

# **“Jehovah’s Witnesses”— Are They Really?**

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In this chapter, we examine the claims of “Jehovah’s Witnesses.” This is a religious movement which, although of young age (founded in the latter 1800’s), exerts influence in the religious world today on an international scale. There is little chance one could separate the history of the Jehovah’s Witnesses from that of the men who have served as presidents of the Watchtower Society. The first of these was Charles Taze Russell (1881-1916), succeeded by J. F. Rutherford (1917-1942), succeeded by Nathan Knorr (1942-1977), succeeded by the current President of the Society, Fred Franz.

We are not motivated to do this examination by any doubts in the sincerity or personal integrity of Jehovah’s Witnesses but, rather, by our utter agreement with the following precept stated in a Jehovah’s Witness publication:

We need to examine, not only what we personally believe, but also what is taught by any religious organization with which we may be associated. Are its teachings in full harmony with God’s Word, or are they based on the traditions of men? If we are lovers of the truth, there is nothing to fear from such an examination. (*The Truth that Leads to Eternal Life*, Brooklyn:

The Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania, 1968, p. 13.)

Jehovah's Witnesses believe that we all ought to examine our religious beliefs, a precept we can also find within the pages of the Bible (Eph. 5.9-11, I Thes. 5.21, I Jn. 4.1). We hope that they will not take offense at our examination of some of their cardinal beliefs which appear to be out of harmony with the revealed will of God. If they, in reality, have the light of God's truth, they should be perfectly willing to have their beliefs exposed to the light of public scrutiny, because Jesus said in Jn. 3.20-21:

For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, and cometh not to the light, lest his works should be re-proved. But he that doeth the truth cometh to the light, that his works may be made manifest, that they have been wrought in God.

Thus, to examine the Jehovah's Witnesses' doctrine is to obey both Jesus and the Watchtower Society, and should be pleasing to both.

## **The Jehovah's Witnesses Organization Was Admittedly Based upon Enforced Acceptance of The Teachings of False Prophets**

To carry out what both the Bible and the Watchtower Society leaders encourage us to do, it is necessary to know what a false prophet is. In Dt. 18.20-22, we find God's definition:

But the prophet which shall presume to speak a word in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods, even that prophet shall die. And if thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the word which the Lord hath not spoken? When a prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously; thou shalt not be afraid of him.

That Jehovah's Witnesses really believe that their organization is a "prophet," we shall thoroughly establish later. For the present, however, let's notice from an April 1, 1972 *Watchtower* article, "They Shall Know That A Prophet Was Among Them," the following statement:

So, does Jehovah have a prophet to help them, to warn them of dangers and to declare things to come? These questions can be answered in the affirmative. Who is this prophet?...This "prophet" was not one man, but was a body of men and women. It was the small group of footstep followers of Jesus Christ, known at that time as International Bible Students. Today they are known as Jehovah's Christian witnesses... (*The Watchtower*, July 1, 1973, p. 401; April 1, 1972, p. 197, cited by Edmond C. Gruss, *We Left Jehovah's Witnesses—A Non-Prophet Organization*, Nutley, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1974, p. 137.)

Ever since the inception of Jehovah's Witnesses, their leaders have instilled a sense of urgency upon their people about the Battle of Armageddon. They assure them that the Battle of Armageddon, "The Battle of Jehovah God Almighty in which his executive officer Christ Jesus leads invisible forces of righteousness to destroy Satan and his demonic and human organization, eliminating wickedness from the universe and vindicating Jehovah's universal sovereignty," is actually upon them. The following list of predictions and dates shows the utter inability of these leaders to predict the "battle of Armageddon" and, consequently, proves they are false prophets and we are not to be afraid of their claims:

### 1877:

THE END OF THIS WORLD, that is, the end of the gospel and the beginning of the millennial age is nearer than most men suppose; indeed we have already entered the transition period, which is to be a "time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation" (Dan. 12:1). (N. H. Barbour and C. T. Russell, *Three Worlds, and the Harvest of this World*, p. 17, cited by Edmond C. Gruss, *Jehovah's Witnesses and Prophetic Speculation*, Nutley, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1972, p. 82.)

**1886:**

The outlook at the opening of the New Year has some very encouraging features. The outward evidences are that the marshaling of the hosts for the battle of the great day of God Almighty, is in progress while the skirmishing is commencing...The time is come for Messiah to take the dominion of earth and to overthrow the oppressors and corrupters of the earth (Rev. 19:15 and 11:17, 18) preparatory to the establishment of everlasting peace upon the only firm foundation of righteousness and truth. (*Watch Tower Reprints, I*, p. 817, cited *Ibid.*, p. 82.)

**1889:**

...the “battle of the great day of God Almighty” (Rev. 16:14), which will end in A.D. 1914 with the complete overthrow of earth’s present rulership, is already commenced. The gathering of the armies is plainly visible from the standpoint of God’s Word. (*The Time Is at Hand*, 1889 Ed., p. 101. The 1915 edition of this text changed the “A.D. 1914” to read “A.D. 1915.”, cited by Gruss, *Ibid.*, p. 140.)

True, it is expecting great things to claim, as we do, that within the coming twenty-six years, all present governments will be overthrown and dissolved... (C. T. Russell, *Studies in the Scriptures, II*, Brooklyn: International Bible Students Association, 1915, pp. 98, 99.)

**1894:**

Now, in view of recent labor troubles and threatened anarchy, our readers are writing to know if there may not be a mistake in the 1914 date. They say that they do not see how present conditions can hold out so long under the strain. We see no reason for changing the figures—nor could we change them if we would. They are, we believe, God’s dates, not ours. But bear in mind that the end of 1914 is not the date for the begin-

ning, but for the end of the time of trouble. (*Watch Tower Reprints, II*, p. 1677, cited *Ibid.*, p. 140.)

**1897:**

...complete destruction of “the powers that be” of “this present evil world”—political, financial, ecclesiastical—about the close of the “Times of the Gentiles,” October, A.D. 1914. (C. T. Russell, *Studies in the Scriptures, IV*, Brooklyn: Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society, 1897, p. 622.)

**1904:**

According to our expectations the stress of the great time of trouble will be on us soon, somewhere between 1910 and 1912—culminating with the end of the “Times of the Gentiles,” October, 1914. (C. T. Russell, *The New Creation*, 1904, p. 579, cited by Gruss, *Jehovah’s Witnesses and Prophetic Speculation*, p. 140.)

**1914:**

While it is possible that Armageddon may begin next Spring, yet it is purely speculation to attempt to say just when. We see, however, that there are parallels between the close of the Jewish age and this Gospel age. These parallels seem to point to the year just before us—particularly the early months. (*Watch Tower Reprints, VI*, September 1, 1914, p. 5527, cited *Ibid.*, p. 141.)

**1915:**

The Battle of Armageddon, to which this war is leading, will be a great contest between right and wrong, and will signify the complete and everlasting overthrow of the wrong, and the permanent establishment of Messiah’s righteous kingdom for the blessing of the world. (*Watch Tower Reprints, VI*, April 1, 1915, p. 5629, cited *Ibid.*, p. 142.)

Sometime during World War I, C. T. Russell, first President of the Watchtower Society, wrote:

The present great war in Europe is the beginning of the Armageddon of the Scriptures. (Rev. 16:16-20). It will eventuate in the complete overthrow of all the systems of error which have so long oppressed the people of God and deluded the world...We believe the present war cannot last much longer until revolution shall break out. (C. T. Russell, *Pastor Russell's Sermons*, p. 676, cited *Ibid.*, p. 142.)

### 1917:

We anticipate that the "earthquake" will occur early in 1918, and that the "fire" will come in the fall of 1920. (Comments on Rev. 11:13, *The Finished Mystery*, 1917 Edition. The 1926 edition reads: "and that the 'fire' will follow in due course", cited *Ibid.*, p. 144.)

### 1920:

This is the Golden Age of which the prophets prophesied and of which the Psalmist sang; and it is the privilege of the student of the divine Word today, by the eye of faith, to see that we are standing at the very portals of that blessed time! Let us look up and lift up our heads. Deliverance is at the door! (J. F. Rutherford, *Millions Now Living Shall Never Die*, 1920, p. 97, cited *Ibid.*, p. 145.)

### 1929:

Because some Jews returned to Palestine then, we find the following statement from *Life*, a Society publication:

That foreshadowed God's purpose now to shortly dash to pieces the Devil's organization that controls all the nations of the earth, and then bring peace and prosperity to the people; and all who obey him will be granted life everlasting on the earth. (*Life*, 1929, pp. 346-347, cited *Ibid.*, p. 146.)

Satan knows that shortly he must fight the Lord, and therefore he prepares for the conflict. (J. F. Rutherford, *Prophecy*, Brooklyn: Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society, 1929, p. 266.)

**1930:**

The great climax is at hand. The kings of earth now set themselves against his anointed Stone. (J. F. Rutherford, *Light, II*, Brooklyn: Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society, 1930, p. 327.)

**1931:**

God's kingdom has begun to operate. His day of vengeance is here and Armageddon is at hand and certain to fall upon Christendom and that within an early date. God's judgment is upon Christendom and must shortly be executed. (J. F. Rutherford, *Vindication, I*, Brooklyn: Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society, 1931, p. 147.)

**1939:**

The abundance of Scriptural evidence, together with the physical facts that have come to pass showing the fulfillment of prophecy, conclusively proves that the time for the battle of the great day of God Almighty is very near and that in that battle all of God's enemies shall be destroyed and the earth cleared of wickedness.

Likewise today, all the nations and peoples of earth are face to face with the greatest emergency. They are being warned as God commands, that the disaster of Armageddon is just ahead. (J. F. Rutherford, *Salvation*, Brooklyn: Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society, 1939, pp. 310, 361, cited by Gruss, *Jehovah's Witness and Prophetic Speculation*, p. 148.)

**1940:**

The prophecies of Almighty God, the fulfillment of which now clearly appears from the physical facts,

show that the end of religion has come and with its end the complete downfall of Satan's entire organization...The day for final settlement is near at hand. (J. F. Rutherford, *Religion*, Brooklyn: Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society, 1940, pp. 336, 338.)

**1941:**

Armageddon is surely near, and during that time the Lord will clean off the earth everything that offends and is disagreeable. (J. F. Rutherford, *Children*, 1941, p. 366, cited by Gruss, *Jehovah's Witnesses and Prophetic Speculation*, p. 149.)

**1942:**

THE NEW WORLD IS AT THE DOORS...The time is short. Those who do not inform themselves and who do not now choose the new world which Higher Powers shall establish will never live to enter into blessings and glories. (*The New World*, 1942, p. 10, cited by Gruss, *op. cit.*, p. 150.)

**1943:**

The final war will come as a most sudden and complete surprise...Nevertheless, the appearing of the "desolating abomination in the holy place" is an unerring proof that the unknown day and hour of the beginning of the final war is dangerously near. (*The Truth Shall Make You Free*, Brooklyn: Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society, 1943, p. 341.)

**1944:**

Concerning the establishment of the United Nations the Society taught:

As one of the most positive evidences that "the kingdom of heaven is at hand" and that the end of the world arrangement is now near, Jesus foretold the setting up of that anti-Christ organization. (*The Kingdom*

*Is at Hand*, Brooklyn: Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society, 1944, p. 342.)

**1946:**

The disaster of Armageddon, greater than that which befell Sodom and Gomorrah, is at the door. (*Let God Be True*, Brooklyn: Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society, 1946, p. 194.)

**1950:**

Every intelligent creature on earth must determine his own destiny. Now at the consummation of this system of things when the judgment of the nations is under way and the separating of the sheep and the goats with opposite destinies is nearing a conclusion, yes, now is the urgent time to make your determination.

The march is on! Where? To the field of Armageddon for the “war of the great day of God the Almighty”!...It is unavoidable, for Jehovah’s time has come to settle definitely the issue of universal sovereignty. (*This Means Everlasting Life*, 1950, p. 307, 311, cited by Gruss, *Jehovah’s Witnesses and Prophetic Speculation*, p. 93.)

**1955:**

...in the light of the fulfillment of Bible prophecy it is becoming clear that the war of Armageddon is nearing its breaking-out point. (*You May Survive Armageddon into God’s New World*, 1955, p. 331, cited *Ibid.*, p. 93.)

**1966:**

What cataclysmic times are fast approaching! A climax in man’s history is at the door! How vital, then, for each one who loves life to take note of these evidences of history that point to the near end of this wicked system! (*Awake!*, October 8, 1966, p. 20, cited *Ibid.*, p. 94.)

**1969:**

There is only a short time left before Jehovah will destroy this wicked system of things. (*The Watchtower*, January 15, 1969, p. 39.)

**1975:**

About this date, the Society taught:

According to this trustworthy Bible chronology six thousand years from man's creation will end in 1975, and the seventh period of a thousand years of human history will begin in the fall of 1975 C.E...Six thousand years of man's existence on earth will soon be up, yes, within this generation...It would not be by mere chance or accident but would be according to the loving purpose of Jehovah God for the reign of Jesus Christ, the "Lord of the sabbath," to run parallel with the seventh millennium of man's existence. (*Life Everlasting in Freedom of the Sons of God*, Brooklyn: Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society, 1966, pp. 29-30.)

**The Official Watchtower Society's View of This Record**

The record of the warnings by the Watchtower Society of the urgency of the Battle of Armageddon is a maze of conflicting and contradictory statements. Thus, the following statements, which advertise *The Watchtower*, are utterly unbelievable:

Since 1879 it has been published regularly for the benefit of sincere students of the Bible. Over that extended period of time *The Watchtower* has consistently proven itself dependable. (*New World Translation of the Christian Greek Scriptures*, 1950, p. 793, cited by Gruss, *Jehovah's Witnesses and Prophetic Speculation*, p. 97.)

For ninety years this faithful journal has been pointing forward to this very time, urging people to turn to the Bible because of the spiritual famine that the Bible itself foretold was to come in our generation. (*Awake!*, back cover, January 8, 1970, cited *Ibid.*, p. 98.)

Such blatant falsehoods as these are nearly unsurpassable! A pre-meditated lie could not be a better example of false advertising.

## What Is The Answer?

Inadvertently, Jehovah's Witnesses have indicted themselves as false prophets:

True, there have been those in times past who predicted an "end to the world," even announcing a specific date...Yet, nothing happened. The "end" did not come. They were guilty of false prophesying. Why? What was missing? Missing was the full measure of evidence required in fulfillment of Bible prophecy. Missing from such people were God's truths and the evidence that he was guiding and using them. (*Awake!*, October 8, 1966, p. 23, cited *Ibid.*, p. 98.)

We couldn't agree with this statement more, yet notice its obvious application to this statement from *The Watchtower*:

As far back as 1880 The Watchtower points to A.D. 1914 as the date marking the end of the world, at which time great trouble would come upon the nations; but at that time it was not seen by God's people on earth that the trouble would be the battle of Jehovah against Satan's organization. For many years Witnesses believed, and so stated in The Watchtower, that "the time of trouble" would be a terrific clash between the various elements of the earth, such as capital and labor. Not until 1925 was "the time of trouble" Scripturally understood...(The Watchtower, February 1, 1938, p. 35, cited by Edmond Gruss, *We Left Jehovah's Witnesses—A Non-Prophet Organization*, Nutley, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1974, p. 153.)

## To Our Jehovah's Witnesses Friends:

Jehovah's Witness friend, even if you disown these doctrinal statements by your early leaders, you must be honest with yourself and admit with your leaders that your organization was founded by and based upon the teachings of false prophets. Note the admission of H.

C. Covington, General Council of the Watchtower Society, who represented the Society in the Scotland Trial. This trial took place in Scotland in November, 1954 and was a test case brought by the Society to stop Scotland's draft of Jehovah's Witnesses into military service. Covington admitted the failure of early prophecies by Society leaders:

A. That was the publication of a false prophecy, it was a false statement or an erroneous statement in fulfillment of a prophecy that was false or erroneous.

Q. Back to the point now. A false prophecy was promulgated?

A. I agree to that.

Q. It had to be accepted by Jehovah's Witnesses?

A. That is correct.

Q. If a member of Jehovah's Witnesses took the view himself that prophecy was wrong and said so he would be disfellowshipped?

A. Yes, if he said so and kept persisting in creating trouble...Our purpose is to have unity.

Q. Unity at all costs?

A. Unity at all costs...

Q. A unity based upon an enforced acceptance of false prophecy?

A. That is conceded to be true. (H. C. Covington, Pursuer's Proof of Trial in Scottish Court of Sessions, *Douglas Walsh vs. The Right Honourable James Latham Clyde, MP., P. C.*, pp. 341-342.)

Thus, even the Jehovah's Witnesses' leadership candidly admits the validity of Part I of this material, that *the Jehovah's Witnesses organization was admittedly founded by and based upon the enforced acceptance of the teaching of false prophets.*

## **Jehovah's Witnesses Have and Have Always Had an Unscriptural "Key" To Understanding The Bible**

Jehovah's Witnesses energetically point out the spiritual bondage of those in subjection to ecclesiastical hierarchies and that everyone ought to be open-minded and investigate the truth of the Bible for himself. Yet, Jehovah's Witnesses themselves cannot be faithful to the Watchtower Society and question their own beliefs and are, therefore, *one of the most ecclesiastically dominated religious groups the world has ever known*. This is true now and has been since the inception of the movement.

Charles Taze Russell, founder of the movement, wrote about his series of books, *Studies in the Scriptures*, in 1910:

Not only do we find that people cannot see the divine plan in studying the Bible by itself, but we see, also, that if anyone lays the "*Scripture Studies*" aside, even after he has used them, after he has become familiar with them, after he has read them for ten years—if he then lays them aside and ignores them and goes to the Bible alone, though he has understood his Bible for ten years, our experience shows that he goes into darkness. On the other hand, if he had merely read the "*Scripture Studies*" with their references and had not read a page of the Bible as such, he would be in the light at the end of two years, because he would have the light of the Scriptures. (*Watch Tower*, September 15, 1910. We find this same passage in the July, 1957 *Watchtower*, cited by Anthony A. Hoekema, *The Four Major Cults*, Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1963, p. 227.)

Many times, when people confront Jehovah's Witnesses with this statement, they hastily reply that they no longer believe that statement of Russell. However, they still believe that one cannot understand the Bible without the help of the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society. Notice the following statements from more recent publications:

Jehovah had chosen the publication we now call the Watch Tower to be used as a channel through which to

bring to the world of mankind a revelation of the divine will and, through the words revealed in its columns, to bring a division of the world's population into those who would do the divine will and those who would not. (*Jehovah's Witnesses in the Divine Purpose*, 1959, p. 22, cited by Edmond C. Gruss, *Apostles of Denial*, Nutley, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1970, p. 218.)

He does not impart his holy spirit and an understanding and appreciation of his Word apart from his visible organization...However, for God to answer our prayers for his spirit, we must meet his conditions, among which is that we recognize the visible channel he is using for that very purpose. (*The Watch Tower*, 86:391, July 1, 1965, cited *Ibid.*, p. 219.)

Thus, Jehovah's Witnesses must still believe that one can neither appreciate nor understand God's will, nor will his prayers be heard unless he recognizes the Watchtower Society as God's sole organization to reveal divine truth upon this earth.

To further illustrate that Jehovah's Witnesses must accept without question the official interpretations of the Watchtower Society, hear these words of Fred Franz, Vice-President of the Watchtower Society. These were given under oath in a trial in Scotland to establish the Jehovah's Witnesses' military exemption in that country in 1954:

Q. And we shall hear how that Society is formed and ordered. Is that regarded by Jehovah's Witnesses as the visible agency which Jehovah God is using at the present time? A. Yes. Q. To conduct and direct the work which he wishes done on earth today? A. Yes. Q. Is that your belief? A. Yes. Q. Is it for that reason that Jehovah's Witnesses accept without question doctrines and Biblical interpretations as expounded by the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society through its Directors? A. Yes. Q. In publications both periodical and in book form? A. Yes. Q. Issued by and with the authority of the President and Directors of that Society? A. Yes. (*Scotland Trial*, pp. 22-25.)

Q. A witness has no alternative, has he, to accept as authoritative and to be obeyed instructions issued in “The Watchtower” or “The Informant” or “Awake”?  
A. He must accept those. (*Ibid.*, pp. 122-123.)

Q. Is there any hope of salvation for a man who depends upon his Bible alone when he is in a situation in the world where he cannot get the tracts and publications of your incorporation? A. He is dependent upon the Bible. Q. Will he be able to interpret it truly? A. No. (*Ibid.*, p. 133.)

In the same trial, Grant Suiter, Secretary-Treasurer of the Society discussed the capacity of the Company Servant:

Q. Isn't he expected to familiarize himself with the publications of the Society? A. He certainly is. Q. Indeed can he in the view of Jehovah's Witnesses have an understanding of the Scriptures apart from the publications of Jehovah's Witnesses? A. No. Q. Only by the publications can he have a right understanding of the Scriptures? A. That is right. (*Ibid.*, p. 499.)

It is impossible for one to obey the Bible's teaching and be a Jehovah's Witness. In I Thes. 5.21, Paul told Christians to “prove all things,” which means to test everything to see whether it's from God or men. This is a command that Christians must individually shoulder, a command which we cannot transfer to another. Yet, Jehovah's Witnesses must accept without question the teachings of the Watchtower Society and their leaders admit it! We have already seen earlier in this chapter that H. C. Covington, the General Counsel of the Society, maintained that the Jehovah's Witnesses' purpose was to have unity based upon an enforced acceptance of false prophecies.

## **God Cannot Possibly Lead The Watchtower Society**

In I Cor. 14.33, Paul said that “God is not a God of confusion, but of peace.” When one begins to consider the mass of contradictory doctrines and scripture interpretations that have come from the Watchtower Society, he cannot possibly believe that God is the author of them. For instance, consider the nature of the book of Ruth in the Bible. In 1902 the position of the Watchtower Society about this book was:

While the book of Ruth is not prophetic, but merely historical, it is valuable to us in various ways. (*Watch Tower Reprints, IV*, Nov. 15, 1902, p. 3110, cited by Edmond Gruss, *Jehovah's Witnesses—A Non-Prophet Organization*, p. 156.)

Yet, in 1932 “God’s Organization” took an entirely different view about Ruth:

Not only is the book historical, but it is prophetic, the fulfillment of which prophecy takes place in these present days...We must conclude that the book of Ruth was made part of God’s Word or message as a prophecy for the special benefit of the remnant in the last days...The book is a prophecy. (J. F. Rutherford, *Preservation*, pp. 169, 175-176, cited *Ibid.*, p. 156.)

Is God confused on the nature of the book of Ruth? No, nor is He the author of these contradictory statements.

About the resurrection of Sodom and Gomorrah, in 1886, Russell said:

Thus our Lord teaches that the Sodomites did not have a full opportunity; and he guarantees them such opportunity... (C. T. Russell, *Studies in the Scriptures, I*, Brooklyn: Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society, 1886, p. 110.)

In 1954, the position had switched and taught that God would not resurrect these cities:

He was pinpointing the utter impossibility of ransom for unbelievers or those willfully wicked, because Sodom and Gomorrah were irrevocably condemned and destroyed, beyond any possible recovery. (*The Watchtower*, January 1, 1954, p. 85, cited by Gruss, *Jehovah's Witnesses—A Non-Prophet Organization*, p. 157.)

A contradiction like this is bad enough on the surface, yet, in 1965, “God’s Organization” changed its mind again!

As in the case of Tyre and Sidon, Jesus showed that Sodom, bad as it was, had not got to the state of being unable to repent...So the spiritual recovery of the dead people of Sodom is not hopeless. (*The Watchtower*, March 1, 1965, p. 139, cited *Ibid.*, p. 157.)

About the physical establishment of Israel in Palestine in our time, Jehovah's Witnesses used to have to accept this without question:

That the re-establishment of Israel in the land of Palestine is one of the events to be expected in this Day of the Lord, we are fully assured by the above expression of the Prophet. (C. T. Russell, *Studies in the Scriptures, III*, Brooklyn: Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society, 1891, p. 244)

The promise, time and again repeated, that the Lord would regather them and bless them in the land and keep them there and bless them for ever is conclusive proof that the promise must be fulfilled...Behold, that time is now at hand! (J. F. Rutherford, *Comfort for the Jews*, p. 55, cited by Gruss, *Ibid*, p. 158.)

Yet now, they must unquestionably accept exactly the opposite:

Nothing in the modern return of Jews to Palestine and the setting up of the Israeli republic corresponds with the Bible prophecies concerning the restoration of Jehovah's name-people to his favor and organization...The remnant of spiritual Israelites, as Jehovah's Witnesses, have proclaimed world-wide the establishment of God's kingdom in 1914. (*Let God Be True*, 2nd Ed., pp. 217-218, cited *Ibid.*, p. 158.)

About the "higher powers" of Romans 13, Jehovah's Witnesses taught until 1929 that the "superior authorities" (*New World Translation*) were the earthly rulers to whom the Christian paid taxes, etc. (C. T. Russell, *Studies in the Scriptures, I*, p. 266.) Then, from 1929 to 1962, the Watchtower Society explained the "superior authorities" as "the Most High God Jehovah and his exalted Son Jesus Christ (*This Means Everlasting Life*, p. 197.). Then, in 1962, it returned to its former position:

In spite of the end of the Gentile Times in 1914, God permitted the political authorities of this world to continue as the “higher power” or the “powers that be,” which are “ordained of God.” (*Babylon the Great Has Fallen! God's Kingdom Rules!*, Brooklyn: Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, 1963, p. 548.)

Surely we can see that these changes in doctrine and these contradictory statements cannot possibly have come from God. To quote the Watchtower Society in a statement with which we wholeheartedly agree:

Jehovah never makes any mistakes. Where the student relies upon man, he is certain to be led into difficulties. (J. F. Rutherford, *Prophecy*, Brooklyn: Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society, 1929, pp. 67, 68.)

Men not only contradict God, they contradict one another. How can they be reliable guides—unless their words are based on God's words? (*Awake!*, March 22, 1963, p. 32, cited by Gruss, *Jehovah's Witnesses—A Non-Prophet Organization*, p. 159.)

## **Jehovah's Witnesses Do Not Honor Jesus As They Honor The Father**

As we begin to study the teaching of Jehovah's Witnesses about Jesus, we will soon find that the crux of the issue is whether or not Jesus is a created being. Jehovah's Witnesses, when pressed, will admit that Jesus is “a god” or that He is somewhat divine. But, their basic belief about Jesus is that He is a created being. As such, He is not worthy of worship, as is the Father.

Of course, if Jesus is a created being, then Jehovah's Witnesses are correct to not worship Him. Jesus Himself said in Mt. 4.10 (as He refused to worship Satan): “Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.” This is one of the favorite texts of Jehovah's Witnesses in their attempts to show that Jesus is not to receive worship as the Father.

The Greek word for worship in this passage is *proskuneo*, which literally means “to kiss the hand towards one.” The Bible uniformly condemns the worship of anything created. As he described the heathenistic degradation of the Gentiles in their pagan idolatry, Paul

said in Rom. 1.25, “they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the creator.”

## The Bible’s Definition of Idolatry

Whenever one worships any created thing, whether it’s a rock, a tree, a human being, etc., he practices what the Bible calls idolatry. Of course, the application to this question is that if God created Jesus as Jehovah’s Witnesses affirm that He did, then one would be an idolater to worship Jesus.

To further confirm that the worship of created beings is wrong, notice Cornelius’ attempt to worship Peter in Ac. 10.25-26:

And when it came to pass that Peter entered, Cornelius met him, and fell down at his feet, and worshiped him. But Peter raised him up, saying, Stand up; I myself also am a man.

What was Peter’s point? “It’s not appropriate to worship a created being, and I, Peter, am a created being, so get up!”

In Rev. 19.10, John told of his unsuccessful attempt to worship an angel (which is a created being, Ps. 148.2-5):

And I fell down before his feet to worship him. And he saith unto me, See thou do it not: I am a fellow-servant with thee and with thy brethren that hold the testimony of Jesus; worship God.

John tried a similar action in Rev. 22.9 and received a similar rebuff. It is simply never proper to worship a created being.

## Jesus Received Worship and Never Reproved Anyone Who Worshiped Him

Because of Peter’s rejection of Cornelius’ worship of him and the angel’s rejection of John’s worship, it is especially striking that Bible writers use the word worship (*proskuneo*) of Jesus Himself fourteen times in the New Testament. Jesus accepted that worship and never reproved ones who worshiped Him!

In Mt. 2.1, 2:

...wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we saw his star in the east, and are come to *worship* him.

Similarly, in Mt. 2.11:

...they came into the house and saw the young child with Mary his mother; and they fell down and *worshipped* him...

Jehovah's Witnesses may object that these were just ignorant pagans, heathens themselves. Even if that be true, let's agree that they committed idolatry if Jesus was a created being. Notice some further passages.

In Mt. 8.2, we have this record:

...there came to him a leper and *worshipped* him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.

Someone might assert that this man so worshiped Jesus in ignorance. Even so, he was an idolater if Jesus is, as Jehovah's Witnesses assert, a created being.

Again, in Mt. 9.18:

...there came a ruler, and *worshipped* him, saying, My daughter is even now dead: but come and lay thy hand upon her, and she shall live.

In Mt. 14.33, we pass from potentially ignorant heathens to the apostles of Christ themselves. After Jesus had saved the apostles from the tempestuous storm on Galilee,

...they that were in the boat *worshipped* him, saying, Of a truth thou art the son of God.

If Jesus were a created being, doesn't it seem strange that, unlike Peter and the angel who rejected worship, Jesus accepted it? Jesus never reproved any acts of worship offered to Him.

In Mt. 15.25, a Canaanitish woman "came and *worshipped* him, saying, Lord, help me," with no reproof from Jesus. In Mt. 20.20, "Then came to him the mother of the sons of Zebedee with her sons, *worshipping* him, and asking a certain thing of him." By this time, Jesus had taught the apostles for nearly three years and it's obvious that He hadn't taught them Watchtower Society doctrine. They thought it was entirely proper to worship Christ!

In Mt. 28.9, after three and a half years with Jesus and after His resurrection, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were running to bring His disciples word. "And behold, Jesus met them, saying, All

hail. And they came and took hold of his feet, and *worshiped* him.” In verse 17, when the eleven disciples met Jesus in Galilee, “when they saw him, they *worshiped* him; but some doubted.”

We find similar examples in Mk. 5.6, 7 and Jn. 9.38. We also want to especially notice Lk. 24.51, 52, which took place after the resurrection of Jesus:

And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he parted from them, and was carried up into heaven. And they *worshiped* him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy.

Isn't it strange that if Jesus was a created being, the apostles didn't realize it even up to the point when Jesus ascended into heaven? Why hadn't Jesus taught them more perfectly on this point?

Yet, something still stranger exists. In Heb. 1.6, God said of Jesus,

And when he again bringeth in the firstborn into the world he saith, And let all the angels of God *worship* him.

So, if Jehovah's Witnesses are correct when they say that God created Jesus, then we not only have the apostles engaged in idolatry, but Jesus accepted their idolatrous worship. We also have the angels of heaven involved in idolatrous worship of Jesus, and God is the one behind it all!

Further, in reference to Jesus in Rev. 5.13-14, we have,

And every created thing which is in the heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and on the seas, and all things that are in them, heard I saying, Unto him that sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb, be the blessing, and the honor, and the glory, and the dominion, for ever and ever. And the four living creatures said, Amen. And the elders fell down and *worshiped*.

Notice that every created thing worshiped Jesus! From that one statement, we see that God did not create Jesus because (1) every created thing worshiped Him, and (2) He received that worship.

From these examples we can see that only an uncreated, divine being is to receive worship (Mt. 4.10, Rom. 1.25). Jesus received worship unprovokingly from men commanded to worship Him by God Himself. Therefore, Jesus is a divine being whom God did not create.

This is precisely what is wrong with the basis of Jehovah's Witness teaching about Jesus. They don't worship Jesus. In Jn. 5.22, 23 Jesus said,

For neither doth the Father judge any man, but he hath given all judgment unto the Son, that all may honor the Son, even as they honor the Father...

This is exactly what Jehovah's Witnesses do not do. They will not honor the Son even as they honor the Father.

## **Jehovah's Witnesses Used to Believe in Worshiping Jesus**

One remarkable thing about the worship of Jesus by Jehovah's Witnesses is that they used to believe it was proper. "God's Organization," the Watchtower Society, used to teach exactly as the Bible does on the subject! Notice these words from early *Watch Tower* magazines:

Question: ...Was he really worshiped, or is the translation faulty? Answer. Yes, we believe our Lord while on earth was really worshiped, and properly so...It was proper for our Lord to receive worship... (*Watch Tower Reprints, III*, July 15, 1898, p. 2337, cited *Ibid.*, p. 157.)

He was the object of unproved worship even when a babe, by the wise men who came to see the newborn king...He never reproved any for acts of worship offered to Himself. (*Watch Tower Reprints, I*, Oct. 1880, p. 144, cited *Ibid.*, p. 157.)

Even more incredible, men founded the Watchtower Society *to promote worship of Christ!* From Article II of the Charter of the Watch Tower Society of Pennsylvania, we read:

The purposes of this Society are: ...public Christian worship of Almighty God and Jesus Christ; to arrange for and hold local and world-assemblies for such worship... (Cited *Ibid.*, p. 157.)

And yet, Jehovah's Witnesses now refuse to worship Jesus:

...no distinct worship is to be rendered to Jesus Christ now glorified in heaven. Our worship is to go to Jehovah God. (*The Watchtower*, Jan. 1, 1954, p. 31, cited *Ibid.*, p. 157.)

One may ask, “What do the Witnesses do with those passages in the Bible where Christ received worship?” One Witness writer tried to avoid the force of those passages by saying:

If the rendering “worship” is preferred, then it must be understood that such “worship” is only of a relative kind. (*The Watchtower*, Nov. 15, 1970, p. 704, cited *Ibid.* p. 157.)

And, yet, a Jehovah’s Witness cannot even believe this and be faithful to his own publications, for we also find:

Bowing before men or angels as ‘relative’ worship forbidden. (*Make Sure of All Things*, Brooklyn: Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society, 1953, p. 178.)

We see the obvious confusion of “God’s sole organization for the revealing of divine truth” on this subject. We recall this statement by the second president of the Watchtower Society:

Jehovah never makes any mistakes. Where the student relies upon man, he is certain to be led into difficulties. (J. F. Rutherford, *Prophecy*, pp. 67-68.)

The Witnesses cannot possibly be “Jehovah’s” because they will not honor Christ as they should. Jesus said, “He that honoreth not the Son honoreth not the Father that sent him” (Jn. 5.23).

## **Jehovah’s Witnesses Propagate Teachings Which Contradict Plain Bible Teaching**

Difficult passages of scripture exist, as Peter said in II Pet. 3.16, about Paul’s writing:

...wherein are some things hard to be understood, which the ignorant and unstedfast wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction.

However, it is not these scriptures that we speak about in this section. Jehovah's Witnesses wrest even the simplest passages of inspiration. They propagate teachings which blatantly contradict to some of the very plainest passages in all the Bible. Just a few examples follow among many which could be given:

## The Rich Man and Lazarus

In Lk. 16.19ff, Jesus told us:

Now there was a certain rich man, and he was clothed in purple and fine linen, faring sumptuously every day: and a certain beggar named Lazarus was laid at his gate, full of sores...and it came to pass, that the beggar died, and that he was carried away by the angels into Abraham's bosom; and the rich man also died and was buried. And in Hades, he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.

This passage, taken literally, opposes everything the Witnesses teach about what happens to man after death. While it is not our purpose here to treat this subject in detail, the question arises, "What do Witnesses teach about this passage? How do they avoid its force?" A more absurd interpretation of the passage would be difficult to obtain than the one asserted by the Witnesses. They tell us that the passage is a "parable" in which:

...the rich man represents the ultraselfish class of the clergy of Christendom, who are now afar off from God and dead to his favor and service and tormented by the Kingdom truth proclaimed. Lazarus depicts the faithful remnant of the "body of Christ." These, on being delivered from modern Babylon since 1919, receive God's favor, pictured by the "bosom position of Abraham." and are comforted through his Word. (*Let God Be True*, Brooklyn: Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, Inc., 1946, p. 79.)

First, notice that Witnesses and all others who must deny this scripture assume that it is a parable. Nowhere did any inspired writer refer to it as one. When Jesus spoke of a "certain rich man" and a "certain beggar," He evidently spoke of historical people. However, sup-

pose that even though the passage is never spoken of as a parable, we allow that it is. Did Jesus ever give a parable in all His ministry not based upon things which existed? For example, in the previous chapter of Luke, Jesus spoke of the parable of the lost sheep, the parable of the lost piece of silver, and the parable of the prodigal son. In the first part of Luke 16, Jesus spoke the parable of the unrighteous steward. Could we conclude from parables that sheep do not exist? Or lost silver? Or prodigal sons? Or unrighteous stewards? The very purpose of parables was to teach an abstract truth based upon something which existed in reality, like sheep, silver pieces, stewards, prodigal sons, etc. A more fanciful interpretation of a “parable” would be difficult to obtain and, yet, Jesus never spoke of the passage as a parable. Similar contradictory teaching is characteristic of the Witnesses.

## The Personality of The Holy Spirit

Witnesses must believe that the Holy Spirit, which is spoken of extensively in the Bible, is not a person. That is, the Holy Spirit does not have the characteristics of personality. They speak of the Holy Spirit as follows:

But the holy spirit has no personal name. The reason for this is that the holy spirit is not an intelligent person. It is the impersonal, invisible active force that finds its source and reservoir in Jehovah God and that he uses to accomplish his will. (*Let Your Name Be Sanctified*, p. 269, cited by Hoekema, *op. cit.* p. 258.)

*Make Sure of All Things*, speaks of the great commission, where Jesus told the apostles to “make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,” the Watchtower Society says that:

“In the Name of the Father” means “recognizing the Office, Authority” of the Father; likewise, “In the Name of the Son” means, “Recognizing the Office, Authority” of the Son. However, “In the Name of the Holy Spirit” means “Recognizing the Function, Activity” of the Holy Spirit. (*Make Sure of All Things*, Brooklyn: Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society, 1953, p. 41.)

Why the change about the Holy Spirit? Simply because they do not believe the Holy Spirit is a person.

In contrast to these assertions, we find the Holy Spirit has many characteristics of a person, that He (1) knows the will of God, I Cor. 2.11, (2) has a will, I Cor. 12.11, Heb. 2.4, 5, (3) can be grieved, Eph. 4.29-30, (4) can be lied to, Ac. 5.3, (5) is endowed with speech, I Tim. 4.1, (6) teaches, Jn. 14.26, (7) bears witness, Jn. 15.26, Heb. 10.15, (8) hears, Jn. 16.13, (9) loves, Ro. 15.30, and (10) makes intercession, Ro. 8.26.

In short, the Holy Spirit is a person because He does works only a person can do. What "impersonal, invisible, active force without intelligence" can do a single one of the above? The scriptures make it abundantly evident to those who candidly go to them to see what they say. The Holy Spirit holds an office that only a person could occupy.

## The Resurrection of Christ

Few realize that the Witnesses deny the bodily resurrection of Jesus from the grave. Yet, the Watchtower Society boldly asserts:

This firstborn one from the dead was not raised out of the grave a human creature, but he was raised a spirit. (*Let God Be True*, Brooklyn: Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, 1946, p. 272.)

...Jehovah God disposed of that body in his own way, just as he disposed of the body of Moses, who was a type of Christ Jesus; but no one knows how. (*The Truth Shall Make You Free*, p. 264, cited by Hoekema, *op. cit.*, p. 274.)

...it was necessary not only that the *man* Christ Jesus should die, but just as necessary that the *man* Christ Jesus should never live again. (C. T. Russell, *Studies in the Scriptures, V*, Brooklyn: International Bible Students Association, 1899, p. 454.)

Our Lord's human body...did not decay or corrupt...Whether it was dissolved into gases or whether it is still preserved somewhere as the grand memorial of God's love, of Christ's obedience, and of our redemption, no one knows. (*Ibid.*, II, p. 129.)

...he was put to death a *man*, but was raised from the dead a *spirit being* of the highest order of the divine nature...the *man* Jesus is dead, forever dead, and could not be a father or life-giver to the world. (*Ibid.*, V, pp. 453-454.)

We're not concerned with arguments about difficult passages in the Bible. These constitute premeditated contradictions to some of the plainest words Jesus ever spoke:

Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and see my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and put it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing. (Jn. 20.27)

See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye behold me having. And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. And while they still disbelieved for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here anything to eat? And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish. And he took it, and ate before them. (Lk. 24.39-43)

## Baptism

Following the above example, it would be hard to find a clearer illustration of doctrines Jehovah's Witnesses propagate which directly contradict plain Bible teaching. Yet, notice the following statement of the Watchtower about baptism:

Baptism Does Not Wash Away One's Sins. (*Make Sure of All Things*, p. 40.)

Contrast this with Ananias' statement to Saul in Ac. 22.16:

And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on his name.

Similarly,

What, then does Christian baptism signify? It is not a washing away of one's sins... (Eph. 1.7) (*The Truth that Leads to Eternal Life*, p. 183.)

How arrogant to insert this statement into a book entitled *Truth!* If we read Eph. 1.7, we will find that, rather than saying baptism has nothing to do with the remission of sins, Paul spoke of Christ:

...in whom we have our redemption through his blood,  
the forgiveness of our trespasses...

Paul told us the realm where we have redemption through the blood of Christ—in Christ. In Gal. 3.27, Paul told us how we get into Christ where the redemption is:

For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did  
put on Christ.

According to Paul, we are baptized into Christ, where the redemption through His blood takes place. The Bible plainly contradicts the Witnesses on this subject.

We hope you have realized this material has not been a dispute over what the Bible teaches. No one can look at their Bible and deny that Jesus never called His teaching about “a certain rich man” and “a certain beggar” a parable. They could not deny that the scriptures attribute to the Holy Spirit many qualities only a person can have. How could one possibly look at the New Testament and deny that it plainly teaches the bodily resurrection of Jesus? No literate person can deny the scriptures’ teaching on the subject of baptism without help. The Watchtower Society gives Jehovah’s Witnesses just this kind of help to persuade them to believe and propagate teachings which are directly contradictory to plain Bible teachings.

## **Conclusion**

Thus, as we bring this study to a close, we see that the “Witnesses” are, in reality, not Jehovah’s at all, because:

I. The Jehovah’s Witnesses organization was, admittedly, founded by and based upon the enforced acceptance of the teaching of false prophets, especially in the realm of Armageddon.

II. The Jehovah’s Witnesses have now, and have always had, an unscriptural “key” to understanding the Bible—their Watchtower publications.

III. The Jehovah’s Witnesses do not honor Jesus as they honor the Father and, instead, teach that He is a created being unworthy of worship.

IV. The Jehovah's Witnesses propagate teachings directly contradictory to plain Bible teaching on many vital subjects.