

# JEHOVAH'S WITNESS CULT WATCH

RAD ZDERO

Copyright (C) 2010. Permission is granted to email, post, and reproduce this article, but only in its entirety and with proper bibliographic referencing. All rights reserved.



*Rad Zdero has a Ph.D. degree in Mechanical Engineering, specializing in bio-mechanics and bio-materials. He is the director of a hospital-based research group in Toronto. Rad has been involved in the house church and small group movement since 1985. He is the author of The Global House Church Movement (2004) and the allegorical novel Entopia: Revolution of the Ants (2008). He is also the editor of Nexus: The World House Church Movement Reader (2007) and The Starfish Files house church magazine. His writings can be found at [www.Scribd.com/rzdero](http://www.Scribd.com/rzdero). To make contact: [rzdero@yahoo.ca](mailto:rzdero@yahoo.ca)*

## THE GOAL OF THIS ARTICLE

The aim of this article is to address some of the problematic teachings and beliefs of the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, commonly known as Jehovah's Witnesses (JWs). They continue to numerically grow around the world (about 7 million members currently), they distribute their literature on a wide scale (1 billion items each year), and they dogmatically claim that they are the only true Christians in the world. Thus, it is important to evaluate their teachings as objectively as possible using evidence from the Bible, history, and archaeology. It must be emphasized that the purpose here is not to criticize or judge individual JWs at the grassroots level or even their leaders, many of whom undoubtedly are sincere, zealous, and moral people who have a genuine relationship with God through Jesus Christ. Rather, it is the official teachings that are of interest, as found in their literature. It must also be recognized that not every topic dealt with here is assessed in full detail in this modest article, nor can every problematic JW teaching or organizational practice be mentioned. Even so, it is my intention to address the following topics which I hope will give the reader a good foundation for intelligently dialoguing with JW friends, coworkers, neighbours, and missionaries:

1. What is a Cult or Sect?
2. Summary of JW History and Beliefs?
3. Is the JWs 'New World Translation' Bible Reliable?
4. What about the name Jehovah ("YHWH") in the Bible?
5. Is Jesus Christ really Michael the Archangel?
6. Is God a Trinity?
7. No more Prophecy, Tongues, or Knowledge Today?
8. Do only 144,000 go to Heaven?
9. Did Jesus Die on a Cross or a Stake?
10. What about JW False Prophecies About the Future?



# 1. WHAT IS A RELIGIOUS CULT OR SECT ?



**A Cult or Sect can be defined as any group that has ...**

## *Dangerous Behaviour*

- a rigid pyramid structure of authority
- usually centered around one person or small group totally in control
- does not allow any serious questioning of its leaders or the group

## *Dangerous Beliefs*

- has an exclusivist view, i.e. theirs is the only group that is true to God
- disagrees with the Bible regarding the person of Jesus Christ
- does not allow any questioning of the group belief system

## **The Bible Warns Against False Teachers**

### *They May Misinform People*

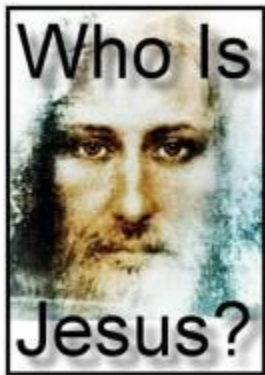
“But I am afraid that just as Eve was deceived by the serpent's cunning, your minds may somehow be led astray from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ. For if someone comes to you and preaches a Jesus other than the Jesus we preached, or if you receive a different spirit from the one you received, or a different gospel from the one you accepted, you put up with it easily enough.” (2 Corinthians 11:3-4)

### *They May Mistreat People*

“Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves. By their fruit you will recognize them. Do people pick grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles? Likewise every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them.” (Matthew 7:15-20)

## **The Main Question: Who is Jesus and Why it Matters?**

What we believe determines how we live and relate to God. Errors in thinking and belief can lead to missing what the Bible really teaches, which can lead us to missing out on getting into a true relationship with God. Our eternal destiny rests on being in a right relationship with God through Jesus Christ. But, who is the real Jesus Christ? The JW's have their own ideas about Jesus. Most pseudo-Christian groups have theological problems, i.e. incorrect teachings that deviate from the Bible, or are authoritarian and abuse their members. Theologically, the main question to ask in identifying a cult or fringe group is: Who is Jesus? Usually, they acknowledge Jesus, but with a twist. The result is ‘another Jesus’ that doesn't fit with the biblical record.



## **Typical answers by Cults and Sects to the given questions...**

*Who is Jesus?* “He was not God in the flesh; he was just a great human teacher, or one of many gods, or God is not a Father-Son-Spirit Trinity.”

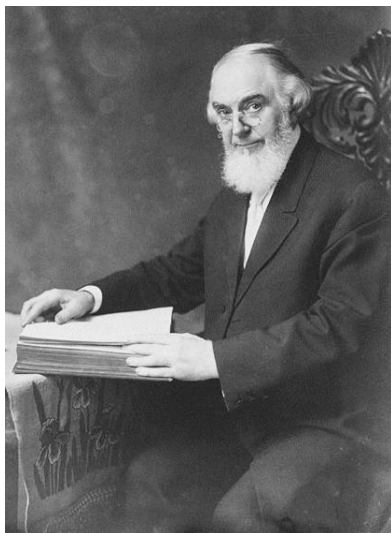
*Salvation through Jesus?* “Jesus is not the only way to God, or Jesus is the only way but you must also join our particular group.”

*Jesus' Death by Crucifixion?* “Jesus' death has no ‘saving’ value, or it must be added to with good deeds, or he was just a good example of sacrifice”

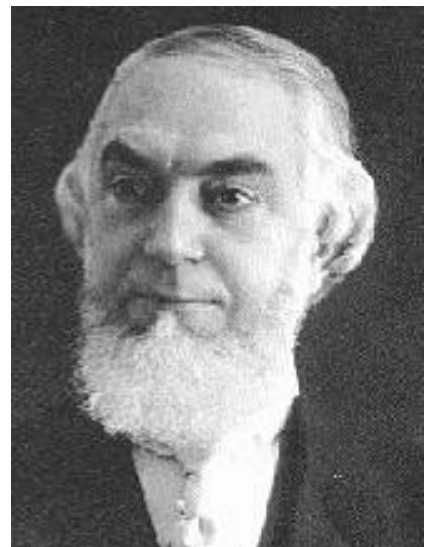
*Jesus Raised Bodily from the Dead?* “Jesus' original body was not raised but he was raised as a spirit only, or he was not raised from the dead at all.”

## 2. SUMMARY OF JW HISTORY AND BELIEFS ?

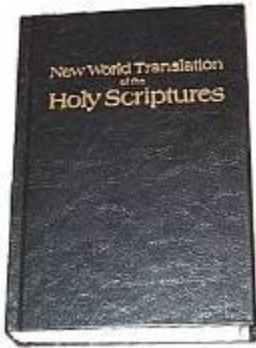
	Historical Summary	Who is Jesus Christ?	Salvation?	Death & Resurrection Of Jesus Christ?	Abusive?
<b>The BIBLE</b>	(a) 66 Books (b) 40 authors (c) 1500 year time span	(a) The God-Man (John 1:1, 8:58, 20:28) (b) Co-eternal with Father and Spirit (c) God = Father-Son-Spirit Trinity	Relationship with Christ (John 3:16, John 17:3, Roman 6:23)	(a) Physically died on a Cross (b) Original Body Raised (John ch. 19-21)	Not in Principle
<b>Jehovah's Witnesses (Watch-tower Society)</b>	(a) Founder - Charles T. Russell (New York, 1881) (b) 'New World Translation' Bible (c) 7 million members in 2010	(a) 'Son of God' = Michael the archangel (b) A Created Being, Not Eternal, Jesus ≠ God (c) God ≠ Trinity of Father-Son-Spirit	(a) Faith & Moral Life (b) Joining their group since they along have the Truth	(a) Physically died on Vertical Torture Stake (b) Original Body <i>not</i> Raised (c) Raised as a Spirit and then Materialized in a 'flesh body' when needed	Cannot Disagree with Watch-tower Teaching  Shunning



**Charles T. Russell** (1852 – 1916) was an American religious leader of Christian restorationism'. He was influenced by the 19<sup>TH</sup> century Adventist movement, which believed Christ would return in 1874. He started a monthly religious magazine called *Zion's Watch Tower and Herald of Christ's Presence* in 1879 and founded *Zion's Watch Tower Tract Society* in 1881. The most well-known of the splinter groups from his original organization is today known as Jehovah's Witnesses, whose main publication is *The Watchtower Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom*.



### 3. IS THE JWS ‘NEW WORLD TRANSLATION’ BIBLE RELIABLE ?



#### Who are the “Translators” of the JW’s Bible, called the New World Translation (NWT)?

The names of the translators of the NWT have never been revealed in any JW literature or in the preface to the New World Translation (NWT). But, according to Raymond Franz <sup>1</sup> (former JW for 40 years, member of Governing Body of JWs for 9 years, and nephew of former JW president Fred Franz) and Bill Cetnar <sup>2</sup> (former JW who worked at Watchtower Headquarters in New York when the NWT was being prepared) the 5 translators, all JWs, are shown in the photograph below. None of them had any formal training in the original biblical languages, with the exception of Fred Franz, who had only limited training in Greek.

As far as anyone knows, there is *not a single* qualified, highly trained, and experienced scholar in the field of Bible languages in the entire Watchtower organization. If there were, it would be certain that they would be in the habit of constantly quoting that scholar for support of the NWT in their literature. This is unlike any other Bible translations, which are produced by genuine Bible scholars with formal training, expertise, and years of experience in Hebrew and Greek. For example, the NASB (New American Standard Bible) was produced by a team of 40 translators, each with earned Doctor’s degrees in the field of biblical languages; their names are made available on request. <sup>3</sup> If you would not trust a hospital that would not reveal the name of the doctor



(who is unqualified and untrained at that) who was going to operate on you, then why should you trust the JWs and their Watchtower Society in correctly translating the Bible? Simply having a Bible and a Greek or Hebrew concordance beside you on your desk does not qualify you to accurately translate the Bible from the original languages.

**The Translation Committee for the JW’s New World Translation** (from left to right): Milton Henschel, Nathan Knorr, Albert Shroeder, George Gangas, and Fred Franz. None of them had any academic training in biblical languages, with the exception of Franz who only had two years of undergraduate university Greek at the University of Cincinnati.

#### The Problem with So-Called “Scholars” JWs Quote to support the NWT



##### **Johannes Greber**

- not a recognized and trained biblical scholar or translator; former Catholic priest
- cited by JWs for support of NWT because his translation (*The New Testament – A New Translation and Explanation*, 1937) agrees with the NWT at John 1:1 regarding Jesus simply as “a god”
- JWs stopped using him in 1983 for support, years after they found out he was involved in the occult and credits “spirits” for helping him make his translation <sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Raymond Franz, *Crisis of Conscience*, Commentary Press, 1992, p.50.

<sup>2</sup> Cetnar and Cetnar, *Questions For Jehovah's Witnesses Who Love The Truth*, Kunkletown, PA: Cetnar, 1983, p.64.

<sup>3</sup> Lockman Foundation, scholars names available from NASB translation committee, [www.gospelcom.net/lockman](http://www.gospelcom.net/lockman)

<sup>4</sup> Johannes Greber, see website [www.caic.org.au/jws/wtgreber.htm](http://www.caic.org.au/jws/wtgreber.htm)

### **Alexander Thomson**

- Thomson: "It therefore gives us much pleasure to welcome the publication of the first part of the New World Translation [of the Hebrew scriptures], Genesis to Ruth...This version has evidently made a special effort to be thoroughly readable."<sup>5</sup>
- He was briefly co-editor of a magazine called *The Differentiator*. According to his co-editor, Thomson "did not even formally study Greek or Hebrew in any school."<sup>6</sup>
- He was *not* a Hebrew or Greek scholar as claimed by Jehovah's Witnesses. "Thomson was employed in a bank in Scotland and did not believe that Jesus was God."<sup>7</sup>



### **Benjamin Kedar**

- Kedar: "In my linguistic research in connection with the Hebrew Bible [Old Testament], I often refer to the English edition of what is known as the New World Translation...this work reflects an honest endeavor to achieve an understanding of the text that is as accurate as possible..."<sup>8</sup>
- he is an historian of Jewish history (Dept. of History- Hebrew University of Jerusalem)
- he is *not* a Bible translator equipped to assess the Greek language of the New Testament, which is where *most* of the *significant* problems with the NWT are found

### **Nicholas Kip**

- a practicing JW, wrote article endorsing NWT in JW magazine: "How Knowing Greek Led Me to Know God," Awake! (March 22, 1987).
- has a Master's degree in ancient Greek; teaching it since the 1960s
- currently teaches at Phillips Academy, Andover, MA, a private highschool
- several letters to Kip by Robert Bowman Jr., a biblical researcher at Christian Research Institute (Rancho Santa Margarita, CA) trained in ancient Greek. Bowman tried to engage Kip in scholarly dialogue about his problematic endorsement of the NWT. Mr. Kip was unwilling to address the issues ([www.equip.org/free/DJ090.htm](http://www.equip.org/free/DJ090.htm))

### **What do all Reputable Bible Language Scholars say about the NWT?**

The following is a list of recognized Bible language experts commenting on the NWT as a whole and with specific regard to the NWT translation of John 1:1 as "the Word was a god" instead of "the Word was God", meaning that Jesus was *not* God in the flesh, a main point made by the JWs. Many of these Greek scholars are world-renowned whose works the Jehovah's Witnesses have quoted in their publications to help them look reputable. Westcott is the Greek scholar who with Hort edited the Greek text of the New Testament used by the Jehovah's Witnesses. Yeager is a professor of Greek and the star pupil of Julius Mantey. Metzger is the world's leading scholar on the textual criticism of the Greek New Testament. It is scholars of this quality who insist that John 1:1 cannot be taken to mean anything less than that the Word is the one true Almighty God. The following quotes are taken directly from [www.letusreason.org/JW38.htm](http://www.letusreason.org/JW38.htm) (also see [www.spiritwatch.org/jwnwt.htm](http://www.spiritwatch.org/jwnwt.htm)):

**Dr. Charles L. Feinberg** (La Mirada, CA.): "I can assure you that the rendering which the Jehovah's Witnesses give John 1:1 is not held by any reputable Greek scholar."

**Dr. Eugene A. Nida**, Head of the Translation Department of the American Bible Society Translators of the GOOD NEWS BIBLE: "With regard to John 1:1 there is, of course, a complication simply because the NEW

<sup>5</sup> Alexander Thomson, *The Differentiator*, June 1954, p.131, as quoted in: Watchtower Society (WTS), *All Scripture is Inspired of God and Beneficial*, Brooklyn, New York, 1963, 1990, p.326.

<sup>6</sup> Cetnar and Cetnar, p.53.

<sup>7</sup> Cetnar and Cetnar, p.53.

<sup>8</sup> Watchtower Society (WTS), *All Scripture is Inspired of God and Beneficial*, Brooklyn, NY, 1963, 1990, p.326.



WORLD TRANSLATION was apparently done by persons who did not take seriously the syntax of the Greek". (Bill and Joan Cetnar, *Questions for Jehovah's Witnesses Who love the Truth*, p.55)

**Dr. William Barclay**, renowned scholar from the University of Glasgow, Scotland: "The deliberate distortion of truth by this sect is seen in their New Testament translations. John 1:1 translated: '...the Word was a god', a translation which is grammatically impossible. It is abundantly clear that a sect which can translate the New Testament like that is intellectually dishonest." (THE EXPOSITORY TIMES, Nov, 1985.)

**Dr. Anthony Hoekema**, commented: "Their New World Translation of the Bible is by no means an objective rendering of the sacred text into Modern English, but is a biased translation in which many of the peculiar teachings of the Watchtower Society are smuggled into the text of the Bible itself (The Four Major Cults, pp. 238, 239).

**Dr. F. F. Bruce**, renowned professor at the University of Manchester, England: "Much is made by Arian amateur grammarians of the omission of the definite article with 'God' in the phrase 'And the Word was God'. Such an omission is common with nouns in a predicate construction. 'a god' would be totally indefensible."

**Dr. Paul L. Kaufman** (Portland, OR): "The Jehovah's Witness people evidence an abysmal ignorance of the basic tenets of Greek grammar in their mistranslation of John 1:1."

**Dr. Bruce M. Metzger**, renowned Professor of New Testament Language and literature at Princeton Theological Seminary, and said to be the greatest expert on New Testament Greek living, said: "Far more pernicious in this same verse is the rendering, . . . 'and the Word was a god,' with the following footnotes: " 'a god', In contrast with 'the God'". It must be stated quite frankly that, if the Jehovah's Witnesses take this translation seriously, they are polytheists. In view of the additional light which is available during this age of Grace, such a representation is even more reprehensible than were the heathenish, polytheistic errors into which ancient Israel was so prone to fall. As a matter of solid fact, however, such a rendering is a frightful mistranslation." (The Jehovah's Witnesses and Jesus Christ, Theology Today, April 1953, p. 75)

**Dr. B. F. Westcott**, whose Greek text is used in JW Greek/English *Kingdom Interlinear*: "The predicate (God) stands emphatically first, as in 4:24. It is necessarily without the article . . . No idea of inferiority of nature is suggested by the form of expression, which simply affirms the true Deity of the Word . . . in the third clause 'the Word' is declared to be 'God' and so included in the unity of the Godhead." (The Gospel According to St. John, Eerdmans, 1953, p. 3; The Bible Collector, July-December, 1971, p. 12.)

**Dr. Robert Countess**, who wrote a doctoral dissertation on the Greek text of the New World Translation, concluded that the Christ of the New World Translation "has been sharply unsuccessful in keeping doctrinal considerations from influencing the actual translation .... It must be viewed as a radically biased piece of work. At some points it is actually dishonest. At others it is neither modern nor scholarly."

**Dr. Harry A. Sturz**, Chairman of the Language Department and Professor of Greek at Biola College: "Therefore, the NWT rendering: 'the Word was a god' is not a 'literal' but an ungrammatical and tendential translation. A literal translation in English can be nothing other than: 'the word was God'." (THE BIBLE COLLECTOR, July - December, 1971 p. 12)

**Dr. J. Johnson** of California State University, Long Beach, when asked to comment on the Greek, said, "No justification whatsoever for translating *theos en ho logos* as 'the Word was a god'. There is no syntactical parallel to Acts 23:6 where there is a statement in indirect discourse. Jn.1:1 is direct. I am neither a Christian nor a Trinitarian."

**Randolph Yeager**: "Only sophomores in Greek grammar are going to translate '...and the Word was a God.' The article with *logos*, shows that *to logos* is the subject of the verb *en* and the fact that *theos* is without the article designates it as the predicate nominative. The emphatic position of *theos* demands that we translate '...and the Word was God.' John is not saying as Jehovah's Witnesses are fond of teaching that Jesus was only

one of many gods. He is saying precisely the opposite." (The Renaissance New Testament, Vol. 4, Renaissance Press, 1980, p. 4.)

**Donald Guthrie:** "The absence of the article with Theos has misled some into thinking that the correct understanding of the statement would be that 'the word was a God' (or divine), but this is grammatically indefensible since Theos is a predicate." (*New Testament Theology*, InterVarsity Press, 1981, p. 327)

**E.C. Colwell:** "...predicate nouns preceding the verb cannot be regarded as indefinite -or qualitative simply because they lack the article; it could be regarded as indefinite or qualitative only if this is demanded by the context, and in the case of John 1:1 this is not so." ("A Definite Rule for the Use of the Article in the Greek New Testament", *Journal of Biblical Literature*, Vol. 52, 1933, p. 20.)

**Philip B. Harner:** "Perhaps the clause could be translated, 'the Word had the same nature as God.' This would be one way of representing John's thought, which is, as I understand it that ho logos, no less than ho theos, had the nature of theos." ("Qualitative Anarthrous Predicate Nouns Mark 15:39 and John 1:1", *Journal of Biblical Literature*, Vol. 92, No. 1, March 1973, p. 87). He also states in the *Journal of Biblical Literature*, 92, 1 (March 1973) on Jn.1:1 "In vs. 1c the Johannine hymn is bordering on the usage of 'God' for the Son, but by omitting the article it avoids any suggestion of personal identification of the Word with the Father. And for Gentile readers the line also avoids any suggestion that the Word was a second God in any Hellenistic sense." (pg. 86. Harner notes the source of this quote: Brown, John I-XII, 24)

**Julius R. Mantey:** "Since Colwell's and Harner's article in JBL, especially that of Harner, it is neither scholarly nor reasonable to translate John 1:1 'The Word was a god.' Word-order has made obsolete and incorrect such a rendering .... In view of the preceding facts, especially because you have been quoting me out of context, I herewith request you not to quote the Manual Grammar of the Greek New Testament again, which you have been doing for 24 years." (Letter from Mantey to the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society). He also writes: "A Grossly Misleading Translation .... John 1:1, which reads 'In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God,' is shockingly mistranslated, 'Originally the Word was, and the Word was with God, and the Word was a god,' in a New World Translation of the Christian Greek Scriptures, published under the auspices of Jehovah's Witnesses." (published in various sources.)

### Well Known Bible Translations that Translate John 1:1 as “the Word was God” and *not* “the Word was a god” (according the JW’s Bible, the NWT)

Douay - "and the Word was God".

Rotherham - "and the Word was God".

King James Version - "the Word was God".

Jerusalem Bible - "and the Word was God".

The New Life Testament - "the Word was God".

The Berkley Version - "and the Word was God".

New Translation (Darby) - "the Word was God".

Modern King James Version - "the Word was God".

Revised Standard Version - "and the Word was God".

American Standard Version - "and the Word was God".

The New International Version - "the Word was God".

Numeric English New Testament - "the Word was God".

The New American Standard Bible - "and the Word was God".

The New Testament in Basic English - "and the Word was God".

Young's Literal Translation of the Bible - "and the Word was God".

The New Testament in Modern Speech (Weymouth) - "and the Word was God".

The New Testament in Modern English (Montgomer) - "and the Word was God".

The New Testament in Modern English (Phillips) - "that word, was with God, and was God".



## 4. WHAT ABOUT THE NAME JEHOVAH (“YHWH”) IN THE BIBLE ?



The JW's claim that they are the only ones restoring the true but lost divine name of God. It is often referred to as the Tetragram, because it is composed of four letters. The name is most commonly written in English as “Jehovah” or “Yahweh”. To their credit, JW's are correct in restoring the almost 7000 occurrences of the name to the Old Testament, since there is plenty of manuscript evidence supporting its use in the original Hebrew O.T. Even so, there are problems with their restoration of the name “Jehovah” (see [www.letusreason.org/JW14.htm](http://www.letusreason.org/JW14.htm)):

- Despite what JW's imply, most Christians do not have any objection to using “Jehovah” as the divine name in prayer or in the Bible or in books
- “Jehovah” is not the proper pronunciation of YHWH anyway, it is closer to “Yah-way”
- Despite what JW's simply, there is no conspiracy by other Christians or translators to avoid using the Divine Name; most Bibles make it clear in the preface that the translators have simply chosen to use LORD in capitals for simplicity and fully recognize that YHWH appears in the Old Testament
- Only a few old copies of the Greek version of Old Testament (called the Septuagint) that Jesus and the Apostles would have used show a use of YHWH; the vast majority do not
- YHWH *never once* occurs in the original Greek language of the New Testament in any of the 5400 old surviving Greek copies and portions available to scholars. But JW's insert it into their NT over 200 times.
- Jesus and the Apostles never used “Jehovah” or YHWH in the New Testament; “Abba Father” is encouraged for believers in addressing God to indicate intimacy (Matthew 6:9-13; Romans 8:15)
- “the Lord” (Kyrios) is translated “Jehovah” inconsistently by JW's in the New Testament; they don't do it when it would indicate Jesus = Jehovah (e.g. John 20:28, Greek = “the Lord of me and the God of me”)

## 5. IS JESUS CHRIST REALLY MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL ?

Why do they believe that Jesus is Michael the Archangel?

- *One of the beliefs peculiar to JW's* is that Michael the Archangel, who in their view was the first being that Jehovah God created, came to earth 2000 years ago, entered into the womb of the Jewish peasant girl Mary, and became the man Jesus Christ.
- *They Reject the Idea of the Trinity.* They teach that this is a false doctrine that finds its sources in paganism and in the inspiration of Satan <sup>9</sup>. So, if Jesus is not God-in-the-flesh, then he must be someone else. But who?
- *Misuse of 1 Thessalonians 4:16.* JW's teach that because this passage says that at his second coming, Christ will descend with “...a shout, with the *voice of the archangel*...”, he must in fact himself be an archangel. But which one?



<sup>9</sup> Reasoning from the Scriptures, Brooklyn, New York, 1989, pp.405-426.

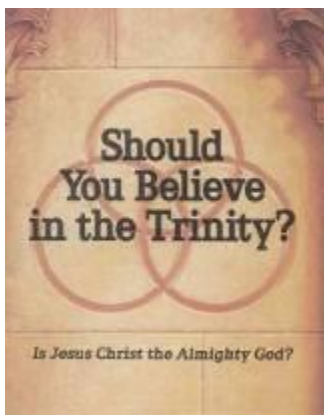


The two most important archangels named in the Bible are Gabriel and Michael. Well, JW reasoning goes, it can't be Gabriel because he was the one telling Mary about Jesus being born (Luke 1:26-27). So, he must be Michael, whose name means 'one like God' and who is mentioned most often of all the archangels in the Bible (Daniel 10:13-21 and 12:1; Jude 9; Revelation 12:7).

**The main problems with this conclusion are:**

- *The overwhelming weight of Scripture.* The Bible teaches that God's Spirit 'overshadowed' the virgin girl Mary supernaturally (Luke 1:30-35), and became the man Jesus Christ who, in fact, is God-in-the-flesh (compare John 1:1 and 1:14; compare John 8:58-59 and Exodus 3:14; see John 20:28 and Colossians 2:9).
- *Logical conclusion of 1 Thessalonians 4:16 is contradictory using JW logic.* As usual, JWs stop short in their reasoning by ignoring the rest of this passage. Using their own logic, JWs should be confronted and challenged to conclude that Jesus is also called God in this verse because it also reads that Christ will descend with "...a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the *trumpet of God*..." Who is worthy to blow God's trumpet other than God himself? If it is God's trumpet and Jesus is blowing on it, then Jesus must also be God. Thus, the same passage, according to this very rigid way of reading things, calls Jesus both an archangel and God. Contradiction? Not if we look at the rest of Scripture and avoid basing our entire theology on one verse. Also, we should avoid strained logic and rigid interpretations (e.g. just because John has brown hair and Fred has brown hair, does *not* mean that John and Fred are the same person)
- *Jesus Christ holds a far superior position than Michael the Archangel.*
  - Jesus never shrank back from sharply rebuking demonic powers and Satan himself (Luke 8:26-33 and 9:37-42; Matthew 4:8-11; Mark 1:25 and 8:31-33). Michael the Archangel, on the other hand, did not feel he had the right or authority to do so (Jude 9).
  - Jesus claimed ALL authority in heaven and on earth was his (Matthew 28:19-20; John 5:21-23; John 14:6; see also Acts 4:12 and Philippians 2:5-11), whereas Michael is just 'one of the chief princes' (Daniel 10:13) although also called 'the great prince' (Daniel 12:1).

## 6. IS GOD A TRINITY ?



### What do JWs teach about the Trinity?

The Trinity concept held by most Christians states that there is one God, but that he is internally composed of three co-equal and co-eternal persons, namely, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. However, Jehovah's Witnesses deny this outright. Instead, they teach that the Father is God, Jesus Christ is only God's Son who was the first created being Michael the Archangel, and that the Holy Spirit is God's impersonal active force, like electricity. They base their view, in part, on a mistranslation of John 1:1 which they render 'the Word was a god' rather than 'the Word was God', on Jesus' statement that 'the father is greater than I' (John 14:28), the fact that Jesus prayed to the Father (John 17), and the argument that a Father and Son are equal and the same is confusing to the human mind. They say that the Trinity concept is false and should not be taught by true Christians:

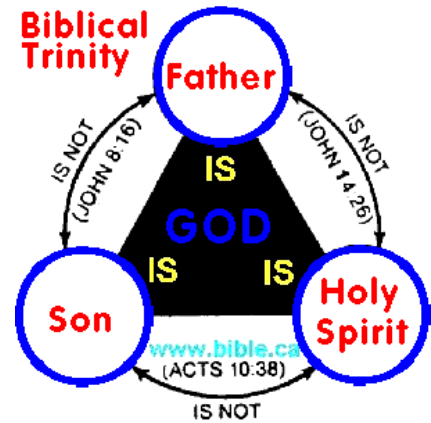
"There can be no compromise with God's truths. Hence, to worship God on his terms means to reject the Trinity doctrine. It contradicts what the prophets, Jesus, the apostles, and the early Christians believed and taught... It is [Satan] who promotes such false doctrines ... And the Trinity doctrine also serves the interested of clergymen who want to maintain their hold on people..." (Should You Believe in the Trinity? 1989, p.31).

## Does the Bible support the Trinity idea?

Although a detailed analysis of the biblical basis for the trinity doctrine is beyond the scope of this article, below is a summary of some of the Scriptures which support the idea of a Father-Son-Spirit trinity.

### *The Son = God*

- John 1:1 - “the Word was God” *not* “a god” as the JW Bible reads (all scholars agree—see section 3c)
- John 8:58-59 - Jesus says he is “I AM”, after which the Jews try to stone him for blasphemy as they should according to the Law (compare Exodus 3:14)
- John 20:28 - Jesus accepts “My Lord and my God” (Greek, “the Lord of me and the God of me); “the God” means “Jehovah” according to JWs, so Thomas must be calling Jesus “Jehovah”
- Revelation chs. 1 and 22 – both Jesus and the Almighty God ...
  - are ‘first and last’
  - are ‘coming quickly’
  - send their angel



### *The Holy Spirit = God, and has a Personality (not an “it” or just “energy” as JW’s claim)*

- John 14:16-17, 26; and John 16:7-11 – the Holy Spirit teaches, convicts, judges, reminds
- Acts 5:4, 9; Acts 10:19-20; Acts 13:2 – people lie to the Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit speaks
- 2 Corinthians 3:17 – ‘the Lord is the Spirit’
- Romans 8:16, 26-27 – the Holy Spirit intercedes for us and testifies with us
- Ephesians 4:30 – the Holy Spirit is grieved

### *The Resurrection of Jesus from the Dead indicates Father-Son-Spirit Trinity*

- God raised Jesus (Acts 17:31)
- The Father raised Jesus (Acts 3:26, 1 Thes 1:10)
- The Son raised himself (John 2:19-21)
- The Holy Spirit raised Jesus (Rom 8:11)

### *Other Passages which Strongly Suggest Jesus is God*

- Stephen actually prays to Jesus (Acts 7:59-60)
- Jesus is worshiped and only Almighty God should be worshiped (Compare Matthew 4:8-10, Acts 10:25-26, Rev 19:9-10 with Matthew 14:25-33, Heb 1:5-6, Luke 4:8, Philip 2:10-11, and Isaiah 45:23)
- Jesus is the “fullness of the Godhead” (Col 2:9); incorrect translation to “divine nature” by JW’s in NWT

## 7. NO MORE PROPHECY, TONGUES, OR KNOWLEDGE TODAY ?

JWs teach that ALL miracles, prophecy, visions, speaking in tongues, and supernatural dreams, stopped when the last apostle died. That kind of stuff never made it past 100 AD when the final book of the Bible, the book of Revelation, had been completed by the apostle John in 90-95 AD. They believe this based on one short passage alone, namely 1 Corinthians 13:8-10, which says that these things would stop happening when the ‘perfect’ comes<sup>10</sup>: “If there are gifts of prophecy they will be done away; if there are tongues they will cease; if there is knowledge it will be done away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part, but when the perfect

<sup>10</sup> WTS, *Reasoning from the Scriptures*, Brooklyn, New York, 1989, p.159.

*comes the partial will be done away.*” JWs teach that if these things are going on in certain circles, it is because Satan or self-delusion or trickery are the cause. However, to the contrary:



- There is *no* evidence, Biblical or otherwise, that “the perfect” in this passage refers to the completion of the Bible in 95 AD and the end of the apostolic age. This is just a JW belief based on no evidence.
- JWs ignore the rest of the passage (1 Corinthians 13:11-13), as usual, which discusses the “perfect” as seeing “face-to-face” and to “know fully just as I also have been fully known”. This is spiritually intimate language and, thus, it can be more strongly argued that the “perfect” refers to the return of Christ or even to a believer’s departure to be in the presence of Christ after death (Philippians 1:21-24).
- Even if we agree with the JWs that the “perfect” was the completion of the Bible, we still must take this verse at face value. Notice that it says *nothing* whatsoever about miraculous healing, visions, or dreams, coming to an end when the “perfect” arrives. Only prophecy, words of knowledge, and speaking in tongues, are said to be done away with. JWs, however, presume to add to this passage something that it does *not* directly say by teaching that miraculous healings, visions, and divine dreams have also ended.

- God cannot be put in a box and told *what* he can and cannot do and *when* he can and cannot do it.
- JWs point to known cases of “miracle fraud” or “emotionalism” as examples, but ignore countless legitimate documented experiences (e.g. prayers that end up in someone being healed; dreams or visions that occur for people who are not in an emotionally frenzied state; people being raised from the dead)<sup>11</sup>

## 8. DO ONLY 144,000 GO TO HEAVEN ?

Before 1935, the JWs taught that there would only be 144,000 people who would be saved and part of the kingdom of God, comprised of the relatively small number of early first century Christians and all baptized JWs. However, a crisis point came in 1935 when the membership of their organization grew beyond 144,000; they were forced to change their theology. Since then, the JWs have taught that only 144,000 people will go to heaven whereas the rest of those who are part of the kingdom will live on a restored paradise earth.<sup>12,13</sup> The reasons for this are in their interpretation of certain scriptures.



According to the JWs:

- “little flock” (Luke 12:32) refers to 144,000 heaven dwellers ruling with Christ (Rev 7:3-4, 14:1-5)
- “great crowd” refers to the paradise earth dwellers who will be ruled by those in heaven (Rev 7:9)

<sup>11</sup> Jim Rutz, *Megashift*, 2005.

<sup>12</sup> WTS, *You can Live forever in Paradise on Earth*, Brooklyn, New York, 1989, chapter 14.

<sup>13</sup> WTS, *The Truth that Leads to Eternal Life*, Brooklyn, New York, 1968, chapter 9.

Unfortunately, the JW's tend to quote things out of context, are inconsistent in their use of logic, or simply try to connect verses together that really have nothing to do with one other. Let us address the issues:

- *"Little Flock"* occurs in several places but Jesus never hints at a number or suggests that there is some known maximum membership of an elite group known as the little flock. The verses surrounding Luke 12:32 show that the context is clearly one of simply encouraging his disciples to persevere and be strong and seek after God; it has nothing to do with Jesus making statements about how many will get to heaven.
- *"Flock"* - all other verses that use the word "flock" refers to believers in Christ in a general and affectionate sense (Matt 26:31, Acts 20:28-29, 1 Cor 9:7, 1 Pet 5:2-3) and are never used in discussions by Jesus or the apostles regarding how many people will get into heaven.
- *"Other Sheep"* - in another place, Jesus says he has other sheep of 'another fold', which are not of 'this fold', that he must bring into the kingdom (John 10:14-16). Does this mean that 'other sheep that are not of this fold' are those who will live on paradise earth and his current 'fold' are those who will live in heaven? There is no definite indication of what Jesus meant here. However, it likely has to do with Gentile (i.e. non-Jewish) followers of Christ, as discussed next.
- *Jews v. Gentiles* - if there was any one single issue in which a distinction between 2 people groups was made, it was certainly not about believers in heaven or earth. But, rather, it was the controversy over Jewish followers of Jesus accepting non-Jewish (or Gentile) followers of Jesus into the church. It can be argued strongly that the "other fold" Jesus would gather meant Gentile believers, to be added to the "fold" of his Jewish sheep (John 10:14-16). This one issue tore the early church apart emotionally and theologically, as evidenced by the following:
  - Paul argued fiercely in favour of Gentile Christians (Rom 9-11; Gal 1:13-17; Colossians 3:11).
  - Paul was almost killed because of bringing Gentiles into the Temple (Acts 21:27-32).
  - Paul publicly rebuked Peter for his discrimination against Gentile believers (Gal 2:11-21).
  - Peter also received criticism for baptizing Gentiles (Acts 11:1-4).
  - Major Apostolic Council in Jerusalem over the issue (Acts 15:1-35).
- *144,000 Spiritual or Literal Jews ?* – JW's teach that 144,000 is a literal number because it would have no meaning in comparison to the "great crowd" (Rev 7:4 compare 7:9). But they spiritualize the rest of the description of this group and refuse to take it literally. The reason? Because the tribes of Israel named in Rev. 7 and 14 are not the same as in the Old Testament and, therefore, they argue, this cannot mean a select group from literal Israel, i.e. Jews. ***This is quite misleading.*** In fact, there are several lists of the tribes of Israel in the Old Testament, being slightly different from each other depending on the context of what God was trying to do and say at a given time (Gen 49:1-28 = Ezek 48:30-35, which are different from Num 1:4-16 = Num 26:1-55 = Ezek 48:1-29). Specifically, JW's argue that Joseph and Levi were never reckoned as tribes, so this list in Revelation must be a "spiritual Israel" and not "literal Israel"<sup>14</sup>. To the contrary, Joseph and Levi are *both* listed as tribes in each of the Genesis 49:1-28 and Ezekiel 48:30-35 lists ! Contrary to the JW's beliefs, the Revelation passages state plainly that there are 12,000 Jewish male virgins chosen from each of the 12 tribes of Israel. This is a group of *actual Jews* chosen by God for a specific task, most likely preaching to their own nation to bring in the saving of Israel in the last days (Romans 11:26; Zechariah chs. 12 and 13). As well, what proof is there that 144,000 is a literal number? It may be simply a spiritual number. The fact is, we cannot say for sure either way and, to do so, is mere presumption.



<sup>14</sup> WTS, *Reasoning from the Scriptures*, Brooklyn, New York, 1989, p.166.



## 9. DID JESUS DIE ON A CROSS OR A STAKE ?



Jesus on a + shaped cross



Jesus on vertical torture stake as shown by JW's in their *Knowledge that Leads to Eternal Life* book.

### What do JW's teach about the way Jesus was executed?

JW's attempt to distance themselves from historic and mainstream Christianity by claiming that Jesus was executed on a vertical torture stake, rather than a + cross or T cross. The pictures in their publications show Jesus with his arms raised above his head and with a single nail through his palms or wrists. The JW's state that true Christians would not use the historically untrue and pagan cross in their worship:

“Nevertheless, true Christians do not use the cross in worship. Why not? An important reason is that Jesus Christ did not die on a cross... Why, then, was this pagan symbol promoted? Apparently, to make it easier for pagans to accept ‘Christianity.’ Nevertheless, devotion to any pagan symbol is clearly condemned by the Bible. (2 Corinthians 6:14-18) The Scriptures also forbid all forms of idolatry. (Exodus 20:4, 5; 1 Corinthians 10:14) With very good reason, therefore, true Christians do not use the cross in worship.” (What Does the Bible Really Teach? 2005, Appendix).

### Why do JW's teach that Jesus died on a vertical ‘Torture Stake’?

JW's *only* line of argument is from linguistics. Using selective and incomplete quotes from scholarly sources, they claim that the primary Greek word translated for "cross" in the New Testament is "stauros", which they say has as its primary meaning just a vertical stake or post:

“The Greek word rendered "cross" in many modern Bible versions ("torture stake" in NW) is stau-ros'. In classical Greek, this word meant merely an upright stake, or pale. Later it also came to be used for an execution stake having a crosspiece. The Imperial Bible-Dictionary acknowledges this, saying: "The Greek word for cross, [stau-ros'], properly signified a stake, an upright pole, or piece of paling, on which anything might be hung, or which might be used in impaling [fencing in] a piece of ground. . . . Even amongst the Romans the crux (from which our cross is derived) appears to have been originally an upright pole."-Edited by P. Fairbairn (London, 1874), Vol. I, p. 376.” (Reasoning from the Scriptures, 1989, p.89)

### Evidence of Cross from the Greek Language

The problem with their argument from linguistics is that "stauros" did in fact have a secondary meaning of a cross, i.e. a vertical stake with a horizontal cross piece. This secondary meaning of "stauros" as a cross was not a very late development as JW's claim. Rather, it was defined this way right from the beginning of the Roman practice of executing criminals on wooden posts. The above quote from The Imperial Bible-Dictionary used by

the JW's is intentionally *not* given in its fullness by them since, ironically, it shows that the word “stauros”, in fact, most often referred to a cross (and not just a vertical stake) even during the 1<sup>ST</sup> century AD:

“The Greek word for cross, (stauros), properly signified a stake, an upright pole, or piece of paling, on which anything might be hung, or which might be used in impaling (fencing in) a piece of ground. But a modification was introduced as the dominion and usages of Rome extended themselves through Greek-speaking countries. Even amongst the Romans, the crux (from which the word cross is derived) appears to



have been originally an upright pole, and always remained the more prominent part. *But from the time that it began to be used as an instrument of punishment, a traverse piece of wood was commonly added: not however always then.... There can be no doubt, however, that the later sort was the more common, and that about the period of the Gospel Age, crucifixion was usually accomplished by suspending the criminal on a cross piece of wood.... But the commonest form, it is understood, was that in which the upright piece of wood was crossed by another near the top, but not precisely at it, the upright pole running above the other, thus "a cross" and so making four, not merely two right angles.* It was on a cross of this form, according to the general voice of tradition, that our Lord suffered.... It may be added that crucifixion was abolished around the time of Constantine, in consequence of the sacred associations which the cross had now gathered around it." (The Imperial Bible-Dictionary, Edited by P. Fairbairn (London, 1874), Vol. I, p.376f)

### Evidence of Cross from Archaeology

There is also plenty of archaeological evidence from inscriptions, coins, and gems from *before, during, and after* the 1<sup>ST</sup> century AD showing that the Romans and others commonly executed criminals on + and T crosses (ex. the "Alexamenos Graffito" inscription, the "Pereire" crucifixion gem, the "Herculaneum" wall inscription, the "Orpheus" crucifixion gem, the "Sator Square" word puzzle, the "Jerusalem Burial Cave Bagatti", etc.). Some of these examples are shown below.



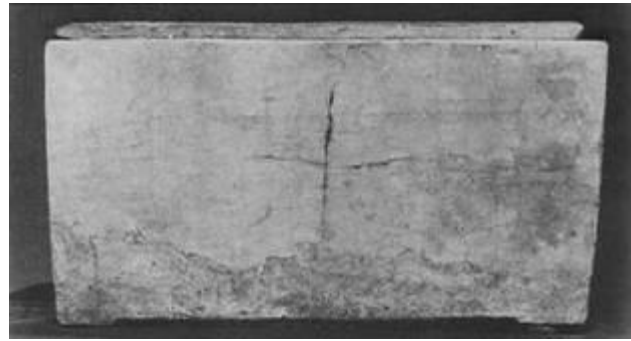
Imprint of a traditional Roman cross over a charred altar in a house in Herculaneum, Italy, which was buried in an eruption of Mt. Vesuvius in 79 AD (see P.L. Maier, *First Christians: Pentecost and the Spread of Christianity*, Mowbrays: London, 1976, p.141).



Crucifixion Gem (Pereire Collection), Eastern Mediterranean (possibly Syria). Dated by scholars variously between the 1<sup>ST</sup> century AD to 3<sup>RD</sup> century AD (see Ian Wilson, *Jesus: The Evidence*, Pan Books, 1984).



A 1<sup>ST</sup> century AD burial cave uncovered by archaeologists on the Mount of Olives contains inscriptions indicating its use by the first Christians. This head stone is inscribed with the sign of the cross (see Jean Gilman, “Jerusalem Burial Cave Reveals: Names, Testimonies of First Christians”, Jerusalem Christian Review, 1998, vol.9, issue 2, internet edition; [www.leaderu.com/theology/burialcave.html](http://www.leaderu.com/theology/burialcave.html))



Bone box used to store the bones of the dead in Jerusalem and dated to between 100 BC and 100 AD. The symbol of the cross is clearly evident, indicating either that the victim was executed on a cross by the Romans, or simply that the deceased was a Christian believer (see J. Finegan, *The Archeology of the New Testament*, 1992, p.363-364).



The crucifixion of Dionysus (or Orpheus). Ancient Greek seal is dated to the 2<sup>ND</sup> century B.C. Formerly housed at the Altes Museum in Berlin, but lost or destroyed during World War II. Inscription: “Orpheus Bacchikou”. (see F. Carotta, A. Eickenberg, 2009, “Orfeo Báquico – La Cruz Desaparecida”, *Isidorianum* 18, no. 35. p.179–217.)



Sator Square, 79 AD, Pompeii, Italy. This Latin word puzzle may have been a coded way for early Christians to signal their presence to each other. Why? When it is decoded, it reads “Alpha, Omega, Our Father” in the shape of a cross.

## Evidence of Cross from Ancient Writings

There are plenty of written reports from secular and Christian sources *before, during, and after* the 1<sup>ST</sup> century AD indicating that criminals were executed by the Romans in a variety of ways on stakes and crosses. But Jesus, from several of these writings, is clearly reported to have been executed on a cross, NOT a vertical torture stake. Consider these ancient reports below.

**Dionysius of Halicarnassus** (c. 60 BC - 7 BC), a Greek historian and teacher of rhetoric, reports: "A Roman citizen of no obscure station, having ordered one of his slaves to be put to death, delivered him to his fellow-slaves to be led away, and in order that his punishment might be witnessed by all, directed them to drag him through the Forum and every other conspicuous part of the city as they whipped him, and that he should go ahead of the procession which the Romans were at that time conducting in honour of the god. The men ordered to lead the slave to his punishment, having stretched out both his arms and fastened them to a piece of wood which extended across his breast and shoulders as far as his wrists, followed him, tearing his naked body with whips." (Roman Antiquities, 7.69.1-2).

**Seneca the Younger** (b. 3BC – d.65 AD), a Roman philosopher, recounts: "I see crosses there, not just of one kind but made in many different ways: some have their victims with head down to the ground; some impale their private parts; others stretch out their arms on the gibbet." [Dialogue "To Marcia on Consolation", in Moral Essays, 6.20.3, trans. John W. Basore, The Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1946) 2:69].

**Josephus** (b.37 - d.100 AD), Jewish historian employed by the Romans, reports: "So the soldiers, out of the wrath and hatred they bore the Jews, nailed those they caught, one after one way, and another after another, to the crosses, by way of jest, when their multitude was so great, that room was wanting for the crosses, and crosses wanting for the bodies." (Wars of the Jews, 5.11.1)

**The Epistle of Barnabas** (c.80 - 120 AD), reports in chapter 9, verse 7: "For the scripture saith; And Abraham circumcised of his household eighteen males and three hundred. What then was the knowledge given unto him? Understand ye that He saith the eighteen first, and then after an interval three hundred. In the eighteen 'I' stands for ten, 'H' for eight. Here thou hast JESUS (IHSOYS). And because the cross in the 'I' was to have grace, He saith also three hundred. So He revealeth Jesus in the two letters, and in the remaining one the cross." (Prof. J.B. Lightfoot translation into English).

**Justin Martyr** (b.100 – d.165 AD), early church father who was born in Judea and executed in Rome, explicitly says the cross of Christ was of two-beam shape: "That lamb which was commanded to be wholly roasted was a symbol of the suffering of the cross which Christ would undergo. For the lamb, which is roasted, is roasted and dressed up in the form of the cross. For one spit is transfixed right through from the lower parts up to the head, and one across the back, to which are attached the legs of the lamb." (Dialogue with Trypho, chapter XL)

**Irenaeus** (b.130 – d.202 AD), an early church father who knew Polycarp the disciple of the apostle John, reports, "The very form of the cross, too, has five extremities, two in length, two in breadth, and one in the middle, on which [last] the person rests who is fixed by the nails" (Against Heresies II, xxiv, 4).

**Lucian of Samosata** (c.120-180 AD), a Greek satirist, describes the crucifixion of the mythical Prometheus by nailing him to a precipice on the Caucasus "with his hands outstretched (ἐκπετασθεὶς τῷ χεῖρε) from crag to crag." (Prometheus on Caucasus, 1-2)

## Evidence of Cross from the New Testament

The New Testament itself records that the criminal charges against Jesus were written on a plaque that was placed above his "head" (not his hands) (Matthew 27:37), and that his hands were fastened by "nails" (plural) (John 20:25), rather than one nail through both hands as would likely be done when using a stake. Both of these scriptural details are more consistent with execution using a cross, rather than just a vertical stake.

## 10. WHAT ABOUT JW FALSE PROPHECIES ABOUT THE FUTURE ?



### False Prophets Can be Identified according to the Bible:

According to the Bible, those who claim to be God's real messengers and then go on to incorrectly predict the future, are really false prophets and are to be ignored. They do not represent God's true teachings or God. We must be aware of false teachers claiming to speak and act for God. According to the Bible:

- "If what a prophet proclaims in the name of the LORD does not take place or come true, that is a message the LORD has not spoken. That prophet has spoken presumptuously. Do not be afraid of him." (Deuteronomy 18:22)
- Jesus said "false Christs and false prophets will arise and show great signs and wonders, as so to mislead, if possible, even the elect" (Matthew 24:24).

### JW's agree that False Prophets Do Not Predict the Future Correctly:

- "True, there have been those in times past who predicted an 'end to the world,' even announcing a specific date. Some have gathered groups of people with them and fled to the hills or withdrawn into their houses waiting for the end. 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, Oct 8, 1968, p. 23)
- 1972 "Of course, it is easy to say that this group acts as a 'prophet' of God. It is another thing to prove it. The only way that this can be done is to review the record. What does it show?" (The Watchtower, April 1, 1972, p. 197)

### BUT, JW's Claim to be God's Only True Prophets and Apostles in their Literature:

- "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**...Of course, it is easy to say that this group acts as a 'prophet' of God. It is another thing to prove it." (The Watchtower, 4/1/1972, p. 197)
- "Consider, too, the fact that **Jehovah's organization alone, in all the earth, is directed by God's holy spirit or active force**" and later on the same page, "Under the influence of God's holy spirit, you can share in this grand work of finding, welcoming and educating those who will become fellow praisers of Jehovah." (The Watchtower, 1/7/1973, p.402)
- "They have a modern Governing Body of older Christian men from various parts of the earth who give needed oversight to the worldwide activities of God's people. **These men, like the apostles** and older men in Jerusalem in the first century, are anointed members of the faithful and discreet slave class designated by Jesus to care for all of his Kingdom interests here upon earth. **History has proved that they can be trusted to follow the direction of the holy spirit and that they do not rely on human wisdom in teaching the flock of God the ways of genuine peace.**" (The Watchtower, Dec.15, 1989, p. 6)



### So, how do the JW's measure up to their own Claims of Being God's True Prophets?

The following is only a partial list of the false and unfulfilled prophecies about the future that JW's have made in their own literature. Most JW's today are totally unaware of their organizations history of false prophecy. They will usually defend or dismiss these things by simply minimizing them as "mistakes" or "errors" or that they are on a learning curve and that "the light is getting brighter and brighter". However, God takes false prophecy in His name very seriously and so should we. Can we really believe the JW's when by their own standards and their own admission their organization is acting like a false prophet?

**1889** "In the coming 26 years, all present governments will be overthrown and dissolved." (C.T. Russell, Studies in the Scriptures, Vol. 2, 1880, p. 98-99)

**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 Time is at Hand, 1908 edition, p. 101)

**1908** "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, 1908 edition, p. 98-99)

**1914** "The present great war in Europe is the beginning of the Armageddon of the Scriptures." (Pastor Russell's Sermons, p. 676)

**1916** "The Bible chronology herein presented shows that the six great 1000 year days beginning with Adam are ended, and that the great 7th Day, **the 1000 years of Christ's Reign, began in 1873.**" (The Time is at Hand, p. 2, Forward)

**1916** - World War I would end in a glorious outcome - Messiah's Kingdom (The Watchtower reprints, 9/1/16, pg. 5951).

**1917** "Also in the year 1918, when God destroys the churches wholesale and the church members by millions .... " (The Finished Mystery, vol. VII, 1917, p.485)

**1918** "Therefore **we may confidently expect that 1925 will mark the return of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and the faithful prophets of old**, particularly those named by the Apostle in Hebrews 11, to the condition of human perfection." (Millions Now Living Will Never Die, 1920, p. 89)

**1920** '**...we may expect 1925** to witness the return of these faithful men of Israel from the condition of death, being resurrected' (Millions Now Living Will Never Die, 1920, p. 88)

**1922** "The date 1925 is even more distinctly indicated by the Scriptures than 1914." (The Watchtower 9/1/22, p. 262)

**1922** "It will be clearly shown that present-truth chronology displays **indisputable evidence of divine foreknowledge of the principle dates, and that this is proof of divine origin**, and that the system is not a human invention but a discovery of divine truth....we believe that it bears the stamp of approval of Almighty God." (The Watchtower, July 15, 1922, p.187)

**1923** "Our thought is that 1925 is definitely settled by the Scriptures. As to Noah, the Christian now has much more upon which to base his faith than Noah had upon which to base his faith in a coming deluge." (The Watchtower, 4/1/23, p. 106)



**1925** "The year 1925 is here. With great expectation Christians have looked forward to this year. Many have confidently expected that all members of the body of Christ will be changed to heavenly glory during this year. This may be accomplished. It may not be. In his own due time God will accomplish his purposes concerning his people. Christians should not be so deeply concerned about what may transpire this year." (The Watchtower, 1/1/25, p. 3)

**1941** "Receiving the gift, the marching children clasped it to them, not a toy or plaything for idle pleasure, but the Lord's provided instrument for most effective work in the **remaining months before Armageddon.**" (The Watchtower, 9/15/41, p. 288)

**1968** "Are we to assume from this study that the 'battle of Armageddon will be over by the Autumn of 1975 ... **it may involve only a difference of weeks or months** not years." (The Watchtower, 15/8/68)

**1969** "More recently earnest researchers of the Holy Bible have made a recheck of its chronology. According to their calculations the six millenniums of mankind's life on earth would end in **the mid-seventies.** Thus the seventh millennium from man's creation by Jehovah God would begin within less than ten years." (The Watchtower, Nov. 15, 1969, p. 622)

**1974** "Yes, the end of this system is so very near! Is that not reason to increase our activity?...Reports are heard of brothers selling their homes and property and planning to finish out the rest of their days in this old system in the pioneer service. Certainly this is a fine way to spend the short time remaining before the wicked world's end." (Kingdom Ministry, May 1974, p. 3)



**When their predictions don't come true, the JW's inadvertently admit to being false prophets. They also minimize the situation by saying they are human and make mistakes. Sometimes they blame their grassroots members for letting their imaginations run wild by misunderstanding their publications. Sometimes they apologize, which they feel excuses the matter. They never seem to take full responsibility for their actions by ceasing to set dates for biblical/prophetic events in the future. And they never entertain the idea that they might be false or presumptuous prophets, based on their own criteria for truth. Here is a sampling of some of the ways they have dealt with their false predictions:**

**1926** "Some anticipated that the work would end in 1925, but the Lord did not state so. The difficulty was that the *friends inflated their imaginations beyond reason*; and that when their imaginations beyond reason, they were inclined to throw away everything." (The Watchtower, p. 232)

**1931** "There was a measure of disappointment on the part of Jehovah's faithful ones on earth concerning the years 1914, 1918, and 1925, which disappointment lasted for a time... *and they also learned to quit fixing dates.*" (VINDICATION, p. 338)

**1972** "Does this admission of making mistakes stamp them [Watchtower] as false prophets? Not at all, for false prophets do not admit to making mistakes." (The Watchtower, Nov. 1, 1972, p. 644)

**1975** "This marked the beginning of a period of education in the written Word of God from the standpoint that Bible prophecy is best understood after it has been fulfilled. *So there needed to be a correction of our previous views*, and the surviving remnant of spiritual Israel needed to be readjusted to the postwar realities and opportunities. ... This revised program of Bible education had a profound effect on the remnant. It oriented their work in the right direction." (Man's Salvation Out Of World Distress At Hand, 1975, p. 191)

**1979** "Because of this hope, the "faithful and discreet slave" has alerted all of God's people to the sign of the times indicating the nearness of God's Kingdom rule. In this regard, however, it must be observed *that this "faithful and discreet slave" was never inspired, never perfect. Those writings by certain members of the "slave" class that came to form the Christian part of God's Word were inspired and infallible, but that is not true of other writings since.* Things published were not perfect in the days of Charles Taize Russell, first president of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society; nor were they perfect in the days of J.F. Rutherford, the succeeding president. The increasing light on God's Word as well as the facts of history have repeatedly required that adjustments of one kind or another be made down to the very present time. *But let us never forget that the motives of this "slave" were always pure, unselfish; at all times it has been well-meaning.*" (The Watchtower, March 1, 1979, p. 24)

**1980** "With the appearance of the book Life Everlasting in Freedom of the Sons of God, and its comments as to how appropriate it would be for the millennial reign of Christ to parallel the seventh millennium of mans existence, *considerable expectation was aroused regarding the year 1975.* Unfortunately, however, along with such cautionary information. *There were other statements published that implied that such realization of hopes by that year was more of a probability than a mere possibility.* There were statements made then, and thereafter, stressing that this was only a possibility. It is to be regretted that these latter statements apparently overshadowed the cautionary ones and contributed to a buildup of the expectation already initiated....In saying anyone, the Watchtower included all disappointed ones of Jehovah's Witnesses, hence including persons having to do with the publication of the information that contributed to the buildup of hopes centered on that date." (The Watchtower, March 15, 1980, p. 17-18)

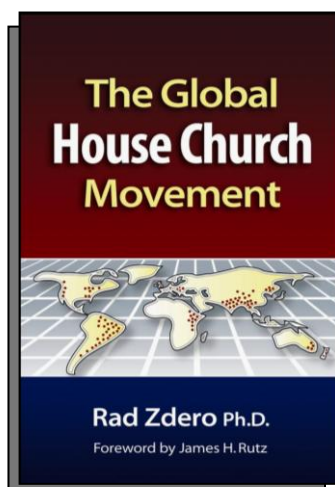
**1993** "Further, the widely circulated booklet 'Millions Now Living Will Never Die' presented the view that in 1925, God's purposes regarding the restoring of the earth to Paradise and the resurrecting of the faithful ones of old would begin to be fulfilled. ... *The year 1925 came to its conclusion, but the end was not yet!* Ever since the 1870's, Bible Students had been serving with a date in mind - first 1914, then 1925. Now they realized that they must serve for as long as Jehovah wishes." (The Watchtower, Nov. 1, 1993, p. 12)

## RECOMMENDED READING

- Bill Cetnar, *Questions For Jehovah's Witnesses Who Love The Truth*, Kunkletown, PA, 1983 (ex-JW who worked at the JW headquarters when their Bible was being translated in the 1950s).
- Carl Jonsson, *The Gentile Times Reconsidered: Chronology & Christ's Return*, Commentary Press, 1998.
- David Reed, *Answering Jehovah's Witnesses Subject by Subject*, Baker Books, 1996.
- David Reed, ed., *Index of Watchtower Errors*, Baker Books, 1990.
- David Reed, *Jehovah's Witnesses answered Verse by Verse*, Baker Books, 1990.
- James Penton, *Apocalypse Delayed: The Story of Jehovah's Witnesses*, Univ. of Toronto Press, 1998.
- Raymond Franz, *Crisis of Conscience*, Commentary Press, 1992 (JW of 40 years who left the organization, 9 years a member of the Governing Board of JWs, and nephew of former JW President Fred Franz).
- Robert Bowman Jr., *Jehovah's Witnesses*, Zondervan, 1996.
- Rolf Furuli, *The Role of Theology and Bias in Bible Translation: With a special look at the New World Translation of Jehovah's Witnesses*, Elihu Books, 1999.
- Walter Martin, *Kingdom of the Cults*, Bethany House, 1985.

# ***REVOLUTIONARY BOOKS***

**by RAD ZDERO**

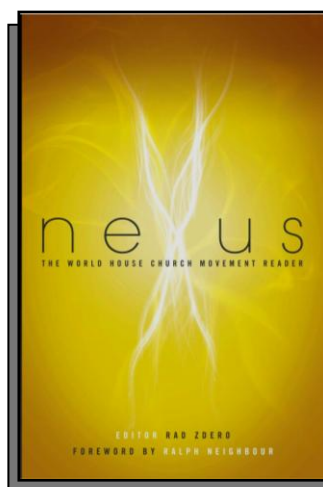


## **The Global House Church Movement**

Rad Zdero gives you biblical, historical, and practical insights for a radical new type of church that is arising all around the world. This book is guaranteed to challenge your understanding of what the church is really meant to be and do! Perfect as a study guide to kick-start a new house church! (paperback, 155 pages)

**Best price from ...**

[www.missionbooks.org](http://www.missionbooks.org)

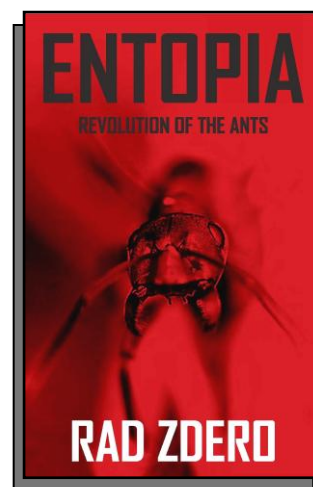


## **Nexus: The World House Church Movement Reader**

As the editor of this volume, Rad Zdero has compiled the writings of almost 40 house church leaders and scholars from 20 countries in over 60 provocative articles. Get trained to start your own network of missional house churches no matter where you live! (paperback, 528 pages)

**Best price from ...**

[www.missionbooks.org](http://www.missionbooks.org)



## **Entopia: Revolution of the Ants**

An allegorical tale written in the tradition of C.S. Lewis's *Narnia* chronicles and George Orwell's *Animal Farm*. An adventure of grassroots revolution in the hierarchical and ordered world of an anthill. The system must change! Although just a fable, it has challenges for the church to grapple with. Fun for kids of all ages! (paperback, illustrated, 132 pages)

**Best price from ...**

[www.oaktara.com](http://www.oaktara.com)

[www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)



## **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

**RAD ZDERO** earned his Ph.D. degree in Mechanical Engineering from Queen's University (Kingston, Canada), specializing in bio-mechanics and bio-materials. He is the director of a hospital-based research lab in Toronto, Canada. Rad has been actively involved in the house church and small group movement since 1985 and is dedicated to encouraging the full restoration of original New Testament Christianity in our day.