs 6:8 it is translated "food" (Page 735). Any logical person knows that bread is altogether different from fruit and that trees don't bear bread. But note how the New World Translators rendered Jeremiah 11:19: "...let us bring to ruin the tree with its food..." (page 850).

To affirm that a Hebrew word can only have one meaning is to disregard all the figures of speech which are used in the Scriptures and to destroy numerous symbolical meanings as well. If fire can mean only fire then what set upon the disciples on the day of Pentecost? If bread only means bread, then how could Jesus say He was the Bread of Life?

It is no doubt true that the word *sheol* does, indeed, refer to the grave in certain Old Testament passages but the word cannot be limited to that one meaning alone. It is clear from a number of Old Testament passages that the word *sheol* refers to the whole realm of departed spirits and in many cases to those in a place of torments. It is evident from the context of the following passages that *sheol* refers to a place of torments:

The wicked shall be turned into (sheol), and all the nations that forget God (Psalm 9:17).

Thou shalt beat him with a rod, and deliver his soul from (sheol) (Proverbs 23:14).

Though they dig into (sheol) thence shall mine hand take them, though they climb up to heaven from there will I bring them down (Amos 9:2).

From the context of numerous passages *sheol* can only mean the abode of the wicked where they are tormented in contrast to the heavenly blessings of the righteous. Merrill Unger stated:

Some passages are doubtful, but concerning others scarcely a question can be entertained (e.g., Job 11:8; Psa. 139:8; Amos 9:3). (1012)

The editors of the New Scofield Bible came to the following conclusion concerning the word *sheol* and its usages in the Old Testament:

Sheol is, in the O.T., the place to which the dead go. (1) Often, therefore, it is spoken of as the equivalent of the grave, where all human activities cease... Scripture reveals *sheol* as a place of sorrow (2 Sam, 22:6; Ps. 18:5; 116:3), into which the wicked are turned (Ps. 9:17), and where they are fully conscious (Isa. 14:9-17; Ezek. 32:21). Compare Jon. 2:2; what the belly of the great fish was to Jonah, *sheol* is to those who are therein (954).

It is also evident from Isaiah 66:24 that there is a place of torments for the wicked who die without God's salvation:

And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me: for their worm shall not die neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorrence unto all flesh (KJV).

Sound Biblical exegesis will show that the word *sheol* has reference to the unseen realm of departed spirits in the Old Testament. But for the wicked it comprised a place of torments which was separate from the righteous dead. This is supported in the New Testament account which the Lord Jesus gave in Luke 16:19-26. The place of the righteous dead is referred to as "Abraham's bosom" (Luke 16:22) and "paradise" (Luke 23:43). This place existed in the heart of the earth prior to Christ's resurrection and was separated from the place of torments by a great gulf. It was to Abraham's bosom that Jesus descended after He was crucified (Matthew 12:40), but the place of torments is still there and it can in no stretch of the imagination be equated with the grave. The J.W.'s speak of Christ's death as limited to the grave:

The Hebrew word at Psalm 16:10 translated "hell" is *sheol*. but in the Greek quotation it is *hades*. So we see that *hades* is the Greek equivalent for *sheol*. The original word in both languages means grave, a condition where nothing can be seen; and there is where the Son of God went for three days (Let God Be True, 73,74).

If Christ went no further than the grave after death then how could He promise paradise that day to the repentant thief (Luke 23:43) and what can be the meaning of Matthew 12:40, "...so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth?"

In their attempts to deny the Biblical doctrine of hell the J.W.'s further contend that death means extinction or annihilation. Commenting on the "hell fire" of Mark 9:47-48, it is stated:

Here the Greek Bible text uses, not the word *hades*, but the word *Gehenna*, which is mistranslated "hell fire" but which according to the Hebrew Scriptures has reference to the "Valley of Himmon." This Valley lay on the outside of the south and west walls of Jerusalem and was used as a crematory or incinerator where the Israelites dumped the city's offal and garbage as well as the dead bodies of animals and of vile criminals to be destroyed by burning... Its flames symbolized the everlasting and complete destruction to which all the demonized enemies of God and his kingdom will go and from which there is no recovery or resurrection... In all places where *hell* is translated from the Greek word *Gehenna* it means everlasting destruction or extinction... *Gehenna*, or the valley of the son of Hinnom is a picture or symbol of complete annihilation or extermination, and not of eternal torment (76-78).

In an on-line article an anonymous author has pointed out the following passages as verifiable proof that there is existence between death and resurrection:

A. I Sam. 28:3-20

In this passage, the spirit of Samuel the prophet is allowed to converse with King Saul after Samuel had been dead for some time.

B. Matt. 17:1-3

This is the story of the Mt. of Transfiguration. Here Moses, who had been dead for over 1,000 years is talking to Jesus (along with Elijah, who had been taken to Heaven without dying).

C Luke 16:19-31

Here is a contrast between an unsaved rich man who died and went to Hell, and a saved beggar who died and went to "Abraham's bosom" (a Jewish conception of Heaven). Interestingly, in this story, the rich man in Hell has his senses -he can feel the torment of fire, he can speak to Abraham, he can hear Abraham speaking back to him, he can remember what took place while he was on earth, he can recognize Lazarus, etc.

D. Luke 23:39-46

In this passage, Jesus tells the dying thief on the cross (vs. 43), "Today shalt thou be with me in paradise." Then 3 verses later (vs. 46), Jesus commends His spirit to God the Father and dies. If this isn't an indication of life after death, I don't know what would be!

E. Acts 7:54-60

In this passage, Stephen is martyred for the cause of Christ. He looks up and sees Jesus in Heaven waiting to receive his spirit after death.

F. II Corinthians 5:8

Paul states in this verse that when a Christian is absent from the body (i.e., when he dies; when his soul and spirit leave his body), then that Christian is present with the

Lord. G. Philippians 1:21-24

Paul states in this passage that for him "to die is gain" (vs. 21). Why? Because when he dies, he will "depart, and be with Christ." (vs.23)

H. I Thessalonians 4:13-18)

This passage is often called the "Rapture". It pictures the Lord Jesus Christ descending from Heaven into the clouds and raising the bodies of the Christian dead. However, the passage states that when He descends, "them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him" (vs. 14). Obviously, if He brings them "with him", they must have been where He was, i.e., in Heaven.

Thus He brings the soul and spirit of the dead Christian from Heaven "with him", raises the dead body, and reunites body, soul, and spirit at the resurrection of the saved.

The point is, in order for Him to bring these Christians "with him", when He raises their bodies, they had to have been with Him between the time of their death and the time of the resurrection, That, my friend, is life after death.

I. Hebrew 12:22-24

This passage states that when one comes to "the heavenly Jerusalem", he also comes "to the spirits of just men made perfect" (vs. 23). Again, life after death.

J. Rev. 6:9-11

In this passage we are told of believers who will be martyred for the Word of God during the reign of the Antichrist. After being slain, their souls are in Heaven asking God to avenge their murder. Life after death.

These are not all the passages in the Bible which teach and imply life after death, but they are enough for any honest person to see that this is indeed what the Bible teaches. In order for anyone to deny that the Bible teaches life after death, they have to twist, pervert, and explain away a lot of Scripture, (pages 2-3)

It should be understood that death in the Biblical sense never means extinction or annihilation. The Bible portrays death as separation. Physical death is a separation of the soul and spirit from the body (James 2:26) and spiritual death is the separation of a sinner from the presence of God (Genesis 2:17), but death is not extinction, it is conscious existence either in the Lord's presence (II Corinthians 5:8) or separated from Him in a place of torments (II Thessalonians 1:9; Revelations 21:8).

Gehenna is a symbol of eternal separation in conscious torment after death in a place called hell. And hell is referred to as a place where the unsaved will suffer after death (Matthew 8:11,12; 13:42, 50; 22:13; Luke 13:24-28; II Peter 2:17; Revelation 14:10,11). Joel Groat has rightly stated this truth. He said:

The Bible teaches that the human soul continues to exist consciously after death (Is. 14:9-11; Lk 16:19-21; Rev. 6:9-11). Those who have rejected God's gift of eternal life will suffer conscious eternal punishment (Matt. 25:41,46; Rev. 14:10,11; 20:10,15) (4).

In their efforts to deny the Biblical doctrine of hell the J.W.'s pass off as a parable the account which Jesus gave in Luke 16:19-31. J.W. writers have stated:

By this parable Jesus uttered a prophecy which undergoes fulfillment in its modern setting since A.D. 1918. It has its application to two classes existing on earth today. The rich man represents the ultraselfish class of the clergy of "Christendom", who are now alienated from God and dead to his favor and tormented by the truth proclaimed. Lazarus depicts the remnant of the "body of Christ" and also that class of persons who are of good-will. These, on abandoning religion, receive God's favor and comfort through his Word. (Let God Be True, 79).

In rebuttal to such a faulty and groundless interpretation of Luke 16:19-31 it should be noted, first of all, that Luke's account is a record of an actual case in which Jesus described the disposition of the souls of two men after they had died. And what was said was not a parable because Jesus never used personal names in parables.

What was the Lord Jesus then describing in this account? He was portraying the awful condition of a lost soul after death in the rich man who rejected God, and the blessed condition of a saved soul who had believed in God and partaken of His mercy as seen in Lazarus.

The reader should note that the soul of the rich man, because he had rejected God, went into conscious torment after he had died and left this world. There's no doubt about it, he was suffering the torments of a literal hell and he knew it. In Luke 16:24 he said, "For I am tormented in this flame" (Martin 92).

But what about the interpretation that the J.W.'s offer concerning this passage as a coming event which was fulfilled in 1918? To interpret Scripture in this manner is hermeneutically and exegetically incorrect. Such an interpretation is a gross example of twisting the Scriptures to support one's own belief system and it amounts to nothing less than spiritualizing the Word of God.

What is hell then? Is it the grave? And does death mean distinction and annihilation for those who die as unbelievers? According to the truth of God's Word, hell is a real place of torments for the unbeliever who dies without Christ as his Saviour. It is not extinction or cessation of being. This truth is substantiated not only in the account which Jesus gave in Luke 16:19-31, it is evidenced from the judgment which will be pronounced upon unbelievers at His Second Coming. Matthew 25:46 states:

And these shall go away into everlasting punishment but the righteous into life eternal (KJV).

The reader should also notice what this punishment entails. It is stated to be the same for those who will be deceived in the Tribulation Period and receive the mark of the beast (Antichrist). Revelation 14:9-11 states:

...if any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb; and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up forever and ever, and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name (KJV).

To believe that hell is the grave and that there is no place of torments for unbelievers is to be deceived by the great deceiver who is Satan himself. Moreover, if the grave is annihilation and extinction of being for unbelievers, then where's the just retribution against the wicked who have committed a lifetime of atrocities against the innocent? And if there's no place of punishment then why was it needful for Christ to suffer for one's sins? To die in one's sins is to be consigned to a devil's hell which is real and everlasting and without any hope of reprieve or release.

I can't buy what the J.W.'s are peddling...

**#3 BECAUSE OF THE PLACE OF INFERIORITY WHICH THEY GIVE TO
THE LORD JESUS CHRIST**

Who is Jesus Christ and what place should He occupy? Before considering the nature and the place which the J.W.'s ascribe to Him, it would be remiss not to begin with what the Scriptures say about Him. Joel Groat summarized what the Bible teaches concerning Jesus Christ as follows:

The Bible teaches that Jesus Christ is God come in the flesh, and is the Creator of all things (John 1:1-3, 14; Col. 1:16). While never less than God, at the appointed time He laid aside the glory He shared with the Father and took on a human nature (John 17:35; Phil. 2:6-11; Col. 2:9). Following His death, Jesus Christ rose bodily from the grave, appeared to and was recognized in His body by over 500 people. This fact was crucial to both the preaching and faith of the early Church (Luke 24:39; John 2:19-21; I Cor. 15:6,14). (4)

The Bible does indeed teach that Jesus Christ is God come in the flesh. The apostle Paul stated in I Timothy 3:16 that there's no argument in regard to this fact:

And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up to glory (KJV).

But is Jesus Christ the Jehovah God come in the flesh? The J.W.'s say no. They contend that Christ was an angelic being (Michael the archangel) who was born as a man. Let God Be True states:

This One was not Jehovah God, but was "existing in the form of God." How so? He was a spirit person, just as "God is a spirit"; he was a mighty one, although not Almighty as Jehovah God is... (34).

Despite this blasphemous denial by the J.W.'s it is evident from the Scriptures that Jesus Christ is indeed the LORD (Jehovah). This can be substantiated first of all in the Scriptures concerning the prophecy regarding John the Baptist. Isaiah 40:3 states:

The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God (KJV).

The reader should notice that the word "LORD" occurs in all capital letters when it is a translation of the word "Jehovah." The New Testament makes it emphatically clear that this prophecy refers to John the Baptist who was the forerunner of Jesus Christ. John 1:22,23 states:

Then said they unto him, who art thou? That we may give an answer to them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself? He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Isaiah (KJV).

There can be no doubt that this text identifies Jesus as Jehovah. And this truth is supported in Hebrews 1:3; Phil. 2:11; Col. 2:9; Rev. 1:8,17,18 as well.

The Scriptures also teach that Jehovah God would be born of a virgin. Isaiah 7:14 says:

Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel (KJV).

There can be no question as to whom this refers. Matthew 1:21-23 says:

And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus; for he shall save his people from their sins. Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet saying, Behold a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel, which being interpreted, is God with us (KJV).

In Isaiah 9:6 another prophecy is given concerning Christ and the names by which He would be called and these describe Him to be Jehovah God:

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulders, and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace (KJV).

Micah 5:2 gives a prophecy concerning the place of Christ's birth and also gives a description of one who can be no less than Jehovah God:

But thou, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel, whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting (KJV).

Matthew 2:6 makes it very clear that Micah's prophecy and description refers to Christ. For when King Herod inquired of the chief priests and scribes concerning where Christ would be born, they quoted this Scripture specifically.

The prophecy of yet another Scripture substantiates the truth that Jesus Christ is indeed Jehovah God manifested in the flesh. To which place will Christ return when He comes again at His Second Coming? Zechariah 14:4 says it will be the Mount of Olives and it describes this One as LORD or Jehovah in chapter 14:3,5,9.

The J.W.'s further contend that John 1:1 should be translated in the following manner:

In the beginning was the word and the word was with God and the word was a god (New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures 1151).

Such a translation is not only flawed, it makes Christ "a god" rather than Jehovah God. The J.W.'s failed to discern how a proper noun in the Greek language should be translated when it is anarthrous (has no article). Greek scholar Kenneth Wuest states the following in reference to anarthrous nouns and how it applies to John 1:1:

When the article is not used, the emphasis is upon the quality or character of the person or thing designated by the noun... The student should not translate "the word was a god"... because the absence of the article here qualifies. Therefore, the quality or character of Deity is emphasized. The translation would be, "The Word as to His essence was Deity" (Wuest 15,16).

As for the J.W.'s argument of John 1 it should be seen that the disciple Thomas referred to Christ as "the" God and not "a" God. In John 20:28 Thomas said literally, "The Lord of me and the God of me" (KJV).

The reader should note that the J.W.'s are not consistent in how they translate an anarthrous noun or one that does not have an article. They translate John 1:6 as "there arose a man that was sent forth as a representative of God" (NWT). Why didn't the J.W.'s translate this verse as "a" God when it is the very same Greek construction as John 1:1? The answer lies in the fact that the J.W.'s twist the Scriptures to suit their own belief system which denies Christ or His rightful position as Jehovah God.

J.W.'s once again contend that Jesus is "a god" but not the "Almighty God." The trouble with this contention is that every god besides Jehovah is a "false" god. Isaiah 43:10,11 states:

Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, and my servant
whom I have chosen, that ye may know and believe me,
and understand that I am He; before me there was no God
formed, neither shall there be after me (KJV).

From this Scripture it is abundantly clear that any other God other than Jehovah is a false god. If Jesus is not the true God then He would be a false god. The Scriptures substantiate, however, that Christ possessed the glory that Jehovah God possesses (Isa. 48:8; 48:11; John 17:5; Heb. 1:3).

It is the contention of J.W.'s that Jehovah created "a god" (Jesus) and then used Him to create all other things. Let God Be True states:

He was the first of Jehovah God's creations... he is ranked
with God's creatures, being first among them and also most
beloved and favored among them. He is not the author of
the creation of God; but after God had created him as his
firstborn Son, then God used him as his working partner in
the creating of all the rest of creation (35).

The J.W.'s maintain that the word "firstborn" used in Col. 1:15 and Rev. 3:14 means "first created" and it proves that Jesus is less than Jehovah. It should be understood that the word "firstborn" can indeed refer to the first one born in a family, but it is also used in the Scriptures as a title of preeminence. Jeremiah 31:9 is an example of this usage. It ascribes the title of firstborn to one of the tribes of the northern kingdom:

...I will lead them beside streams of water on a level
path where they will not stumble, because I am Israel's
Father, and Ephraim is my firstborn son (KJV).

The word "firstborn" is a title ascribing preeminence to Jesus Christ (slick 2). John 1:1 makes it clear He existed before all other things and this is the meaning in Col. 1:15 which states:

Who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature (KJV).

The apostle Paul substantiates Christ's preeminence in Col. 1:16,17:

For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions, or principalities, or powers -all things were created by him, and for Him. And He is before all things, and by Him all things consist (KJV).

The Scriptures set forth the truth that the Lord Jesus Christ was before all things, He made all things, and by Him all things are held together (Jn. 1:4; Col. 1:16). To support their argument that Jesus is a created being and not the eternal God the J. W.'s insert the word "other" in Col. 1:16,17. They argue that it is not in the Greek text but it is implied and should be inserted as follows:

...by means of him all [other] things were created in the heavens and upon the earth, the things visible and all things invisible, no matter whether they are thrones or Lordships or governments or authorities. All [other] things have been created through him and for him. Also, he is before all [other] things and by means of him all [other] things were made to exist (New World Translations 1274).

Is the Lord Jesus preeminently before all things or was He a created being of Jehovah? The Scriptures substantiate the truth that Jesus possesses eternity and has always existed. This is brought out in Micah 5:2; Isa. 9:6; Jn. 1:1. The Bible states that it is the Lord (Jehovah) who created all things by Himself. Isaiah 44:24 says:

This is what the Lord says... your Redeemer, who formed you in the womb; I am the Lord, who has made all things, who alone stretched out the heavens, who spread out the earth by myself (KJV).

Notice if Col. 1:16 says that the Lord Jesus created all things and Isaiah 44:24 says that the Lord (Jehovah) did it "by Himself, then the only logical deduction is that Jesus is this One and the name Jehovah is not simply a name of God, the Father, but also of God the Son as well as the second person of the triune Godhead (Slick 2,3).

In their attempts to disprove the eternity and the deity of Christ the J.W.'s ask a number of questions by which they are able to confuse a lot of people. The J.W.'s ask first of all, "why did Jesus pray to the Father in John 17?" The J.W.'s fail to differentiate that Jesus was both God and man (Col. 2:9; Jn. 8:58 cp Ex.3:14) and as a man Jesus needed to pray to the Father. Matthew Slick answers this question in this manner:

The two natures of Christ are why we have two types of Scripture concerning Jesus: Those that seem to focus on His divine-side and those that seem to focus on His human-side. The J.W.'s are simply ignoring, or changing, the divine-side Scriptures and concentrating on those that describe His human-side (1).

The J.W.'s also ask, "Why did He say that the Father was greater than He in John 14:28?" The answer lies in the fact that Jesus' position in the incarnation was different from that of God, the Father. According to Heb. 2:9 it states that Jesus was made a little lower than the angels when He became a man but Jesus was not different in His nature - He was still Jehovah God in flesh (I Tim. 3:16; Col. 2:9; Heb. 1:3; Jn. 14:9).

The J. W.'s ask, "Why did Jesus say that He could only do those things that He saw the Father do in John 5:19?" This verse doesn't deny the deity of Christ, it substantiates it. J. W.'s should be asked, "Who can do the same things that God the Father can do?" No angel or man could do them, but Jesus could do them because He is God (Slick 1).

The Bible teaches us that the Lord Jesus asserted Himself to the Jews to be God. He said, "Before Abraham was, I am" (John 8:58). This assertion brought the wrath of the Pharisees who sought to have Him stoned for such a claim. When Jesus said, "Before Abraham was, I am," He was quoting Ex. 3:14 where God was telling Moses who He was. Jesus is none other than the eternal "I am" who has existed from all eternity. The J.W.'s incorrectly translate the present tense verb (ego eimi) into the perfect tense and render it, "I have been" (Slick 3). The New World Translation states, "Before Abraham came into existence, I have been" (1164). The reader and student of the Bible should note that such a translation is exegetically fraudulent and is used to deny the deity of Jesus Christ.

The place which the J.W.'s give the Lord Jesus is a place of inferiority which strips Him of His deity. If Charles Russell had received theological training he would have learned that such teachings are the same as the false teachings propagated by Arius in the 3rd century. There is no essential difference between the followers of Arius and the followers of Charles Russell. The Arians denied the divine nature of Christ. According to their false teachings Christ's nature was "like" God's nature but not the "same as" God's nature. The reader may verify this fact by reading of the Arian Controversy compiled by Phillip Schaff in his History of the Christian Church.

I can't buy what the J.W.'s are peddling...

**#4 BECAUSE OF THE MANNER IN WHICH THEY RIDICULE
AND REPUDIATE THE BIBLICAL DOCTRINE OF THE
TRINITY**

J.W.'s emphatically deny the Bible doctrine of the Triune Godhead. They charge those who believe in the Trinity with believing in three gods. When one asserts that Jesus is God the J.W.'s like to respond with a question, "Then who ran the universe during the three days that Jesus was dead and in the grave?" They ridiculously conclude, "If Jesus was God, then during Jesus' death God was dead and in the grave" (Let God Be True, 91).

Where did the doctrine of the Trinity originate? The J.W.'s contend that Satan is the originator of the Trinity doctrine. In an attempt to deny this doctrine as biblical the J.W.'s offer the following explanation:

The origin of the "Trinity" doctrine is traced back to the ancient Babylonians and Egyptians, and other ancient mythologists... First, a religionist living in the second century, by the name of Tertullian, located in Carthage, Africa, introduced the term "Trinitas" into Latin ecclesiastical writings, the term "Trinity" not once being used in the inspired Scriptures. Second, the doctrine was first introduced into "Organized Religion" by a clergyman named Theophilus, also living in the second century. In the year 325 "A.D." a council of clergymen met at Nice in Asia Minor and confirmed the doctrine. It was later declared to be the doctrine of the religious organization of "Christendom", and the clergy have ever held to this complicated doctrine. The obvious conclusion, therefore, is that Satan is the originator of the "Trinity" doctrine (Let God Be True, 82).

What is deviously and intentionally omitted by the J.W.'s in their explanation is of vast importance to the serious student of the Bible. The J.W.'s fail to mention that the Nicean Council, as well as other church councils, were held to settle the debates over false teachings which had arisen and were causing divisions within the ranks of Christendom. One of the issues settled concerned the heretical teachings of Arius who denied the deity of Christ and laid the foundation for the heretical teachings of Charles Taze Russell.

The J.W.'s make an issue of the fact that the word "Trinity" is not found in the Bible. But just because a particular word is not used doesn't mean that a certain concept is not taught. The word "rapture" is not used in the Bible but who can deny that Christ the Bridegroom is coming for His bride which is the church? (I Thess. 4:13-18). The words "Second Coming" are not used in the Bible and yet this doctrine, as well, is clearly manifested (Matt. 24: 29-31).

Does the Bible teach the doctrine of the Trinity? An on-line author for the Bible-Believer's Resource Page has stated:

The Bible teaches that there is only one true God (Isa. 43:10,11; 44:6,8). Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are identified as distinct Persons within the one Triune Godhead (Matt. 3:16,17; II Cor. 13,14). Throughout the New Testament the Son and the Holy Spirit, as well as the Father, are separately identified as God. Each has divine attributes and acts as God (Son: Mark 2:5-12; John 20:28; Heb. 1:8; Holy Spirit: Acts 5:3-4; II Cor. 3:17,18) (4-

Dr. John F. Walvoord, former President of Dallas Theological Seminary, defines and defends the doctrine of the Trinity as follows:

God is one numerically, He subsists in three persons, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit who are equal in eternity, power and glory, each possessing all the divine attributes and yet having properties which distinguish them within the unity of the Trinity.

Now, the question arises, "How did these Bible scholars arrive at such conclusions?" To the real student of the Bible the answer is obvious - this is what the Word of God teaches!

The Bible teaches that God, is a Triune Being or a Single Being who exists in a plural manner. This is why the term Godhead is often used in the Scriptures (Act 7:19; Romans 1:20; Col. 2:9). Ed DeVries points this truth out in the name ELOHIM:

The Hebrew name for God used in all known manuscripts is ELOHIM, so Gen. 1:1 could read, "In the beginning ELOHIM created the heaven and the earth." The word ELOHIM means three in one. The word ELOHIM has both a singular and a plural usage in Hebrew, uniquely, the two usages are always simultaneous. The word ELOHIM can never be used in the plural form without implying the singular and vice-versa (1).

The concept of the Trinity is also illustrated in several different ways in nature. Just as God is a Triune Being so is man whom He created. Man is composed of a body, a soul, and a spirit, yet he is not three beings but one. And each of these parts are separate and distinct from the others.

A second illustration of the concept of the Trinity is seen in the structure of the atom which is the building block of the whole universe which God has made. Every object in the universe is composed of atoms and the atom is a triune object. It has protons, neutrons, and electrons.

Each one of these parts is independent of the other two yet all three exist as one unit (DeVries, 1).

Not only does the name ELOHIM set forth the truth that God is a Triune Being and this concept is illustrated in nature, the Bible also gives numerous references which speak of God as a Plurality of Persons. In the account of man's creation Gen. 1:26,27 states:

And God said, let US make man in Our image... so God (ELOHIM) created man in His own image.

J.W.'s claim that the "US" in verse 26 is referring to the angels who aided God in the creation of man, but the word ELOHIM in verse 27 makes it plain that God is referring to the other members of the Trinity. Notice "Our" image (26) is said to be God's own image (27).

In the account of the Tower of Babel God is also referred to as a plurality of persons. Genesis 11:6-8 states:

"And the LORD (Jehovah) said... Let US go down and there confound their language... so the LORD (Jehovah) scattered them abroad..."

Herein the Triune Nature of Jehovah is set forth, so that one can rightly conclude that God exists as a Triune Being and Jehovah is a name which applies to each of the individual persons in the Trinity.

The Triune Godhead is also seen in the account involving Isaiah's call in Isaiah 6:8:

Also I heard the voice of the Lord saying, whom shall I send and who will go for US?

The Bible not only sets forth the fact that the Godhead is a Plurality of Persons, it also gives numerous incidents where all three persons of the Trinity are involved. In Isaiah 48:16 all three persons of the Trinity are revealed in the following statement:

Come near unto me, hear this: I have not spoken in secret from the beginning; from the time that it was, there am I; and now the Lord God, and His spirit hath sent me (KJV).

It should be noted that the speaker in this Scripture is not Isaiah the prophet himself, but the Lord and the other Persons of the Triune Godhead.

In the account detailing the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah there can be no doubt that other persons of the Trinity were involved. Genesis 19:24 states:

Then the LORD rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the LORD out of heaven (KJV).

In the New Testament, reference is also made to all three persons of the Trinity in I John 5:7:

For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit; and these three are one (KJV).

The incident involving the baptism of the Lord Jesus also offers irrefutable evidence that the Godhead is a Plurality of Persons. In Matthew 3:16,17 it states while the Son was being baptized the Holy Spirit descended upon Him and also the Father was speaking from heaven.

Other evidences of the Trinity can be seen in the baptismal formula which is given in the great commission (Matt. 28:19,20) and also in the apostolic benediction of Paul to the Corinthian believers (II Cor. 13:14).

Despite the subtle ways which the J.W.'s use to deny the biblical doctrine of the Trinity, there can be no doubt that God is a Triune Being comprising three persons - the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Logic would lead one to conclude if the Godhead is made up of three persons then all three of these persons would have to possess the attributes of Deity. And this is exactly what the Scriptures attest. The Father (Psa. 90:2), the Son (John 1:1; Micah 5:2), and the Holy Spirit (Heb. 9:15) all possess the attribute of eternity.

The Father (Gen. 18:14; Jer. 32:17), the Son (Matt. 28:18; II Cor. 12:9), and the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:35-37) also possess the attribute of omnipotence. And each person of the Triune Godhead also possesses the attribute of omniscience (I John 3:20; John 21:17; Col. 2:3; I Cor. 2:10,11; John 14:26; 16:12,13).

The Father (Jer. 23,24), the Son (Matt. 28:20), and the Holy Spirit (Psa. 139:7-10) all possess the attribute of omnipresence.

In addition to the fact that all three persons of the Trinity possess the attribute of Deity, it can also be seen that each person is involved in the work of God. The Trinity is seen in God's work of creation (Gen. 1:1,2; John 1:1) and in God's work of salvation (John 3:36; 5:24; 6:63).

Based upon all these evidences the student of the Bible can come to only one logical conclusion - that God is both a Unity and a Trinity. He is one God manifested in three persons.

It should be seen that there is an administrative and a functional order in the three persons of the Triune Godhead. Administratively and functionally the Father is the first, the Son is second, and the Holy Spirit is third. The Bible teaches that the Father sent the Son (John 6:39); the Father and the Son sent the Holy Spirit (John 14:26; 16:7). Moreover, the Son functions or acts in subordination to the Father and the Spirit acts or functions in subordination to the Son yet these persons are one unit that comprises the Godhead (I John 5:7).

J.W.'s often ask the question, "Why did Jesus say in John 14:28 that my Father is greater than I?" The answer lies in the fact that the Son of God, who is co-equal and co-eternal with the Father, is Himself administratively and functionally subordinate to the Father. And one should note that subordination is in no way an argument for inferiority (John 14:9; Phil. 2:6; Col. 2:9).

Despite the manner in which the J.W.'s ridicule and repudiate the Biblical doctrine of the Holy Trinity, the Bible-believing Christian cannot buy their bill of goods, because the Bible gives abundant evidence that God is a Triune Being consisting of three persons in one Godhead.

I can't buy what the J.W.'s are peddling...

#5 BECAUSE OF THE UNSCRIPTURAL DOCTRINE WHICH THEY TEACH CONCERNING SALVATION

How is a person saved? This is a question which the Bible answers very clearly. It states that salvation is by grace through faith and not by any efforts on man's part. Notice Ephesians 2: 8,9 says:

For by grace are ye saved through faith and that NOT OF YOURSELVES,
it is the GIFT of God, NOT OF WORKS, lest any man should boast (KJV).

In Titus 3:5 the apostle Paul stated the same truth:

It is NOT BY WORKS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS WHICH WE HAVE
DONE, but according to His mercy He saved us... (KJV).

One might well wonder if salvation is a gift and it is by the grace of God, which means unmerited favor, then just what is the basis upon which God can be gracious and grant salvation as a gift? The Bible teaches that all men are sinners and have fallen short of God's glory or standard and thereby they are all justly condemned before a Holy God (Rom. 3:23). But the Bible also teaches that God loved a world of sinners and gave His only begotten Son to die for their sins (John 3:16). Moreover, when Christ died, He suffered God's wrath for sin for every man and satisfied all the righteous and just demands of a Holy God (Heb. 2:9; I Peter 2:24; Rom. 3:22-26).

Now upon the basis of the shed blood of Christ and upon this basis alone can God be just to acquit any sinner. But because of what Christ has done all who receive Him by simple faith are saved, declared righteous before God, and brought into fellowship with Him (John 1:12; II Cor. 5:21; Gal. 3:22; Eph. 2:13).

Upon this basis and it alone could the apostle Paul answer the Philippian jailer's question when he asked, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" Paul said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved and thy house" (Acts 16:31).

Is this the way of salvation which the J.W.'s teach and do they exhort others to do as the apostle Paul did? The answer is an emphatic NO! To the J.W. the way of salvation is obtained in a number of specific ways and each one of these components is either a blatant denial of what the Word of God teaches or it is a concept taken out of Scriptural context.

To begin with, the J.W.'s teach that the atonement for man's sins is half of God and half of man. They contend that Christ paid a ransom price to Jehovah which only removed the effects of Adam's sin and laid the foundation for righteousness (Let God Be True, 259,260). How does one become righteous then according to the J.W.'s? Good works becomes the basis and are necessary for salvation (Studies in the Scriptures, 1985, pp 150, 152).

J.W.'s also teach that only their church members will be saved (The Watchtower, February 15,1979, p.30). This idea makes salvation predicated upon a certain religious denomination and not upon belief in the person of Christ and His finished work of redemption. The Bible makes it abundantly clear that salvation is by faith in what Christ alone has done (Acts 4:12).

According to pages 166 - 167 of Reasoning From the Scriptures (1985), and page 121 of Let God Be True, the J.W.'s contend that only 144,000 Jehovah Witnesses will go to heaven. And just how do they arrive at this number? The number comes from their interpretation of Revelation chapter seven. In this chapter it states that God will seal 144,000 who will become a part of the Kingdom which Christ will establish. It should be noted that this interpretation is in gross error and is taken out of context. The Scriptures make it very plain that those sealed in Revelation 7:4 - 8 are Jews and not Gentiles and these are specifically named as 12,000 from each of the 12 tribes of Israel. But if that isn't enough and it should be, the teachings of the J.W.'s offer very little chance of salvation when one considers all the thousands which they now number.

The J.W.'s refer to the 144,000 who will go to heaven as "the annointed class" or "the chosen ones." All the others make up what they call "the other sheep" or "the great crowd." The J.W.'s say these are not born again and they don't need to be because they will gain everlasting life on this earth (The Watchtower, November 15,1954). Salem Kirban has stated what the J.W.'s teach concerning salvation:

To gain paradise and life Jehovah Witnesses list four steps:

1. study the Bible
2. association with the Witnesses is essential to salvation
3. change your living from the former way to God's way
4. you must also be a preacher and a witness. "Only the preachers of God's Kingdom can expect to be protected during the end of this world and to live through Armageddon into the new world" (Paradise Lost to Paradise Regained, p. 242,244,246,249)

Justification comes to THE OTHER SHEEP by their "unbreakable steadfastness" during the Millennium (Kirban 64).

What the J.W.'s offer others is a salvation by works based upon man's efforts to measure up. With such teachings they could not have responded to the Philippian jailer as the apostle Paul did. Neither could they have offered any hope to the repentant thief who was dying on a cross when Jesus was crucified. And moreover, they have no gospel or good news for the throngs of helpless sinners of today. To follow what the J.W.'s teach concerning salvation is to be burdened with a yoke of the law similar to what the Pharisees placed upon those who followed them - it was unbearable and offered no solace for the need of their soul (Matt. 23:4,13,15).

I can't buy what the J.W.'s are peddling...

#6 BECAUSE OF THE PERVERTED BIBLE TRANSLATION WHICH THEY USE TO SUPPORT THEIR BELIEF SYSTEM

In 1950 the Jehovah Witnesses published their New World Translation of the Christian Greek Scriptures and the Hebrew Scriptures. It was their contention that the King James Version, as well as other translations, were the results of misleading influences based on traditions which had their roots in paganism. Based upon this contention as Jehovah's theocratic representatives they produced a translation which supposedly avoided the snare or religious traditions. In the foreword of this first publication it was stated:

But honesty compels us to remark that, while each of them has its points of merit, they have fallen victim to the power of human traditionalism in varying degrees. Consequently, religious traditions, hoary with age, have been taken for granted and gone unchallenged and uninvestigated. These have been interwoven into the translation to color the thought. In support of a preferred religious view, an inconsistency and unreasonableness have been insinuated into the teachings of the inspired writings.

The Son of God taught that the tradition of creed-bound men made the commandments and teaching of God of no power and effect. The endeavor of the New World Bible Translation Committee has been to avoid this snare of religious traditionalism (Martin 63,64).

Several questions are raised by the assertions of the J.W.'s concerning their translation. First of all, is the King James Translation colored by human tradition? Secondly, were men like Wycliffe and Tyndale and the King James translators dishonest in their translation of the Hebrew and Greek texts? And thirdly, how is it that the Watchtower translation committee can assert that their scholarship is superior to hundreds of great Greek and Hebrew scholars who have translated the Scriptures?

While the J.W.'s make such egotistical and unsupportive claims it can be shown that the New World Translation is a distortion of what the Bible teaches to make it support their own belief system which denies many of the cardinal doctrines taught in the Word of God. It can also be shown that the J.W. translators of the New World Translators can be charged with three malpractices in their attempt to make their translation support their own belief system.

First of all the J.W. translators of the New World Translation can be charged with added words to the Sacred Text. In Colossians 1:16-20 the word "other" is added some four times to make it look like Christ is part of God's creation rather than God the Creator. Notice how this word is added:

Because by means of him all [other] things were created in the heavens and upon the earth, the things visible and the things invisible, no matter whether they are thrones or Lordships or governments or authorities. All [other] things have been created through him and for him. Also, he is before all [other] things which were made to exist... and through him to reconcile again to himself all [other] things by making peace through the blood [he shed] on the torture stake... (NWT).

In Philippians 2:9 the J.W. translators did the very same thing and for the very same reason again. Notice contrary to what they state as a practice of placing words in brackets to clarify meanings they have inserted the word "other" without brackets as if it were a part of the original text. It reads:

For this very reason also God exalted him to a superior position and kindly gave him the name that is above every other name (NWT).

Notice that several other texts have words inserted or added and no brackets are used to indicate that they are not part of the original text. This can be seen in Philippians 1:23-24. It reads:

I am under pressure from these two things; but what I do desire is the releasing and the being with Christ, for this, to be sure, is far better. However for me to remain in the flesh is more necessary on your account (NWT).

Philippians 1:23,24 implies that if Paul died he would be with Christ. This idea is contradictory to what the J.W.'s teach that death involves annihilation of the soul, so the J.W. translators inserted several words to change the meaning of the original text and support their belief concerning annihilation of the soul at death.

To further support their claims that one's spirit does not extend beyond death the J.W. translators inserted 5 times the words "the gift or the" in I Corinthians 14:12-16. It reads:

So also you yourselves, since you are zealously desirous of [gifts of the] spirit, seek to abound in them for the upbuilding of the congregation... for if I am praying in a tongue, it is my [gift of the] spirit that is praying, but my mind is unfruitful. What is to be done then? I will pray with the [gift of the] spirit, but I will also pray with [my] mind. I will sing praise with the [gift of the] spirit, but I will also sing praise with [my] mind. Otherwise, if you offer praise with a [gift of the] spirit how will the man occupying the seat of the ordinary person say amen to your giving of thanks, since he does not know what you are saying (NWT).

Not only are the J.W. translators charged with the malpractice of adding words to the Sacred texts to change their meanings to suit what they believe, they can also be charged with omitting words from the Biblical text. In Romans 8:1 of the New World Translation it reads:

Therefore those in union with Christ Jesus have no condemnation.

It might appear to be a small oversight to omit the word "now" but the J.W.'s do not believe that a person can be free of condemnation here and now. So to support their belief they have simply omitted in their translation the word "now" which is in the text. Another example of omitting words from the Biblical text is seen in the J.W.'s translation of Colossians 1:19. It reads:

Because God saw good for all fullness to dwell in him.

Because J.W.'s do not believe that Jesus Christ is Jehovah God in the flesh they omit the word "the" before fullness. Colossians 2:9 substantiates the fact that the fullness of God dwelt in Him.

The J.W. translators have done even more than adding words and omitting words from the Biblical text, they have also changed numerous words and given paraphrases for translations. And these renderings are oftentimes exegetically dishonest and without license. They are simply changed to support what the J.W.'s believe and teach.

An example of this malpractice is seen in I Jn. 5:20b. The NWT reads:

And we are in union with the true one by means of his son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and life everlasting.

The J.W. translators translated the Greek preposition "en" which generally means "in" as "in union with." Then they took the same word "en" and translated it as "by means of." This has been done no doubt to change the meaning of the text. The text teaches that those in Christ are in God and that Christ is the true God and life eternal.

Another example of changing words to change their meanings is seen in several passages in which the word "believe" (pisteuo) is used. The J.W.'s do not believe that a person is justified solely by faith in Christ as the Scriptures teach (Rom 4:4,5; 5:1). So the J.W. translators translated "pisteuo" as "exercise faith" in almost all the New Testament passages. John 1:12; 3:16-18; Romans 4:3 and Galatians 3:22 are a few examples of this practice. Notice how John 1:12 reads in the NWT:

However, as many as did receive him to them he gave authority to become God's children, because they were exercising faith in his name.

This translation of the word "pisteuo" is no doubt done to support the J.W.'s belief system that works or "exercising of one's faith" is necessary for salvation.

The J.W.'s claim that Jehovah has called upon them to restore His divine name in the New Testament, so in over **200** places they have inserted the word "Jehovah" where the Greek text is "Kurios" or "Lord." This is a classic example of changing the Sacred text without honest exegesis. In Roman 10:13 the NWT reads:

For everyone who calls on the name of Jehovah will be saved. The NWT translated the word Kurios as "Jehovah" in verse 13 because this verse is a quote from the Septuagint (The Greek translation of the Old Testament). But the NWT renders Kurios as "Lord" in Romans 10:9,12. In doing this the NWT obscures the fact that Jesus is being identified as Jehovah by the use of the word "Lord." Moreover, by this disassociation the J.W.'s lead others to believe that calling on Jehovah results in salvation but calling on Christ does not.

It should be seen that the NWT changes the texts where Jesus is called God. Nine specific scriptural texts call Jesus God (Isa. 9:6; John 1:1,18; 20:28; Romans 9:5; Titus 2:13; Heb. 1:8; II Pet. 1:1; I Jn. 5:20). The NWT does not call Jesus God at all in Romans 9:5; Titus 2:13; Heb. 1:8 and II Pet. 1:1. In John 1:1,18 Jesus is referred to as "a god" but not Jehovah God. In Isa. 9:6, John 20:28, and I Jn. 5:20 the NWT translates these texts without calling Jesus God or using words which identify Him as less than Jehovah God (Bowman 1-5).

Glaring examples of paraphrase can also be seen in the New World Translation. The J.W. translation committee simply inserted their own paraphrases instead of translating the text and this has been done with no brackets or any words of explanation for the reader. This means unless a person is a scholar of the New Testament Greek he has no way of knowing what is sound exegesis and what is not nor can he know what is an honest translation and what is a paraphrase. Some examples of this malpractice can be seen in the J.W.'s NWT of I Tim.3:16; Romans 3:24; 5:1; John 8:58.

So what of the New World Translation? After only a cursory consideration one can quickly conclude that it was written to support the J.W.'s system of belief. In other words, since the King James translation of the Bible didn't support what the J.W.'s believe, they simply wrote themselves a translation that did. They added words, they omitted words, and they changed words to support their own belief system. Moreover, they inserted paraphrases, at will, instead of honestly translating what the text said. For these reasons I cannot buy the teachings which they are peddling.

Those who handle the Scriptures should be very careful in what they say and keep in mind God's admonition of Revelation 22:18,19.

I can't buy what the J.W.'s are peddling...

#7 BECAUSE OF THE VIEW WHICH THEY HOLD CONCERNING THE RETURN OF CHRIST AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF HIS KINGDOM

Before looking at the view which the J.W.'s hold concerning the return of Christ and the establishment of the Kingdom one would do well to answer the question - "what does the Bible teach concerning these things?"

Concerning the return of Christ, the Bible teaches when the church age comes to a close Christ will rapture out of this world all born-again believers who make up the body of Christ which is the church (I Thess. 4:13-18). This event is an imminent event meaning that it could happen at any moment and the Bible gives no signs as to the time that it will occur. This wonderful prospect of a living generation of believers being taken to heaven without dying is referred to as the "blessed hope" of all those in Christ (Titus 2:13).

The Bible teaches after the church is raptured out of this world the tribulation period of seven years will follow during which time the Antichrist will rise to power (II Thess.2:3-12; Rev. 13:1-10; 16:1-21) God's wrath will be poured out upon an unbelieving world (Rev. 3:10; 6:1-17) and things will consummate in the battle of Armageddon with the armies of the east coming against the western armies of the Antichrist (Rev. 16:13-16).

The Bible states very clearly after this time of tribulation that Christ will return visibly to this earth, bring judgment upon the Gentile nations and then establish a literal, earthly, millennial kingdom (Matt. 24:29-31; 25:31-46; Isa. 11; Zech. 14:4). The Bible also says during the Kingdom age, Satan will be bound and there will be universal peace and prosperity (Rev.20:1-3; Isa. 2:2-4; Mic.. 7:4,5). Also the curse will be lifted and wonderful changes will come about (Isa. 11:6-9; 65:25).

This is what the Bible teaches but is this what the J.W.'s believe and teach? The answer is an unequivocal no. According to the J.W.'s Christ returned back to the earth in 1914, put an end to the times of the Gentiles (Lk. 21:24) and established His earthly Kingdom (Let God Be True,181-191).

According to the J.W.'s 1914 marks the beginning of "the time of the end" of this world and it will close with the destruction of this world in the battle of Armageddon (Paradise Lost to Paradise Regained, 174).

J.W.'s see themselves as presently serving in this earthly Kingdom and their entrance into the heavenly Kingdom is based upon their faithful allegiance to Jehovah (Let God Be True, 122, 123).

Moreover the J.W.'s contend that the souls of those who have faithfully lived for Jehovah in this life will sleep until the resurrection and at that time they will be resurrected spirits like what they believe Christ to now be. For this reason Russellites were formerly known as millennial dawnists - meaning they would awake after the Kingdom age. According to J.W. doctrine only 144,000 will become resurrected spirits, everyone else will simply be annihilated along with Satan.

In light of what the J.W.'s hold concerning the return of Christ and the establishment of God's Kingdom there is one serious hermeneutical error which should be exposed. The J.W.'s do not interpret the Scriptures in a literal sense. No where does the Bible say that Christ returned or would return in 1914. No where does the Bible teach that we are now in the Kingdom age and no one should be so spiritually naive as to believe that Satan is now bound and the curse is now lifted.

The Kingdom to come is a literal Kingdom which Christ Himself will establish at His coming (Matt. 24:29; 25:46; Acts. 15:14-17). And when it is established Israel will be head of the nations once again and the church saints will rule and reign with Christ in the New Jerusalem.

Based upon a comparison of what the Scriptures teach and the view of the J.W.'s, to follow their teaching is to be led astray spiritually.

I cant's buy what the J.W.'s are peddling...

#8 BECAUSE OF THEIR QUAIN BELIEFS REGARDING CITIZENSHIP AND CERTAIN OTHER THINGS

Do Christians have obligations as citizens in this world and should they be subject to human governments? The apostle Paul clearly laid down the obligations which Christians have to human government in Romans 13:1-7 and Christians are to "render unto Caesar what is Caesar's" (Matt. 22:21). These verses and this principle set forth what is required of Christians in this world. Christians are to obey the laws of human government as long as they do not conflict with what God commands (Acts 5:29). Christians are to pay taxes like others and no doubt have a vital part in the political process as they stand for righteousness and shine as lights in this dark world.

J.W.'s deem themselves to be independent of any allegiance to any government. Therefore, they refuse to salute the flag of any nation or to defend their nation during a time of war (Martin, 88,89).

J.W.'s contend that they should have no part in the political process of government. They have stated:

Inasmuch as Jehovah has chosen his witnesses out of the world to be ambassadors to the peoples of earth in behalf of his kingdom, they are not a part of the world. Since their allegiance is to Almighty God and his kingdom they do not participate in local, national or international elections or politics (Let God Be True, 229).

As for military service they have stated:

The preaching activity of Jehovah Witnesses as ministers entitles them to claim exemption from performing military training and service in the armed forces of the nations wherein they dwell. The exempt status of Jehovah Witnesses also relieves them of performance of governmental work required of conscientious objectors to both combatant and noncombatant military service, because Jehovah's Witnesses are ministers of the gospel and are not religious, political or academic pacifists (Let God Be True, 229,230).

Concerning their refusal to salute the flag or to sing the national anthem they have stated:

Jehovah Witnesses do not salute the flag of any nation... any national flag is a symbol or image of the sovereign power of that nation... The giving of the salute to the flag of any nation is an act that ascribes salvation to the flag and to the nation for which it stands. The saluter impliedly declares through the salute that his salvation comes from the thing for which the flag stands, namely, the nation represented by the flag (Let God Be True, 234-236).

In response to what the J.W.'s hold concerning the allegiance to human government and defense of one's nation, it cannot be denied that Jehovah God commanded His people to go to war in the Old Testament. Numerous Scriptures substantiate this fact and defense of one's nation was required (Num. 32:6; Gen. 14:1-20; Joshua 6:1-3; 8:1,2; I Sam. 15:1-3; 23:1-4; II Sam. 5:17-19). Based upon these O.T. examples and the Christian's responsibility to be subject to the governmental powers that be, it seems unscriptural for a Christian to divorce himself from his obligations as a citizen of this world and to exempt himself from service in defense of his country.

J.W.'s have some other quaint beliefs. Matthew Slick has listed some of these along with their sources:

Jesus did not die on a cross but on a stake, Reasoning from the Scriptures, 1985, pp.89-90.

The cross is a pagan symbol and should not be used, Reasoning from the Scriptures, 1985, pp.90-92.

Blood transfusions are a sin, Reasoning from the Scriptures, 1985, pp. 72-73 (Slick 1).

J.W.'s also refuse to celebrate Christmas and individual birthdays within one's family.

It should be noted that the quaint beliefs of the J.W.'s run contrary to what Bible-believing Christians have held sacred for centuries. Christians have lived under the powers which God has ordained. They have been good citizens of two countries - heaven and earth. They have gone to war in defense of their nation to protect the ones that they love and many have made the supreme sacrifice. They have celebrated the birth of Christ and they have celebrated the birthdays of others whom they love. It is indeed a quaint belief to deny a blood transfusion to someone when it could save that person's life. For these reasons, along with all the others, this writer cannot buy what the J.W.'s are peddling.

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