

JEHOVAH WITNESSES' INVESTIGATIVE STUDY

An Investigative Study

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PREFACE

Dr. Walter C. Martin, the founder of the Christian Research Institute, once commented that “the average Jehovah’s Witness can make a ‘doctrinal pretzel’ out of the average Christian about 30 seconds.” Sadly enough, many Christians do not know how to encounter the Jehovah Witnesses’ errant Bible claims, and therefore fail to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with them. Even more sadly, many Christians show an uncaring, hostile attitude toward the Jehovah Witnesses when they show up at their doors.

This investigative study will primarily concentrate on proving the following:

1. The Watchtower Society is a false prophet.
2. Jesus Christ is God Almighty and the second Person of the Trinity.
3. God is in three coequal Persons; God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.
4. God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit have always existed and will forever exist.
5. Human souls live forever, either in Heaven or Hell, depending upon their relationship with Jesus Christ.
6. Salvation is by faith in Jesus Christ alone.
7. The Jehovah’s Witnesses have an errant Biblical position on such controversial issues as blood transfusions, and birthday, Christmas and Easter celebrations.

This investigative study is primarily taken from the book, *Reasoning From The Scriptures With The Jehovah’s Witnesses*, by Ron Rhodes, and is structured to be used in small Bible groups where these claims can be verbally investigated and challenged. The Scripture verses used in this study are primarily taken from the *New King James Version* of the Bible. Although this Investigative study is too brief to address each of their errant beliefs, it is hoped that it is thorough enough to allow Christians to communicate intelligently with the Jehovah Witnesses, clearly demonstrating that true Christians should be willing to do for the truth what the Jehovah’s Witnesses are willing to do so efficiently, for a lie.

CHAPTER 1 Overview

Historical Information:

1. **Founder:** Charles Taze Russell in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania in 1872 (incorporated in 1884). Russell died in 1916 and was referred to in a 1920 *Watchtower* as the “faithful and discrete slave (God’s special servant)” as described in Matthew 24: 45-47.
2. **Next in Charge:** Joseph F. Rutherford. (1917-42). Doctrinal arguments between the Russell and the Rutherford leaderships caused the organization to be broken into the following two groups (Note that both Russell and Rutherford wore “Cross” symbols on their coat lapels):
 - A. Russellites- Still view Russell and their organization as “God’s special servants”.
 - B. Watchtower Society - Rutherford said that Russell never made the claim of being “God’s special servant” and viewed the Watchtower organization as “God’s chosen instrument” instead of “God’s special servant”.
3. **Other Presidents:** (Note that from this time on, the Watchtower Society’s governing body treated the “Cross” as a pagan symbol).
 - A. Nathan H. Knorr (1942 -77)
 - B. Frederick W. Franz (1977-92)
 - C. Milton G. Henschel (1992-)

Question No. 1: If the Watchtower Society was established by God in 1872, how does the Jehovah’s Witnesses explain the above Watchtower Society’s doctrinal changes occurring during the Society’s long existence and the break-up into two separate groups in 1916?

General Information:

1. **Number of Jehovah’s Witnesses:** 5.0 million worldwide
2. **Number of converts per week:** 4,000
3. **Yearly door-to-door witnessing man-hours expended:** 1.0 million
4. **Watchtower Society’s Bible:** *The New World Translation*
5. **Watchtower Society’s Publication:** *The Watchtower Magazine* (Printed bimonthly in 120 languages).
6. **Watchtower Society’s most recent publication:** *Reasoning From The Scriptures* in 1995 (445 pages, 2 million copies printed).
7. **Jehovah’s Witnesses belief:** All Christian organizations other than the Jehovah’s Witnesses are not directed by God and hence are deceptive and are of the devil. The Jehovah’s Witnesses are extremely exclusive and view the Watchtower Society as the sole possessor and propagator of God’s truth.
8. **Watchtower Society’s doctrine:**
 - A. Refutes the full deity of Christ.
 - B. Believes that Christ is a created being.
 - C. Believes that Christ existed in 3 different, separate states:
 1. Michael the Archangel who ceased being Michael when he became Christ.
 2. Christ, a perfect man on earth for 33 years.
 3. Michael the Archangel after His resurrection.
 - D. Believes that Christ was the one that God provided to rescue mankind from the consequences of Adam’s sin only.
 - E. Believes that Christ was crucified on a “torture stake”, an upright beam without a crossbeam.

- F. Understands that prayers to Jesus are forbidden.
 - G. Believes that the Holy Spirit is neither person nor God, but rather God's "active force".
 - H. Believes that the concept of the "Trinity" is unbiblical and is a blasphemous teaching.
 - I. Believes that the human soul is not immortal, but instead ceases to exist at death.
Future life for the righteous dead is based on God's remembrance in the resurrection.
The unrighteous dead eternally cease to exist.
 - J. Believes that it is utterly impossible to understand the true meaning of Scripture without the Watchtower Society's sole explanation.
 - K. Believes that only 144,000 persons will go to heaven as described in Revelation 7: 4-8.
Furthermore, the Society believes that "the earthly class - those who will live forever only on the new earth after the resurrection, need not and cannot be born again".
 - L. Treats all ex- Jehovah's Witnesses as apostates and equates reading their condemning testimonies against the Jehovah's Witnesses with the reading of pornographic literature.
 - M. Believes they must meet the following 4 requirements for salvation:
 1. Take in knowledge by studying the Bible with the aid of the Watchtower publications.
 2. Obey the laws of God and the laws of the Watchtower Society.
 3. Be baptized into the Watchtower organization.
 4. Publish the good news of the Watchtower Society from door to door
9. **Jehovah Witnesses' worldly beliefs:**
- A. Members maintain a neutral stand towards the political affairs of all nations and therefore refuse to salute any flags, vote, perform military service or pledge allegiance to any government.
 - B. Since 1945, Members have refused all blood transfusions. Oddly enough, hemophiliacs in their membership who are in danger of bleeding to death, are allowed to repeatedly take the necessary blood components that they need.
 - C. Members refuse to celebrate Christmas and Easter because they are pagan holidays and refuse to celebrate birthdays because they "tend to give excessive importance to an individual".
 - D. Members condemn the use of the Cross or statues as a part of their worship.

Steps to witnessing to Jehovah's Witnesses:

1. Don't tell a Jehovah's Witness your denomination. Say "I'm a believer in Christ!"
2. Encourage a mutual examination of Bible Scriptures using the King James Bible(acceptable to the Jehovah's Witnesses) as the "final court of arbitration". The *New World Translation* should only be used if you have investigated the numerous changes made to collaborate the Jehovah's Witnesses errant interpretations.
3. Go to 2nd. Corinthians 13 - "Examine yourselves whether you be in the faith".
4. Agree that neither you nor the Jehovah's Witnesses are Greek or Hebrew scholars capable of researching the original Greek and Hebrew Biblical manuscripts.
5. Be courteous and find common ground in the Scriptures and then proceed from there. Even though the Apostle Paul had every right to be angry with his persecutors, he remained in control and was therefore able to effectively communicate the Gospel to his non-believing captors.
6. Take your time. Don't use a "flame thrower" approach in trying to force a Jehovah's Witness to mentally digest more than he or she can in one session.
7. Reason with the Jehovah's Witnesses by asking leading questions.

8. Make the Jehovah's Witness come to a "scriptural-understanding" conclusion in his own mind.
9. Undermine the Watchtower's prophetic authority. Deuteronomy 18: 20-22 states that "if the thing he prophesies does not happen, it is not of the Lord". The following false prophesies were printed in various Watchtower publications:
 - A. False prophesy of Christ' second coming in 1874 (1897 *Studies in the Scripture*, V.4, P. 621).
 - B. False prophesy that the overthrow of human governments would occur and the Kingdom of God would be established in 1914 (1888 *Studies in the Scripture*, V. 2, PP. 98,99). The Watchtower Society now teaches that Christ returned invisibly in 1914 which rejects the Acts 1: 9-11 teaching that "Christ will return physically and visibly and will appear into view".
 - C. False prophesy of the coming of the Old Testament Saints (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and the old testament prophets) in 1925 (1920 *Millions Now Living Will Never Die*, PP.89,90). A 1920 *Watchtower* also prophesied that "millions now living will never die and will witness the return of these faithful men from the condition of death being resurrected..."
 - D. False prophesy of *The Watchtower* (10/01/67, P. 590) claiming The Watchtower Society to be God's "sole visible channel, through which alone spiritual instruction was to come."
 - E. False prophesy of the end of human history and the beginning of Armageddon in 1975 (10/08/66 *Awake*, P. 14).
10. Pray consistently as you witness to the Jehovah's Witnesses, remembering that only the Holy Spirit can change their hearts.

Question No. 2: How do the Jehovah's Witnesses defend the Watchtower as being God's "propagator of truth" when it has repeatedly been found to be in error?

Reference materials: *Reasoning From The Scriptures With The Jehovah's Witnesses* by Ron Rhodes, *How to Respond - Jehovah's Witnesses* by Herbert Kern, *The King James Bible, The New King James Version, Layman's Bible Encyclopedia* by William C. Martin, *Christianity In Crisis* by Hank Hanegraaff, *Holy Bible-The Scofield Reference Edition, Jehovah and the Watchtower* by Walter C. Martim and *Eerdmans' Handbook To The Bible*.

CHAPTER 2

Christ is God's Son and is Inferior to Him

The Jehovah's Witnesses use the following Scriptures in their efforts to prove that Jesus Christ is "*inferior*" to God:

<u>Scripture</u>	<u>Jehovah Witnesses' Interpretation</u>	<u>Section</u>	<u>Page</u>
Proverbs 8:23	God " <i>produced</i> " Jesus.	1	8
John 3:16	Jesus is a " <i>begotten</i> " Son.	2	9
John 14:28	The Father is " <i>greater</i> " than Jesus.	3	10
John 20:17	Jesus calls the Father " <i>My God.</i> "	4	11
1 Corinthians 11:3	Jesus is the " <i>lesser, humble Servant</i> ", of God.	5	12
1 Corinthians 15:28	Jesus is made " <i>subject</i> " to God.	6	13

CHAPTER 2 - (Section-1) God “*produced*” Jesus

Proverbs 8:22 (KJV) The Lord Possessed “*me*” in the beginning of His way, before His works of old.

Proverbs 8:23 (KJV) “*I*” was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was.

The Jehovah’s Witnesses claim that the “*me*” in Proverbs 8:22 and the “*I*” in Proverbs 8:23 refer to Jesus proving that Jesus is “*a created being*- the earliest of Jehovah’s achievements.” Their New World Translation renders Proverbs 8:22 as “Jehovah Himself “*produced me*” as the beginning of His way.”

CHRISTIAN RESPONSE:

The “*me*” and “*I*” in Proverbs 8:22,23 refer to “*Wisdom*”, not Jesus. Careful study of the first nine chapters of Proverbs clearly demonstrate that these chapters are dealing with “*Wisdom Personified*.” If a Jehovah’s Witness refuses to accept the Christian interpretation, then she or he must also ridiculously believe that Jesus, besides being a “created being”, is also a woman who cries in the streets (Proverbs 1:20,21) and is a woman who dwells with someone named “Prudence” (Proverbs 8:12).

CHAPTER 2 - (Section-2) Jesus is a “*begotten*” Son

John 3:16 (KJV) For God so loved the world that He gave “*His only begotten Son*”, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

The Jehovah’s Witnesses claim that the “*His only begotten Son*” in John 3:13 Proves that “Jesus is a separate, created being and therefore cannot be a part of a `Trinity`.” It is their belief that “God is superior to Jesus in time, position, power and knowledge.”

CHRISTIAN RESPONSE:

To understand the words “*His only begotten Son*” as they were used when John the apostle wrote this Gospel, one needs to understand how these four identical words were used elsewhere in the Scriptures. Such a Scripture is Hebrews 11:17 which reads:

Hebrews 11:17 (KJV) By faith, Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he, that had received the promises, offered up “*his only begotten son.*”

At the time when Abraham was offering up his son, Isaac, as a sacrifice to God, Abraham already had a son, Ishmael, that was born previous to the birth of Isaac. As God had promised, Abraham had many other sons after the birth of Isaac. There can be no doubt that Isaac was not “*his only begotten son*” in the sense that he was the only son that Abraham begat. It is clear from the full Scriptural context of Hebrews 11:17 that a more accurate rendering of the words “*his only begotten son*” would be “*his blessed and favored son*” that was chosen by God to carry out God’s covenant purposes.

Likewise, the Words, “*His only begotten Son*” found in John 3:16, do not signify that Jesus was a created being but rather “*His blessed and favored Son*” who established the new covenant between God and man by His sacrificial death on the cross.

An embarrassing conclusion to the Jehovah Witnesses’ interpretation of John 3:16 would be that if God is literally Jesus’ Father in heaven in the same sense that an earthly father begets a son, then it would seem logical that Jesus must have a “Heavenly Mother” as well as a “Heavenly Father.”

CHAPTER 2 - (Section-3) The Father is “*greater*” than Jesus

John 14:28 (KJV) You have heard me say to you, “I am going away, and coming again to you. If you loved Me, you would rejoice because I said, I am going to the Father: for “*My Father is greater than I.*”

The Jehovah’s Witnesses claim that the words “*My Father is greater than I*” in John 14:28 proves that “Jesus is lesser than Jehovah and therefore cannot be God in the same sense that Jehovah is.”

CHRISTIAN RESPONSE:

When Jesus became incarnate, He voluntarily “veiled” His divine attributes and took on the limitations of His new position in the incarnation. In John 14:28 Jesus is contrasting God’s position of being seated on the throne of highest majesty surrounded by hosts of holy beings, worshipping Him with uninterrupted praise, with that of Jesus’ lowly position of being despised and rejected of men, surrounded by merciless enemies who were soon to nail Him to a cross.

If there be any doubt about this explanation, one should simply go back four chapters earlier, in John 10:30, where Jesus proclaimed “*I and My Father are one.*” Moving ahead three chapters, in John 17:22, Jesus said: “And the glory which You (God) gave Me, I have given them, that they may be one just as “*We are one.*” Going back to the first chapter, in John 1:1, we read “In the beginning was *‘the Word’* and *‘the Word’* was with God, and *‘the Word’* was God.” The Apostle John used the idiom “*the Word*” in all of his biblical writings to mean Jesus Christ. Even the vulgar Jews were taught that John the Baptist was “*the Voice*” and Jesus Christ was “*the Word*”. “ In the beginning was *‘the Word’*” speaks of Jesus Christ’s existence, not only before His incarnation but also before all time. The world was “*from*” the beginning but “*the Word*” was “*in*” the beginning. Jesus Christ was “*in*” the beginning, therefore He never began and has existed eternally as “*one*” with God. This verse conflicts with the Jehovah Witnesses’ teachings causing them to alter the last five words in John 1:1 to read “and the Word was *‘a’* God”. Finally, 1 John 5:7 talks about the “*oneness*” of the Trinity: For there are three that bear witness in Heaven: the Father, the Word (Jesus), and the Holy Spirit: and “*these three are one.*”

If that is not enough proof for the Jehovah’s Witnesses, the Concept of the Trinity is first identified in Genesis 1:26 where God said on the sixth day, “Let *‘Us’* make man in *‘Our’* own image”. Here Father Son and the Holy Spirit acted as “*one*” God to consult and concur about the creation of man.

Based on the investigations of Genesis 1:26, John 1:1, John 10:30, John 17:22 and 1 John 5:7, it is clear that Jesus and the Father are “*One*”. It is also clear that Jesus and the Father are “*one*” with regard to John 14:28 when comparing both of their divine natures and that the word “greater” can only be used when comparing the Father’s eternal, heavenly position with Jesus’ lowly position in His incarnation.

CHAPTER 2 - (Section-4) **Jesus calls the Father “My God”**

John 20:17 (KJV) Jesus said to her (Mary), touch Me not: for I am not yet ascended to My Father: but go to my brethren and say unto them, I ascend unto My Father, and to your Father, and **“to My God and your God.”**

The Jehovah’s Witnesses claim that the words **“to My God and your God”** spoken by Jesus in John 20:17 proves that “Jesus cannot possibly be `Almighty God` Himself” and further claims that “never in the Bible is the Father reported to refer to the Son as `My God`.”

CHRISTIAN RESPONSE:

Since, in this verse, Jesus has not yet ascended to his Father, it is understood that Jesus was speaking these words through His incarnation. Thus it was perfectly proper for Jesus, in His Human nature, to pray to, worship, adore and address the Father as **“My God.”** The Apostle Paul spoke of the divine and human natures of Jesus in Philippians 2: 6-10 (KJV) as follows:

Verse 6: Who (Jesus Christ) being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God.

Verse 7: But made Himself of no reputation and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men.

Verse 8: And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

Verse 9: Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him and given Him a name which is above every name:

Verse 10: That at the name of Jesus, every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth.

Speaking in His incarnation, it was perfectly proper for the Jesus in Philippians 2: 7-8 to address the father as **“My God.”** Speaking in His divine nature, Jesus, in Phillipians 2: 6, could never refer to His Father as **“My God”** because Jesus is fully equal to God in every way. Finally, one has to be completely naive to not believe that Philippians 2: 9-10 clearly demonstrates that God Indeed refers to Jesus as being “Almighty God” Himself.

CHAPTER 2 - (Section-5)
Jesus is the “*lesser, humble Servant*” of God

1 Corinthians 11:3 (KJV) But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head the woman is the man; and “*the head of Christ is God.*”

The Jehovah’s Witnesses say “that because God is said to be “*the head of Christ*” then Christ cannot be God. If Christ were God then ‘*He*’ would be the head.” The New World Translation renders 1 Corinthians 11:3: “But I want you to know that the head of every man is the Christ; in turn the head of a woman is the man; in turn, the head of the Christ is God.”

CHRISTIAN RESPONSE:

A close examination of 1 Corinthians 11:3 shows that it has nothing to do with the inferiority or superiority of one person over the other: rather, it has to do with the patterns of authority.

Genesis 1: 27 reads: So God created them in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He him.

Galatians 3:28 reads: There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

Genesis 1:27 and Galatians 3:28 clearly teach that men and women are equal in terms of nature because they are both created in God’s image and are said to be “*one*” in Christ. Even though men and women are equal in terms of their nature, there is nevertheless “*a functional hierarchy*” that exists between them.

John 10:30 reads: I (Jesus) and the Father are one.

In the same way, Christ and the Father are utterly equal in their divine being. Jesus is functionally under His Father’s headship in the same manner that woman is functionally under the man’s headship. There is no contradiction in affirming that an “*equality of being*” and a “*functional subordination*” exists among the three Persons in the Godhead.

CHAPTER 2 - (Section-6) Jesus was made “*Subject*” to God

1 Corinthians 15:28 (KJV) - Now when all things shall be made subject to Him, then shall “*the Son Himself will also be subject to Him*” who put all things under Him, that God may be all in all.

The Jehovah’s Witnesses argue that this Scripture talks about the Jesus that has already ascended into Heaven and is now in His glorified state and is still in “*subjection*” to the father. For this reason, the Jehovah’s Witnesses say that “this passage proves, beyond any doubt, that Jesus is not equal to the Father since all people-Jesus included- are in complete subjection to Jehovah-God.” The New World Translation renders 1 Corinthians 15:28: “When all things will have been subjected to Him, *the Son, Himself, will also subject himself* to the one who subjected all things to Him, that God may be all things to everyone.”

CHRISTIAN RESPONSE:

Paraphrasing Ron Rhodes in “Reasoning from the Scriptures With The Jehovah’s Witnesses:” “Christ, as the ‘*Perfect Man*’ (yesterday, today and forever) will always be in subjection to the Father. Since the Jehovah’s Witnesses believe that Jesus was not raised in a human body but was recreated as the spirit creature, Michael the Archangel, it is necessary to make the case for Jesus’ continued existence as the glorified *God-Man*.”

Luke 24:39 points out that Jesus was raised from the dead in the same human body in which He died when He spoke to His disciples: “Behold my hands and my feet, that is I myself. Handle Me, and see; for a spirit does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have.”

Acts 1: 9-11 clearly declares that Jesus ascended into Heaven in His human body and shall return in His human body in His second coming:

Verse 9: Now when He had spoken these things while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight.

Verse 10: And while they looked steadfastly toward Heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel:

Verse 11: Who also said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into Heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into Heaven, will come in like manner as you saw Him go into Heaven.

Paul, in 1 Timothy 2:5 also indicates that Jesus presently possesses a human nature as he penned the following words: “For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the ‘*man*’ Christ Jesus.”

Ron Rhodes, again in *Reasoning from the Scriptures With the Jehovah’s Witnesses*, explains it this way: “Because Jesus still possesses His human nature, then, Christ is still in submission to the Father. But in no way does this make Jesus lesser than the Father. Christ is the ‘*God-Man*’. On the human side, Jesus is lesser than the Father. But on the divine side, Jesus is forever equal

to the Father. Even apart from His humanity, Jesus has always been, and forever will be in subjection to the Father because *‘this is the nature of the relationship of the Persons in the trinity.’*”

Christ, in His divine nature is fully equal to the Father, though functionally he is subordinate and submissive to Him.

CHAPTER 2

Summary

The Scriptural verses studied in this Chapter counters the Jehovah Witnesses' claim that Jesus Christ is inferior to God. The Christian response can be summed up as follows:

God did not *“produce”*, *“beget”* or *“create”* Jesus Christ! Jesus Christ, the creator of *“all”* things, has always existed. Jesus Christ, as God's only *“blessed and favored”* Son, acknowledges, in His perfect *“human”* nature, God to be *“greater than He”*, refers to the Father as *“My God”*, is the *“servant”* of God and is *“submissive”* to God. Jesus Christ, in His *“divine”* nature is totally *“equal”* to God while being *“functionally subordinate”* to Him as the second person of the Trinity.

Question No. 3: How can the Jehovah's Witnesses continue to believe that Jesus Christ is inferior to God after realizing that so many of their “religious” beliefs are based on “selective” Scripture interpretations that have been insufficiently investigated, causing the Jehovah's Witnesses to make alterations to the Bible to make it agree with their beliefs, and with the realization that Genesis 1:26, John 1:1, John 10: 30, John 17:22, Phillipians 2:6, 1 Timothy 2:5 and 1 John 5:7 clearly demonstrate that Jesus Christ is Himself, *“God Almighty”*?

CHAPTER 3
Christ is the “*First*” of God’s Creations

The Jehovah’s Witnesses use the following Scripture verses in their efforts to prove that Jesus Christ is a “*created*” being:

<u>Scripture</u>	<u>Jehovah Witnesses’ Interpretation</u>	<u>Section</u>	<u>Page</u>
Colossians 1:15	Jesus was “ <i>created</i> ” by God before all “ <i>other</i> ” things.	1	17
Revelation 1:14	Jesus was the “ <i>beginning</i> ” of God’s creation.	2	18

CHAPTER 3 - (Section-1) **Jesus was “created” by God before all “other” things**

Colossians 1:15 (KJV) - He (Jesus) is the image of the invisible God, the “*firstborn*” over all creation.

The Jehovah’s Witnesses argue that this Scripture supports their view that Jesus came into being, at a point of time, as a created angel, saying that the word “*firstborn*” in this verse means “*first created*”. They claim that “Jesus was a very special person because He was created by God before all other things.”

CHRISTIAN RESPONSE:

Careful study of the Scriptures demonstrate that the word “*firstborn*” does not mean “*first created*.”

In Psalm 89:27, God speaks of David: “Also I (God) will make him (David) My “*firstborn*”, the highest of the kings of the earth.” David, of course, had many older brothers and therefore was not born first.

Genesis 41:51,52 talks about Joseph’s two sons, Manasseh (born first) and Ephraim (born second):

Verse 51: Joseph called the name of the firstborn Manasseh:” For God, has made me forget all my toil and all my father’s house.”

Verse 52: And the name of the second he called Ephraim: “For God has caused me to be fruitful in the land of Egypt ended.”

God changes this around in Jeremiah 31:9: They shall come with weeping, and with supplications I will lead them: I will cause them to walk by the rivers of waters in a straight way in which they shall not stumble: for I am a Father to Israel and Ephraim is My “*firstborn*.”

Carrying this further with more familiar names, Ishmael was thirteen years older than Isaac, and the twin Esau came out of Rebekah’s birth canal before Jacob, but God has declared both Isaac and Jacob as the “*firstborn*.”

The word “*firstborn*” in the Scriptures refers to the son in the family who was in the preeminent position regardless of whether or not he was literally the first son born to the parents. Likewise, Christ is the “*firstborn*” in the sense that He is positionally preeminent over creation and supreme over all things. Christ is also the Heir of all creation in the sense that all things that belong to the Father also belong to the Son.

CHAPTER 3 - (Section-2) Jesus was the “*beginning*” of God’s creation

Revelation 3:14 (KJV) And to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans Write, “These things says the Amen (Jesus), the Faithful and True Witness, “*the Beginning*” of the creation of God:

In this instance, the Jehovah’s Witnesses refer to the Greek word “*arche*” as meaning only “*the beginning*” and argue that using that interpretation of this word proves that Jesus cannot be the “*beginner*” of God’s creation. They claim that this verse verifies their claim that “Jesus is a created being, the first of Jehovah-God’s creations.”

CHRISTIAN RESPONSE:

Although, in the Overview (Chapter 1), it was decided that most Christians are not Greek scholars, one cannot allow the Jehovah Witnesses’ interpretation of the word “*arche*” go unchallenged. Ron Rhodes, in “Reasoning From The Scriptures With The Jehovah’s Witnesses” says that the word “*arche*” can also mean “*one who begins*”, “*beginner*”, “*origin*”, “*source*”, “*creator*” or “*first cause*”.

To be fair to the Jehovah’s Witnesses, let’s allow other Scriptures containing the word “*arche*” to determine what is actually being spoken here. The word “*arche*” is used three other times in the Book of Revelation, each time being interpreted as “*the beginning and the end*” in the following verses that were all penned by the Apostle John about Jesus Christ :

Revelation 1:8 - I am Alpha and Omega, “*the Beginning and the End*”, says the Lord, “who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty.”

Revelation 21:6 - And He said to me, “It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, “*the Beginning and the End.*” I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts.”

Revelation 22:13 - I am the Alpha and the Omega, “*the Beginning and the End*”, the first and the last.

Clearly, the above three Scripture verses communicate that Jesus Christ is not just the beginning of God’s creation but rather the creator of all things ever created, “*the beginning and end of all God’s creation.*”.

Other verses that demonstrate that Jesus is the creator are as follows:

The Apostle Paul speaks of Jesus in Colossians 1:16,17- For by Him (Jesus)all things were created, that are in Heaven, and are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created through Him, and for Him. And He is before all things, and by Him all things consist. The Apostle Paul also speaks of God in Hebrews 1:2 - (God) Has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds.

The Apostle John speaks of Jesus in John 1:3: All things were made by Him (Jesus) and without Him nothing was made that was made.

The Jehovah's Witnesses should readily agree that only God is the creator, as is verified in Isaiah 44:24: Thus says the Lord, your redeemer, and He that formed you from the womb, I am the Lord that **"makes all things"**, who stretches out of the Heavens **"alone"**, who spreads the earth **"by Myself"**; Given the fact that God is the **"maker of all things"**, **"by Himself"**, **"all alone"** and given the fact that the Jehovah's Witnesses believe that Jesus is indeed a creator (created all **"other"** things) proves that Jesus Christ is **"God Almighty"**, just as the Father is. Simply put, if only God can create, and if Jesus can create, then Jesus must also be God.

CHAPTER 3 Summary

The Scriptural verses studied in this Chapter counters the Jehovah Witnesses' claim that Jesus Christ is a created being. Jesus Christ is not God's "*first creation*" and is not just "*the beginning*" of God's creation! Jesus Christ, in His divine nature, is "*positionally preeminent*" over all creation and is supreme over "*all*" things. Revelation 1:8, Revelation 21:6 and Revelation 22:13 declare that Jesus Christ is not only "*the beginning*" but also "*the end*" of God's creation. Colossians 1:16,17, Hebrews 1:2 and John 1:3 clearly demonstrate Jesus Christ has always existed, and as the second Person of the Trinity, created everything that was ever created.

Question No. 4: How can the Jehovah's Witnesses continue to believe that Jesus Christ is a created being when Colossians 1:16,17, Hebrews 1:2 and John 1:3 say otherwise?

CHAPTER 4
Christ is “*Michael the Archangel*”

The Jehovah’s Witnesses use the following Scriptures in their efforts to prove that Jesus Christ was “*Michael the Archangel*” before He became Christ in the incarnation. They claim that after His resurrection, Christ became “*Michael the Archangel*” again.

<u>Scripture</u>	<u>Jehovah Witnesses’ Interpretation</u>	<u>Section</u>	<u>Page</u>
Daniel 10:13 Daniel 10: 21 Daniel 12:1	Jesus’ progressive existence can be summarized as “ <i>Angel-Human-Angel</i> ”.	1	22
1 Thes. 4:16	Jesus will descend from Heaven with the voice of an archangel, thus proving that He is, indeed, the “ <i>Archangel Michael</i> ”.	2	24
1 Peter 3:18	Jesus was resurrected as a “ <i>Spiritual</i> ” creature.	3	26
1 Cor.15: 44-50	“ <i>Flesh and Blood</i> ” cannot inherit God’s Kingdom.	4	28

CHAPTER 4 - (Section-1)

Jesus' progressive existence can be summarized as "*Angel-Human-Angel*"

Daniel 10:13 (KJV) But the prince of the kingdom of Persia (Satan) withstood me twenty one days: and behold, Michael, "*one of the chief princes*", came to help me, for I had been left alone there with the kings of Persia.

Daniel 10: 21 (KJV) But I will tell what is noted in the Scripture of Truth. No one upholds me against these except "*Michael your prince.*"

Daniel 12:1 (KJV) At that time "*Michael shall stand up*", the great prince who stands watch over the sons of your people, and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation. Even to that time: and at that time your people shall be delivered, every one that is found written in the book.

The Jehovah's Witnesses focus on the following phrases in interpreting the three above Scriptures:

Daniel 10: 13 - "*Michael is one of the chief princes.*"

Daniel 10: 21 - "*Michael is the prince of God's people.*"

Daniel 12: 1 - "*Michael, at the time of the end, will stand up, the great prince who is standing in behalf of the sons of your people.*"

Based on Daniel 10:13 and Daniel 10:21, the Jehovah's Witnesses argue that Jesus, in His prehuman state, was the archangel Michael, who was the great prince of the people of God. They say that the phrase "*stand up*" should be interpreted as "*take control and reign as king*" and therefore claim that the prophecy in Daniel 12: 1 points to Michael's (Jesus') enthronement as king in Heaven in 1914.

CHRISTIAN RESPONSE:

An investigation of the following Scriptures needs to be done to counter the Jehovah Witnesses' false claim that that Jesus is Michael the archangel:

1. *Christ is better than the angels.*
Hebrews 1: 4 - (Christ) Having become so much "*better*" than the angels, as He has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.
2. *No angel can ever be called the "Son of God."*
Hebrews 1: 5 - For which of the angels did He (God) ever say: "You are My Son. Today I have begotten You?" And again: "I will be to Him a Father, and He shall be to Me a Son?"

3. **All angels are to worship Jesus.**
Hebrews 1:6 - And again, when He (God) brings in the first begotten into the world, He says, "Let all the angels of God worship Him."
4. **No angel (the archangel included) will rule in God's kingdom.**
Hebrews 2: 5 - For He has not put the world to come, of which we speak, in subjection to angels.
5. **Jesus' title, "King of Kings and Lords of Lords" is sovereign over "angels and princes."**
Revelation 19:16 - And He (Jesus) has on his robe and on His thigh, a name written "King of Kings and Lord of Lords."
6. **Christ could not have been an "angel - human - angel" because He never changes.**
Hebrews 13: 8 - Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and today, and forever.
7. **Jesus has the power to rebuke the devil while Michael the archangel does not.**
Matthew 4:10 - Then Jesus said unto him (Satan), "Away with you Satan! For it is written, you shall worship your God, and Him only you shall serve."

Jude 9: - Yet Michael the archangel in contending with the Devil, when he disputed about the body of Moses, dared not bring against him a reviling accusation, but said, the Lord rebuke You!"

8. **Michael is a chief prince but Jesus is God!**

Daniel 10:13: - (See page 1) refers to Michael as "**one**" of the chief princes indicating that Michael is "**one**" among a "**group**" of chief princes.

Philippians 2:6 Who (Jesus), Being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God.

Although it is generally agreed that the glorious person that Daniel saw in his vision, described in Daniel 10:13, Daniel 10:21 and Daniel 12:1 is no other than Jesus Christ Himself, nowhere in these three verses, or in Jude 9 or in Revelation 12:7 is it declared that Michael is Jesus!

If Michael is not Jesus, then who is he? The "Matthew Henry Commentary" says that "Michael was the angel that was employed by Christ to converse with Daniel in order to encourage and comfort him. In like manner, in the book of Revelation, God allowed Jesus Christ to reveal to the apostle John in a vision, 'things which must shortly come to pass,' and then sent an angel to explain the vision's meaning. Additionally, Christ also employed angels to communicate this vision to the seven churches listed in the third and fourth chapters in the Book of Revelation."

It is not clear why the Jehovah's Witnesses interpret the Scriptures in Daniel to back up their belief that Jesus' second coming occurred in 1914, but it is clear that the above investigated Scripture verses prove that Christ cannot be the archangel Michael. It is also clear that it is not uncommon for Christ to use Heavenly angels to assist Him in promoting the Gospel to all the world.

CHAPTER 4 - (Section-2)

Jesus will descend from Heaven with the voice of an archangel, thus proving that He is, indeed, the “Archangel Michael”

1 Thessalonians 4:16 (KJV) - For the Lord Himself (Jesus) will descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.

The Jehovah’s Witnesses argue that in this verse, Jesus, Himself, is “*speaking*” with the voice of an archangel, thereby proving that Jesus is an archangel. Since Michael is the only angel in the Bible to be referred to as an archangel, then Jesus must be Michael the archangel.

CHRISTIAN RESPONSE:

A careful look at 1 Thessalonians 4:16 reveals that the Apostle Paul in this verse never explicitly says that Jesus, Himself “*spoke*” with the voice of an archangel but rather that Jesus, Himself was “*with*” the voice of an archangel. Paul writes on this same theme in 2 Thessalonians 1:7,8 as follows:

Verse 7: and to give you, who are troubled, rest with us, when the Lord Jesus is revealed from Heaven with His mighty angels.

Verse 8: in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who not know God, and on those who do not obey the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

If the angels are to accompany Jesus Christ at His Second Coming to carry out His divine directives as written in 2 Thessalonians 1:7,8, isn’t it perfectly logical to interpret 1 Thessalonians 4:16 to mean that an archangel (possibly Michael) will be “*one*” of the said angels that are to accompany Jesus Christ?

Another section of the Bible where Jesus Christ And Michael are mentioned together is in the twelfth Chapter of Revelation.

Verse 7: And war broke out in Heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon (Satan); and his angels fought.

Verse 10: Then I heard a loud voice saying in Heaven, “Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come....”

Verse 11: And they over came him (Satan) by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony....

The “Matthew Henry Commentary’s” study of the twelfth Chapter of Revelation, which gives an account of the contest between the church and the antichrist, says that the distinct parties in this warfare are as follows:

1. Michael the archangel (verse 7)
2. Michael’s angels (verse 7)
3. Satan (verse 7)

4. Satan's angels (verse 7)
5. Jesus Christ (verses 10 & 11)

In a similar fashion to 2 Thessalonians 1:7,8, Michael, in the twelfth Chapter of Revelation, appears to be an angel (archangel) who heads up other angels to accompany Jesus Christ in this dramatic battle. There is no mention, in this Chapter of Revelation, that Jesus Christ and Michael are one in the same .

If those two responses are not convincing enough for the Jehovah's Witnesses, then the Jehovah's Witnesses should be accused of using a portion of a verse, striped from its context, to support their view of this Scripture. In reality, the Jehovah's Witnesses are focusing on the first part of 1 Thessalonians 4:16 and are ignoring the second part. If the words "***with the voice of an archangel***" makes Jesus Christ an "***archangel***", then it is quite logical that the words "***with the trumpet of God***" must make Jesus Christ "***God***", a Christian truth but an abhorrent teaching for the Jehovah's Witnesses.

CHAPTER 4 - (Section-3) Jesus was resurrected as a “*Spiritual*” creature

1 Peter 3:18 (KJV) - For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive “*by*” the Spirit.

The New World Translation rewrites this verse to read: Why, even Christ died once for all time concerning sins, a righteous (person) for unrighteous ones, that he might lead you, he being put to death in the flesh, being made alive “*in*” the spirit.

The Jehovah’s Witnesses cite this verse to support their view that Jesus was resurrected with a spiritual body instead of a physical one. Jehovah Witness’ literature claims that “Jesus was raised to life as “*an invisible spirit*”. He did not take up again that body in which he had been killed as a human sacrifice to God.”

CHRISTIAN RESPONSE:

1 Peter 3:18 does not refer to a spiritual resurrection of Christ but rather a physical resurrection “*by*” the Holy Spirit. In other words, Jesus was raised from the dead, not “*in*” the spirit but “*by*” the Spirit of God.

Of course, this is not to deny that the Father and the Son were also involved in Christ’s resurrection as well. Proof of this fact is as follows:

Father raised Christ:

Acts 2:32 - This Jesus, God raised up, of which we are all witnesses.

Acts 13:30 - But God raised Him (Jesus) from the dead.

Romans 6:4 - Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father.

Ephesians 1:20 - Which He (God) worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead.

Christ raised Christ:

John 2:19 - Destroy this temple (*My body*), and in three days I will raise it up.

John 10:18 - No one takes it (*My life*) from me, but I lay it down and I have power to take it (up) again.

Some of the Scripture verses that support the physical resurrection of Christ are listed as follows:

John 2:19 - Destroy this temple (*body*) and three days I will raise it up. - Here Jesus is clearly saying that He would be raised from the dead “*bodily*” instead of spiritually.

John 20:27 - Then He (Jesus) said to Thomas, “Reach your finger here, and look at my hands: and reach your hand here, and put it into my side. Do not be unbelieving but believing.” - Here Thomas is clearly verifying Christ’s “*bodily*” wounds from His agonizing death on the Cross.

Luke 24:42,43 - So they gave Him (Jesus) a piece of broiled fish and some honeycomb; and He took it and ate it in their presence. - Jesus, in this simple act of eating, proved to His disciples and to the readers of His Word that He was raised in a physical "**body**" just as He promised He would in John 2:19.

To counter the Jehovah Witnesses' incorrect position that Jesus was raised into Heaven as a spirit creature, the following Scripture verses need to be investigated:

Peter speaks in Acts 2:30 - Therefore (David), being a prophet and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his body, according to the "**flesh**", He would raise up the Christ to sit on his (David's) throne.

1 John 4:2 - By this you know the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the "**flesh**" is of God.

2 John 7 - For many deceivers have gone out into this world who do not confess Jesus Christ as coming in the "**flesh**". This is an deceiver and an antichrist.

Finally, to affirm that Jesus Christ forever retains His Humanity, we must read the writings of the Apostle Paul in 1 Timothy 2:5 - For there is but one God and one Mediator between God and Men, the "**Man**" Christ Jesus. - One needs to ask, if Jesus Christ, the "**Man**" Christ, ceased to exist at his resurrection and became Michael the archangel as the Jehovah's Witnesses claim, then who is the "**Man**" Christ that shall stand in our defense when the day of our eternal judgment arrives as described in 1 Timothy 2:5?

CHAPTER 4 - (Section-4)
“Flesh and Blood” cannot inherit God’s Kingdom

1 Corinthians 15: 44-50 (KJV)

Verse 44 - It is sown a natural body, it is raised a ***“spiritual body”***. There is a natural body, and there is a ***“spiritual body”***.

Verse 45 - And so it is written, “The first man Adam became a living being. The last Adam became a life giving spirit.”

Verse 46 - However, the ***“spiritual”*** is not first, but the natural, and afterward the ***“spiritual”***.

Verse 47 - The first man was of the earth, made of dust; the second Man is the Lord from Heaven.

Verse 48 - As was the man of dust, so also are those who are made of dust: and as the Heavenly Man, so also are those who are Heavenly.

Verse 49 - And as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the Heavenly Man.

Verse 50 - Now this I say, brethren, that ***“flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God, nor does corruption inherit incorruption”***.

The Jehovah’s Witnesses cite verses 44 and 46 to support their contention that Jesus was raised from the dead as a spirit creature, and cite that verse 50 as proving Jesus must have had a spiritual resurrection since Flesh-and-blood bodies cannot exist in Heaven. It is their contention that although flesh-and-blood bodies cannot inherit God’s Kingdom, the spiritual body is ideally suited for spirit life in Heaven.

CHRISTIAN RESPONSE:

We need to take exception, once again, to our commitment to not get into the Greek word interpretations in order to fully and accurately understand what is being said here. The Jehovah’s Witnesses interpret the Greek words in verses 44 and 46, “soma pneumatikos”, as meaning ***“body spiritual”*** (***“spiritual body”***), when, in reality, they are more accurately interpreted as ***“a body directed by the spirit”*** or a ***“supernatural body”*** as we would call it today.

Allowing other Scripture to validate this assertion, we find out that the exact same word “pneumatikos” is used twice in 1 Corinthians 10:4, where the Apostle Paul spoke of the flight of the Israelis in the Book of Numbers. - And all drank the same ***“spiritual”*** drink. For they drank of that same ***“spiritual”*** Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ.- Hopefully, you will recall in Numbers 20:11, that Moses struck that rock twice with his brother Aaron’s rod causing water to gush out for Moses’ people and their livestock .Here, it seems clear that the rock that Moses hit was not a ***“spiritual”*** rock and that the water that came forth was not ***“spiritual”*** water but rather it was ***“supernatural”*** water from a ***“supernatural”*** rock that was directed by the Spirit of God to do something far beyond what the laws of nature normally allow it to do.

The same word “pneumatikos” is also used in 1 Corinthians 2:15 - But he who is “*spiritual*” judges all things, yet he, himself, is rightly judged by no one. It seems clear here that the Apostle Paul is not talking about invisible, spirit judges but rather judges that have been “*directed by the Spirit of God*” and given “*supernatural*” powers to make their divine induced judgments.

Now, let’s read 1 Corinthians 15: 44-49 changing the word “*spiritual*” to “*supernatural*” in verses 44 and 46 and see how it clarifies what is really being said here.

Verse 44 - It is sown a natural body. It is raised a “*supernatural*” body”. There is a natural body, and there is an “*supernatural*” body.

Verse 46 - However, the “*supernatural*” is not first, but the natural, and afterward the “*supernatural*”.

That takes care of verses 44 through 49, but what about verse 50 which says that flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God, nor does corruption inherit incorruption? The words “*flesh and blood*” in verse 50 means “*mortal flesh and blood*” or in other words “*a mere human being*”. Recalling your memory, in Matthew 16: 15-17, when Jesus asked Peter as to whom he thought Jesus was, that Peter replied “The Christ, The Son of the Living God!” Jesus replied, “For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you!” Obviously, the flesh and blood intellect of the human body is incapable of discerning spiritual truths. In this instance, God chose to reveal this truth, while Peter was still in his flesh-and-blood mortal body, that Jesus was God’s Son. The Phrase “*flesh and blood*” is simply an idiom used by the Apostle Paul to mean humanity”. Just as God added “something” to Peter’s “*mortal humanity*” to allow Peter to “*supernaturally*” discern of Christ’s Deity, God will add “something” to each of the mortal humans that He saves, in order to transform them into an “*immortal humanity*”, complete with all of the necessary special qualities that will enable each one of them to adapt perfectly to live eternally in the presence of God. Simply put, “*mortal humanity*” cannot inherit the Kingdom of God, but God puts no such restriction on “*immortal*” man.

1 Corinthians 5:53 is a verse that confirms our “*mortal/immortal*” humanity position for verses 44 through 49 and the first part of verse 50, and even addresses the “*corruption/incorruption*” aspect for the second part of verse 50. Here Paul is explaining who will be raised when the trumpet blows saying: “For this ‘*corruptible*’ must put on ‘*incorruptible*’ and this ‘*mortal*’ must put on ‘*immortality*’.”

It is clear from the above investigation that 1 Corinthians 44:50 speaks of Jesus’ “*bodily*” resurrection into Heaven, including the raising of supernatural “*human*” bodies that have been transformed by God from natural human “*mortal*” bodies.

CHAPTER 4 Summary

The following Table of the Scripture verses studied in this Chapter, clearly demonstrates that Jesus Christ has never been, nor will ever be Michael the Archangel.

JESUS CHRIST

Better than the angels (Heb. 1:4)

Son of God (Heb. 1:5)

Employer of angels (2 Thess. 1:7,8)

Never changes (Heb. 13:8)

More powerful than the Devil (Matt. 4:10)

Suffered and died for our sins (1 Peter 3:18)

Ruler in God's Kingdom (Heb. (2:5)

Transformer of mortal to immortal (1 Cor. 15:44-50)

Mediator between God and man (1 Tim. 2:5)

Second Person of the Trinity (1 John 5:7)

King of Kings (Rev. 19:16)

Lord of Lords (Rev. 19:16)

God Almighty (Phil. 2:6)

MICHAEL (AS JESUS)

An archangel (1Thess 4:16)

One of the chief Princes (Dan.10:13)

Spirit/man/spirit (1 Peter 3:18)

Prince of God's people (Dan. 10:21)

Less powerful than the Devil (Jude 9)

Human sacrifice to God (1 Peter 3:18)

Worshiper of Jesus (Heb. 1:6)

Question No. 5: As a result of the investigation of the above listed Scripture verses studied in this Chapter, shouldn't the Jehovah's Witnesses question more thoroughly the Watchtowers Society's teaching that Jesus Christ is Michael the Archangel?

CHAPTER 5
The Holy Spirit is Neither Person Nor God but, Rather, God's Active Force

The Jehovah's Witnesses use the following Scriptures in their efforts to prove that the Holy Spirit is not a person but simply a powerful force that God uses to accomplish His Holy will.

<u>Scripture</u>	<u>Jehovah Witnesses' Interpretation</u>	<u>Section</u>	<u>Page</u>
Genesis 1:1,2	The Holy Spirit is an active force.	1	32
Acts 2:4	The Holy Spirit is not a person (Claim No. 1).	2	35
1 John 5:8	The Holy Spirit is not a person. (Claim No. 2).	3	36
Matthew 28:19	The Holy Spirit doesn't even have a name!	4	37

CHAPTER 5 - (Section-1) The Holy Spirit is an active force

Genesis 1:1,2 (KJV) In the Beginning God created the Heavens and the earth. The earth was without form and void: and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the “*Spirit*” of God was hovering over the face of the waters.

The New World Translation renders Genesis 1:1,2 as follows: In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth proved to be formless and waste and there was darkness upon the surface of the watery deep; and God’s “*active force*” was moving to and fro over the surface of the waters.

The Jehovah’s Witnesses say that the word “*Spirit*” in this verse comes from the Greek word “*pneuma*” and since “*pneuma*” is a neuter noun, then The Holy Spirit must be an “*it*”. They also say that the Hebrew word for “*Spirit*”, “*rauch*” can also be interpreted as “*air*”, “*breath*”, “*breeze*” and “*wind*”. The Jehovah’s Witnesses say that each of these four words denote an invisible “*active force*”.

The Jehovah’s Witnesses say that those two interpretations of the word “*Spirit*” point out that just as a human craftsman would use his “*hands and fingers*” to exert force to build a house, so God used His “*hands and fingers*” utilizing His “*active force*” (the Holy Spirit) to build His universe. They say that the following three verses back up their “*hands and fingers*” concept:

Scripture Verse

David speaks to God in Psalm 8:3:
“When I consider your Heavens, the work of your ‘*fingers*’”

Jehovah Witnesses’ Interpretation

The “*fingers*” exert God’s “*active force*”.

David’s song to God in Psalm 19:1:
“The Heavens declare the glory of God: And the firmament shows the “*handiwork*” of God.

The “*hands*” exert God’s “*active force*”.

Jesus says to a crowd in Luke 11:20:
“But if I cast out demons with the ‘*finger*’ of God, surely the Kingdom of God has come upon you!”

The “*finger*” exerts God’s “*active force*”.

CHRISTIAN RESPONSE:

The Jehovah’s Witnesses are once again forcing us to look into their Greek and Hebrew word interpretations. Their “neuter noun” explanation sounds like a valid argument until one realizes that the same Greek word “*Pneuma*” is used as the last of the three words in John 4:24 - “God is “*Spirit*””. Clearly God is not an “*it*” and clearly this logic cannot be used to declare that the Holy Spirit is an “*it*”.

Now what about the Jehovah Witnesses’ interpretation of the Hebrew word “*rauch*”? The Jehovah’s Witnesses say that this word demonstrates that the Holy Spirit is an “*active force*”. Christians, of course, argue that the Holy Spirit is a Person. How does one defend the Christian’s

Interpretation? Unlike a “*force*”, a person has three main attributes, mind, emotions and will. We need to investigate if the Holy Spirit has these three attributes.

The Holy Spirit Has A Mind.

1 Corinthians 2:10 - “But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit ‘*searches*’ all things, yes the deep things of God.” - Here the Holy Spirit, with His mind, “*searches*” the things of God, something a “*force*” cannot do.

1 Corinthians 2:11 - “For what man ‘*knows*’ the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so, no one ‘*knows*’ the things of God except the Spirit of God.” - A “*force*” does not “*know*” things. “*Knowing*” things requires a mind.

The Holy Spirit Has Emotions.

Ephesians 4:30 - “And do not ‘*grieve*’ the Holy Spirit of God, by Whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.” - How do we as Christians “*grieve*” the Holy Spirit? We “*grieve*” the Holy Spirit by doing things that are contrary to His Holy nature. What does it mean to be sealed for the “day of redemption”? Each believer is “sealed” at the instant that he or she asks Jesus Christ into his or her heart, thus allowing the Holy Spirit to take up residence within their bodies, sealing their redemption into Heaven on resurrection-day.

“*Grief*” is an emotion and emotions cannot be experienced by a “*force*”. The Holy Spirit feels the emotion of “*grief*” when believers sin as described earlier in the following earlier verses of the same chapter of Ephesians:

<u>Type of Sin</u>	<u>Scripture Verse</u>
Lying	Ephesians 4:25
Anger	Ephesians 4:26
Laziness	Ephesians 4:28
Speaking Corrupt Words	Ephesians 4:29

The Holy Spirit Has A Will.

1 Corinthians 12:11 - “But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He ‘*wills*’” - The Holy Spirit makes a sovereign choice regarding what spiritual gifts each respective Christian receives. A “*force*” does not have such a “*will*”.

Acts 16:6 - “And now when they had gone through Phrygia and the region of Galatia, they were ‘*forbidden*’ by the Holy Spirit to preach the Word in Asia.” In this verse, the Holy Spirit is boldly exercising His “*will*” to the Apostle, Paul.

In addition to mind, emotions and will, the Holy Spirit possesses the following other attributes that an “*active force*” cannot possess:

<u>Additional Attribute</u>	Scripture Verse
Teaches Believers	John 14:26
Testifies of Christ	John 15:26
Issues Commands	Acts 8:29
Commissions People	Acts 13:4
Guides Believers	Romans 8:14
Intercedes for Us	Romans 8:26
Moves People to Speak	2 Peter 1:21

Clearly the Holy Spirit does things that only a “*person*” can do!

For those who have not been fully persuaded by the above arguments, the words spoken about the Holy Spirit by Jesus in Matthew 12:32 should clarify this issue: “Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him: but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the age to come.” The Holy Spirit is not an “*active force*” like electricity or a radar beam but rather the third Person of the Trinity that can be blasphemed with disastrous repercussions.

Finally, the Jehovah’s Witnesses list the following Greek scholars as their Greek-word-interpretors for their Bible translations:

F.F Bruce	R. C. Trench
J. N. Darby	M. R. Vincent
A. T. Robertson	W. E. Vine
J. H. Thayer	R. Young

Ron Rhodes in “Reasoning From The Scriptures With The Jehovah’s Witnesses” say that all of the above listed Greek scholars disagree with the “*active force*” concept presented here and believe that the Holy Spirit is a “*Person*”. Mr. Rhodes says that “the Watchtower Society is utterly deceptive in citing such individuals in support of their view.”

CHAPTER 5 - (Section-2)
The Holy Spirit is not a person (CLAIM NO. 1)

Acts 2:4 (KJV) - And they were all *“filled”* with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

The New World Translation renders this verse: “And they all became *‘filled’* with the Holy Spirit and started to speak in other tongues, just as the spirit was granting them to make utterance.” The Jehovah’s Witnesses argue that because the Holy Spirit was *“poured out”* to *“fill”* 120 disciples at the same time, that the Holy Spirit cannot be a *“person”*.

CHRISTIAN RESPONSE:

Reading this Scripture verse independent of all other Scripture verses could pose a problem as to how a *“Person”* (Holy Spirit) could be *“poured out”* to fill 120 people at the same time. The following three Scripture verses should help to clarify the Christian’s response to the Jehovah Witnesses’ interpretation of Acts 2:4:

Ephesians 3:19 - “to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge: that you may be *‘filled’* with all of the *‘fullness of God’*”.

Ephesians 4:10 - “He who descended is also the One who ascended far above all of the Heavens, that He might *‘fill’* all things.”

Ephesians 1: 23 - “Which is His body, the *‘fullness’* of Him who *‘fills’* us all.”

Ephesians 3:19 speaks of people being *“filled”* with God, Himself. Ephesians 4:10 and Ephesians 1:23 speak of Christ *“filling”* all things and all people. If God and Jesus Christ, who are *“Persons”*, can *“fill”* things and people with Themselves, then why is it so hard for one to believe that the Holy Spirit, who also has this attribute of being able to *“fill”* people, is also a *“Person”*?

Surely, we must now agree that the Bible clearly teaches that God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit, as *“Persons”*, all have the ability to *“fill”*, but do we truly understand what it means to be *“filled”*? The Matthew Henry Commentary analyzes the phrase, “and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit” in Acts 2:4, as meaning that “they were filled with the graces of the Spirit and were even more than ever under the Holy Spirit’s sanctifying influences. They were more filled with the comforts of the Spirit, rejoiced more than ever in the love of Christ and the hope of Heaven. They were also filled with the gifts of the Holy Spirit. They were endued with the miraculous powers for the furtherance of the Gospel.”

At the exact moment when an individual accepts Jesus Christ as his Lord and Savior, he is instantly *“filled”* with the Holy Spirit in the same manner as Jesus’ followers were *“filled”* on the day of Pentecost as described in Acts 2:4. How important is it for us to be *“filled”* with the Holy Spirit? 1 Corinthians 12:3 says “and no one can say that Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit.”. The gift or gifts given to Christians may not include the Gift of Tongues, but for the first time in that individual’s life, that gift or gifts will allow that person to Spiritually grow, giving him the ability to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Can an *“active force”* give such gifts? To call the Holy Spirit an *“active force”* is to insult the third *“Person”* of the Trinity!

CHAPTER 5 - (Section-3)
The Holy Spirit is not a person (CLAIM NO. 2)

1 John 5:8 (KJV) - And there are three that bear witness (that Jesus is the Son of God) on earth: the *“Spirit”*, the *“water”* and the *“blood”*; and these three agree as one.

The New World Translation renders this verse: “For these are three witness bearers, the spirit and the water and the blood and the three are in agreement.” The Jehovah’s Witnesses argue that “since *‘water’* and *‘blood’* are obviously not persons, then neither is the Holy Spirit a person”.

CHRISTIAN RESPONSE:

This is just another example of insufficient investigation and faulty reasoning by the leaders of the Jehovah’s Witnesses incorrectly focusing on the intent of this scripture. The words in 1 John 5:8 were proclaimed because a false teacher named Cerinthus set forth the heretical idea, after Christ’s resurrection, that a “spiritual” Christ came upon the human Jesus at His baptism but departed before His crucifixion. 1 John 5:8 was written by the apostle John to refute this idea. The word *“water”* in this verse is a reference to Jesus’ baptism and the word *“blood”* is a reference to Jesus’ crucifixion. The words *“water”* and *“blood”* in this verse act as metaphorical witnesses to the fact that Christ experienced both the baptism and the crucifixion. The Holy Spirit is the third witness testifying to this fact.

The mention of these three witnesses reflects the requirements of Jewish law. You will remember that the Bible says in Deuteronomy 19:18: “One witness shall not rise against a man concerning any iniquity or any sin that he commits: By the mouth of two or three witnesses the matter shall be established.” In this instance three witnesses are establishing this matter to be true.

There are many times in the Bible where Jesus, like the Holy Spirit, was associated with impersonal items. The following are examples of this fact:

ASSOCIATED ITEM	SCRIPTURE VERSE
Bread	John 6:25
A Door	John 10:7
A Light	John 8:12
A Stone	1 Corinthians 10:4
The Truth	1 Peter 2:4-8
The Vine	John 15:1
The Way	John 14:6
The Word	John 1:1

Clearly, Jesus’ personality is not canceled out simply because He is associated with impersonal items. In like manner, there is no reason to interpret that the Holy Spirit is impersonal because He is associated with impersonal items such as *“water”* and *“blood”*.

The focus on this Scripture should be that “Jesus is the Son of God” not on the personalities of the three witnesses attesting to that fact.

CHAPTER 5 - (Section-4) The Holy Spirit doesn't even have a name!

Matthew 28:19 (KJV) - Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the “*name*” of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

The Jehovah's Witnesses claim that this Scripture points out that the Holy Spirit, unlike the Father and the Son, cannot be referred to as a person since the Holy Spirit doesn't even have a personal name! They claim that “if the Holy Spirit was truly a *‘person’*, it would have a name just as the Son and Father have”. They argue that that the Greek word “onoma” used for the word “*name*” in this verse does not always refer to a personal name. They back up their argument by saying that when one says “in the *‘name’* of the law”, the word “*name*” does not refer to a person. Using this reasoning, the Jehovah's Witnesses state that in this verse, the word “*name*” is better interpreted as “*power*” or “*authority*” thus refuting the personhood of the Holy Spirit.

CHRISTIAN RESPONSE:

It needs to be pointed out to the Jehovah's Witnesses that many of the spiritual beings in the Bible are not named. In fact, the Greek word “pneuma” used to identify the Holy Spirit is also used to identify most of these other unnamed spiritual beings. More often than not, these other unnamed spiritual beings are identified by their particular character such as “unclean”, “possessed”, etc. The following are three examples of this type of spiritual identity:

Matthew 8:16 - When evening had come, they brought to Him(Jesus) many who were “*demon possessed*”. And He cast out the “*spirits*” with a word, and healed all who were sick.

Luke 4:33 - Now in the synagogue there was a man who had a spirit of an “*unclean*” demon. And he cried out with a loud voice.

Acts 8:7 - For “*unclean*” spirits, crying with a loud voice, came out of many who were “*possessed*”; and many who were paralyzed and lame were healed.

It should be noted here that the Holy Spirit is also identified by His character, which is “*Holiness*”. The Greek word “pnuuma” is used over and over again in the Bible to identify unnamed spiritual beings. Therefore, to say that the Holy Spirit is not a person simply because a name is not assigned to Him is clearly fallacious reasoning.

Now note what the Matthew 28:19 Scripture verse does not say. It does not say in the “*names*” of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. The Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit are each identified as having the same identical name, and that name is God Almighty! The purpose of this Scripture is not to depersonalize the Holy Spirit but rather to demonstrate that the baptizing of these new disciples is to be done by the authority of Heaven and not of man. Furthermore, this Scripture points out that this authority is given by the three Persons of the “*single*” Godhead.

The Jehovah's Witnesses are telling the truth in saying that the Greek word “onoma” does not always refer to a personal name. Ron Rhodes in his book, “*Reasoning From The Scriptures With The Jehovah's Witnesses*”, says that of the 232 times this word is used in the New Testament,

228 of them refer to persons. The four exceptions are Mark 14:32, Luke 1:26, Acts 28:7 and Rev 3:12. Since the word “onoma” in the New Testament almost always refers to a person and since this same word in Matthew 28:19 is used in conjunction with the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, it seems indisputable that the Holy Spirit is, indeed, a person, just as the Father and the Son are persons.

CHAPTER 5 Summary

The following table summarizes the Scripture verses studied in this Chapter in order to counter the Jehovah Witnesses' claim that the Holy Spirit is neither a person nor God but rather an “**active force**” that God uses to accomplish His Holy will.

<u>Christian Concept</u>	<u>Scripture Verse</u>
Unlike a “ force ”, the Holy Spirit has a mind, emotions and a will.	1 Corinthians 2:10,11 Ephesians 4:30 1 Corinthians 12:11 Acts 16:6
Unlike a “ force ”, the Holy Spirit teaches believers, testifies of Christ, commissions people, issues commands, guides believers, intercedes for people and moves people to speak.	John 14:26 John 15:26 Acts 8:29 Acts 13:4 Romans 8:14 Romans 8:26 2 Peter 1:21
Like Jesus and the Father, the Holy Spirit has the ability to fill all people and all things with the graces, influences, comforts, love and the gifts from the Spirit of God.	Ephesians 1:23 Ephesians 3:19 Ephesians 4:10
The Holy Spirit is a “ Person ” like Christ, even though He is sometimes associated with impersonal items.	John 1:1 John 14:6 John 6:25 John 15:1 John 8:12 1 Corinthians 10:4 John 10:7 1 Peter 2:4-8
The Holy Spirit, although not having a name like Jesus and the Father, is known by His Character, “ Holiness ”.	Matthew 12:32 Matthew 28:19

Question No. 6: As a result of the investigation of the above listed Scripture verses, shouldn't the Jehovah's Witnesses stop insulting the Holy Spirit by calling Him an it?

CHAPTER 6
The Concept of the Trinity is an Unbiblical, Blaspheous Teaching

The Jehovah's Witnesses use the following Scriptures in their efforts to prove that the concept of the Trinity is unbiblical and is a blasphemous teaching:

<u>Scripture</u>	<u>Jehovah Witnesses' Interpretation</u>	<u>Section</u>	<u>Page</u>
1 Corinthians 14:33	The Doctrine of the Trinity is incomprehensible, unreasonable and unbiblical.	1	41
Matthew 28:19	The Doctrine of the Trinity is imposed on Scripture rather than being derived from it.	2	44
John 17:3	The Doctrine of the Trinity is a false doctrine.	3	46
Revelation 1:8 Revelation 1:11 Revelation 21:6 Revelation 22:13	God is the Alpha and Omega, but Jesus is not.	4	48

CHAPTER 6 - (Section-1)

The Doctrine of the Trinity is incomprehensible, unreasonable and unbiblical

1 Corinthians 14:33 (KJV) For God is not the Author of confusion, but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.

The New World Translation renders the first clause in 1 Corinthians 14:33: “God is a God, not of disorder but of peace.” The Jehovah’s Witnesses say that because God is not a God of disorder or of confusion, the doctrine of the Trinity cannot possibly be true.

To get an overview as to how the Jehovah’s Witnesses detest the doctrine of the Trinity , one needs to read the following quotes from various Jehovah Witnesses’ publications:

- “If people were to read the Bible from cover to cover without any preconceived idea of a Trinity, would they arrive at such a concept? Not at all!”
- “It is strange that this complicated, confusing doctrine received no attention by Christ Jesus, by way of explanation or teaching.”
- “One of the most mysterious things is the question, who ran the universe during the three days that Jesus was dead and in the grave? If Jesus was God, then during Jesus’ death, God was dead and in the grave. What a wonderful opportunity for Satan to take complete control! If Jesus was the immortal God, He could not have died!”
- “The idea that the Father is God, the Son is God and the Holy Spirit is God, along with the parallel idea that there is just one God, is incomprehensible and unreasonable.”
- “The word Trinity is not even in the Bible. It is a concept that is read into the Bible rather than derived from the Bible.”
- “The doctrine of three Gods in one God is one of the dark mysteries by which Satan, through the Papacy, has beclouded the word and character of the plan of God.”
- “Sincere persons who want to know the true God and serve him, find it a bit difficult to love and worship a complicated, freakish-looking, three-headed God.”
- “Never was there a more deceptive doctrine advanced than that of the Trinity.”
- “The concept of the Trinity was adopted by the Church some 300 years after Christ died.”
- “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 contradicts what God says about Himself in His own inspired word.”

CHRISTIAN RESPONSE:

What is the “Trinity” to a Christian? The “Trinity” is defined as “One God in three coequal Persons; the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit”. The fact that the word “Trinity” is not found in the Bible does not mean that the Trinity “*doctrine*” is not found in the Bible. It should be pointed out that in addition to the word “Trinity” not being found in the Bible, the word “Jehovah”, used by Christians and Jehovah’s Witnesses alike, does not appear in any of the original Hebrew or Greek manuscripts of the Bible.

The question arises as to when and how the word “Jehovah” was introduced to the present day Bible Scriptures. The original Hebrew text of the Old Testament was written without vowels with the name of God represented by the consonants YHWH. Only the temple priests were permitted to pronounce God’s name from these four consonants. The word “Yahweh” was originally formed in the sixth and seventh centuries AD, by Jewish scribes who joined the consonants “YHWH” with the vowels from the word “Adhonai” (Lord). Unfortunately, from this time on, the actual pronunciation of YHWH was practically lost. The word “Jehovah” did not appear until the sixteenth century and although the name of “Jehovah” has now been hallowed by centuries of use, it is felt that this particular name bears little resemblance to the original YHWH pronunciation. It should be noted here that most Bible scholars agree that the true pronunciation of the name of God should be “Yahweh” or “Jahweh”. Even Webster’s Dictionary identifies the word “Jehovah” as a “false reading of Hebrew”. If one is to argue that the doctrine of the Trinity is unbiblical simply on the basis that the word “Trinity” does not appear in the original Hebrew and Greek manuscripts of the Bible, then by that same logic, the use of the Holy name of “Jehovah” must also be considered as unbiblical.

Just because one is unable to fully comprehend a Biblical doctrine does not mean that it is false. For humans to be able to understand everything about God, they would have to have the very mind of God, something that is beyond one’s human capability. The following three Bible verses demonstrate that human beings cannot possibly understand everything about God or His ways:

Romans 11:33 - Oh the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out!

Isaiah 55:9 - For as the Heavens are higher than the Earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.

1 Corinthians 13:12 - For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face, now I know in part, then I shall know just as I am known.

Such verses make it clear that human reasoning has its limitations. Consider two other examples, “time” and “space”. Can any one of us conceive in our finite minds that God has never not existed in time? Can any one of us conceive in our finite minds that there is no beginning or end to space? Like time and space, the complexities of God cannot be fully comprehended. One should not put limitations or reject concepts and doctrines simply because one lacks the mental capacity to thoroughly understand them.

Now with the overview and the rebutting Scriptures behind us, let’s look at 1 Corinthians 14:33 in its proper context. When the apostle Paul said “For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace” he was not talking about the three Persons of the Trinity, but rather the Church’s proper

use of Spiritual gifts, namely the speaking in tongues and the giving of prophecies-all at the same time. In order to eliminate the confusion that this was causing in the Church, he established the following rules with regard to the proper use of these Spiritual gifts:

1. Only one person at a time can speak in tongues.
2. Only two or three persons are allowed to speak in tongues in the same Church service.
3. There must be an interpreter present at all Church services to interpret what is being spoken in tongues.
4. If there is no interpreter present, then the person preparing to speak in tongues must remain quiet.

Since God is a God of peace and not a God of confusion, the true meaning of 1 Corinthians 14:33 is to instruct the Church to strive to imitate God by seeking peace and avoiding disharmony in all of its services. Clearly, the Jehovah's Witnesses cannot use this Scripture verse to support their claim that the doctrine of the Trinity is an unbiblical, blasphemous teaching.

CHAPTER 6 - (Section-2)
The Doctrine of the Trinity is imposed on Scripture
rather than being derived from it

Matthew 28:19 (KJV) Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

The Jehovah's Witnesses say that Trinitarians are reading something into this Scripture verse that is not there. Baptizing disciples in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, does not make each of them equal in substance, power or eternity, nor does it make the Father Son and Holy Spirit "one". They claim that the doctrine of the Trinity is imposed upon this text rather than being derived from it.

CHRISTIAN RESPONSE:

Notice three things that the last 15 words of this Scripture verse does not say:

1. "into the '*names*'(plural)of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (three separate beings)
2. "'*into the name*' of the Father and '*into the name*' of the Son and '*into the name*' of the Holy Spirit" (three separate beings)
3. "into the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit"(omitting the three recurring articles, "*the*", indicating one person with three designations)

The last 15 words of this Scripture verse needs to be read again to show what it does say: "into the name (singular)of '*the*' Father and of '*the*' Son and of '*the*' Holy Spirit". This clause asserts the unity of the three by combining them within the bounds of a single name and then throwing emphasis on the distinctness of each of them by introducing them in turn with the repeated article "*the*". It is critical to note here that the Greek word "onoma" used for the word "name" in this verse is singular, thus indicating that there is "one God, but three distinct Persons in the Godhead.

The following four Scripture verses in the Old Testament also indicate the three-in-oneness of the Godhead:

Genesis 1:26 - Then God said, "let "*Us*" make man in "*Our*" image, according to "*Our*" likeness

Genesis 3:22 - Then the Lord God said' "Behold, the man (Adam) has become like one of '*Us*'---
"

Genesis 11:7 - Come let "*Us*" go down and there confuse their language, that they may not understand one another's speech.

Isaiah 6:8 - Also I(Isaiah) heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send. And who will go for "*Us*"?"

Additional Scripture verses verify that the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are each a part of the Trinity due to the fact that each of them possess the following attributes of Deity:

<u>Attribute</u>	<u>Scripture Verse</u>		
	Father	Son	Holy Spirit
Omnipresence (Everywhere Present)	1 Kings 8:27	Matthew 28:20	Psalms 139:7

<u>Attribute</u>	<u>Scripture Verse</u>		
	Father	Son	Holy Spirit
Omniscience (All Knowing)	Psalms 147:5	John 16:30	1 Corinthians 2:10
Omnipotence (All Powerful)	Psalms 135:6	Matthew 28:18	Romans 15:19
Holiness	Revelation 15:4	Acts 3:14	Romans 1:4
Eternal	Psalms 90:2	Micah 5:2 John 1:2 Revelation 1:8	Hebrews 9:14
Truth	John 7:28	Revelation 3:7	1 John 5:6
Lordship	Genesis 17:1 Zechariah 4:6	Luke 2:11 Romans 10:12 Revelation 1:8	1 Corinthians 3:17

As first mentioned in Chapter 6, the original purpose of Matthew 28:19 was to demonstrate that the baptizing of these new disciples was to be done by the authority of Heaven and not of man. Isn't it ironic that the very Scripture verse that the Jehovah's Witnesses cite that does not prove the Trinity, upon investigation, helps to prove the Trinity?

After the exhaustive investigation of the above listed Scripture verses, How can any person truthfully defend the position that the doctrine of the Trinity is imposed rather than being derived from the words contained in Matthew 28:19?

CHAPTER 6 - (Section-3) The Doctrine of the Trinity is a false doctrine

John 17:3 (KJV) (Jesus praying to the Father for His Disciples) And this is eternal life, that they may know You, “*the only true God*”, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.

The Jehovah’s Witnesses claim, that in this verse, that Jesus is clearly distinguishing Himself from God, by calling the Father “*the only true God*”. “The Father cannot be the only true God if there are two others who are Gods to the same degree as He is.” The Watchtower Publication, *Should You Believe in the Trinity?*, tells us that “time and time again, Jesus showed that He was a creature separate from God and that He, Jesus, had a God above Him, a God whom He worshipped, a God whom He called Father. In this prayer to the Father, Jesus said, You, ‘*the only true God*’. Indeed, since Jesus had a God, His Father, ‘*He*’ could not at the same time ‘*be*’ that God.” Clearly the words in John 17:3 prove that the Doctrine of the Trinity is a false doctrine.

CHRISTIAN RESPONSE:

John 1:1 - In the beginning was “*the Word*” and “*the Word*” was with God and “*the Word was God*”. - “*The Word*” is an idiom, peculiar to the Apostle John’s writings, meaning “*Jesus the Christ*”. Now Let’s reread John 1:1 substituting the words, “*Jesus Christ*” for the words “*the Word*”. In the beginning was “*Jesus Christ*” and “*Jesus Christ*” was with God, and “*Jesus Christ was God*”. *The Living Bible* translates John 1:1 this way: BEFORE ANYTHING ELSE existed there was Christ, with God. He has always been alive and is Himself God. Note that *The Living Bible* used all capital letters in the first three words of this verse to emphasize Jesus’ eternal existence.

John 1:1 clearly demonstrates that Jesus is God, but we need to ask whether or not Jesus is a true God or a false god. Jesus cannot be a false god since that would mean that the Apostle John, who was inspired by God to write the fourth Gospel, was falsely honoring Jesus as God. Therefore Jesus must be a true God! Now the Jehovah’s Witnesses have a problem. If the Father is a true God and if Jesus is a true God, then only one of the two following statements can be true:

1. There is more than one true God (Polytheism).
2. Since John 17:3 says that the Father is the only true God, and John 1:1 demonstrates that Jesus is a true God, then the Father and Jesus (and the Holy Spirit) must collectively be the only true God (one God in three Persons).

John 8:58 - Jesus said to them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, ‘*I AM*’.” - Here Jesus speaks of Abraham as a created being and Himself as the creator. Note that in this verse, Jesus does not say the words, “*I WAS*” but instead the words, “*I Am*”, indicating that He has always existed.

The Jehovah’s Witnesses would immediately argue that Jesus, in John 8:58, was not equating Himself with God but was rather “*in union*” with God. One can put a stop to that argument by just reading ahead one verse in John 8:59 - Then they (the Jews) took up stones to throw at Him

(Jesus) ... The Jews clearly understood that Jesus was claiming to **“be God”**, not just **“in union”** with God”, and immediately picked up stones to put Jesus to death because of this outrageous claim. The Jehovah’s Witnesses acknowledge that Jesus was a sinless man on this earth for 33 years. Could a man who falsely equated Himself with God be a sinless man?

Exodus 3:14 - And God said to Moses, **“I AM WHO I AM.”** And He said, ”Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, **“ ‘I AM’** has sent me to you.”

If Jesus is the **“I AM”**, as John 8:58 says, and if God is the **“I AM”** as Exodus 3:14 says, then only one of the following statements can be true:

1. There are two **“I AMs”** (Polytheism).
2. Since John 8:58 says that Jesus is the **“I AM”** and Exodus 3:14 says that God is the **“I AM”**, and since John 17:3 says that there is **“only one true God”**, then the Father and Jesus (and the Holy Spirit) must collectively be the only true God (One God in three Persons).

Now lets look at the real meaning of John 17:3. The following two things should stand out in this Scripture verse:

1. Eternal life lies in the reverential knowledge of God **and** Jesus Christ! If Adam and Eve had not sinned, and if mankind had continued to be sinless, the knowledge of God alone would have been sufficient for eternal life. But now because man had fallen, there had to be something more. That “something more” was Jesus Christ, God’s only Son, who was sent by God to act in mankind’s behalf. Jesus, knowing that man as a sinner was separated from God, was about to sacrifice Himself, not only for Adam’s sin but for our sins as well, in order to bring us back to God.
2. The Father is the **“only one true God”** as opposed to all other false gods and idols that were being worshipped at that time. The following Scripture verses address how the Bible warns us against the worshipping of false gods and idols:

<u>Scripture Verse</u>	<u>Idols/False Gods</u>	<u>Warning</u>
Exodus 20:3	False gods	Worship no other gods
Deuteronomy 5:7	False gods	Worship no other gods
Deuteronomy 8:19	False gods	Worship no other gods
Deuteronomy 18:20	False gods	Prophets not to give messages from false gods
1 Corinthians 8:4&7	Idols	Don’t sacrifice food to idols
1 Thessalonians 1:9	Idols	Turn from idols
1 John 5:21	Idols	Keep away from idols

The study of the above Scripture verses make it clear that John 17:3 does not disprove Jesus’ deity in any way and most certainly does not prove that the Trinity is a false doctrine.

CHAPTER 6 - (Section-4)
God is the Alpha and the Omega, but Jesus is not

Revelation 1:8 (KJV) - "I am *'the Alpha and the Omega'*, the Beginning and the End", says the Lord...

Revelation 1:11 (KJV) - Saying, "I am *'the Alpha and the Omega'*, the First and the Last"...

Revelation 21:6 (KJV) -"I am *'the Alpha and the Omega'*, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last."

Revelation 22:13 (KJV) - "I am *'the Alpha and the Omega'*, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last."

The Jehovah's Witnesses claim, that the words "*the Alpha and the Omega*" in Revelation 1:8, Revelation 21:6 and Revelation 22:13 refer to God only, and although Revelation 1:11 speaks of Jesus Christ, the words "*the Alpha and the Omega*" in Revelation 1:11 do not even appear in earlier Bible translations. The Jehovah's Witnesses say that Jesus Christ is never referred to in Revelation as "*the Alpha and the Omega*" and therefore these Scripture verses should never be used to claim that Jesus Christ is God and is a part of a Trinity.

CHRISTIAN RESPONSE:

The Jehovah's Witnesses acknowledge that the words being spoken in Revelation 1:11 are by Jesus Christ, but by eliminating the words, "*Alpha and Omega*" in Revelation 1:11 and by saying that all other references to the words, "*Alpha and Omega*", in the book of Revelation are interpreted to refer to God the Father but not Jesus Christ, the Jehovah's Witnesses do not have to admit to the fact that Jesus Christ is also God and is a part of a Trinity.

Although the words in Revelation 1:8 in the *Kings James Version* are printed in red, indicating that they are the words of Jesus, a thorough reading of Revelation 1:4 through Revelation 1:8 lends one to agree with the Jehovah Witnesses' claim that the words "*Alpha and Omega*" in this Scripture verse refers to God the Father. Note that the *Matthew Henry Commentary* and *The Living Bible* both agree with this interpretation. Let's concede this point, the "*Alpha and Omega*" in Revelation 1:8 is God the Father. Upon further study of Revelation 21:6, it appears that words "*Alpha and Omega*" are again referring to God the Father.

Now Let's debate who the "*Alpha and Omega*" is in Revelation 22:13. Revelation 1:7 says "Behold, *He (Jesus) is coming* with the clouds, and every eye will see Him. And all of the tribes of the earth shall mourn because of Him. The Person saying I am the "*Alpha and the Omega*" in Revelation 22:13 is identified in verse 12 as saying, "*I am coming* quickly." That person is Jesus Christ. Note that the words in Revelation 22:13 in the *King James Version* are printed in red indicating that they are the words of Jesus. Also note that the *Matthew Henry Commentary* and *The Living Bible* both agree with this interpretation. Let's not concede this verse to the Jehovah's Witnesses. The "*Alpha and Omega*" in Revelation 22:13 is Jesus Christ. Surely, the "*Alpha and the Omega*" in the Book of Revelation refers to both God the Father and God the Son.

Now, using the last two of the four above listed Scripture verses, let's shift our focus from the words "*Alpha and Omega*" to the words "*The First and the Last*", that also appear in Revelation 21:6 and Revelation 22:13, words that have not *yet* been challenged by the Jehovah's Witnesses. The following listed Scripture verses that use the words "*the First and the Last*" demonstrate what the Bible has to say about the equality of God and Jesus Christ:

<u>Scripture Verse</u>	<u>Verse Speaks of</u>	<u>Reading of the Verse</u>
Isaiah 44:6	God	I am the First and I am the Last.
Isaiah 48:12	God	I am He, I am the First; I am also the Last.
Revelation 21:6	God	I am...the First and the Last.
Revelation 2:8	Jesus Christ	...these things, says the First and the Last, who was dead, and came to life.
Revelation 22:13	Jesus Christ	I am ...the First and the Last.

Even if the Jehovah's Witnesses will not allow themselves to be convinced that Revelation 22:13 speaks of Jesus Christ, it is very clear that Revelation 2:8 cannot refer to anyone else but Jesus Christ. These last five Scripture verses demonstrate conclusively that God the Father and Jesus Christ are both referred to as "*the First and the Last*", which indicates that each of them possesses a divine nature. Isn't it ironic, that out of the very Scripture verses that the Jehovah's Witnesses cite as not proving the Trinity, comes additional proof that the Doctrine of the Trinity is indeed, biblical.

CHAPTER 6

Summary

Clearly, the Scripture verses investigated in this Chapter point out the following facts:

1. God is not a God of disorder. Mankind, because of the limitations of humanity, can not fully understand the complexities of an Almighty God.
2. God, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit each demonstrate the following attributes that only a true God can process:
 - A. Omnipresence
 - B. Omniscience
 - C. Omnipotence
 - D. Holiness
 - E. Eternal
 - F. Truth
 - G. Lordship
3. Even though some of the Scripture verses supporting the Doctrine of the Trinity are being challenged due to disagreements in translation and interpretation, there is an abundance of proof in these same Scripture verses and other supporting Scripture verses to validate this Doctrine.

Question No. 7: How can the Jehovah's Witnesses continue to call the Trinity an unbiblical, blasphemous teaching after finding out that the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit each are everywhere present, all knowing, all powerful, holy, eternal, truth and Lord?

CHAPTER 7

Christ Died on a Stake, Not a Cross

Philippians 2:8 (KJV) - And being found in appearance as a man, He (Jesus) became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the “*cross*”.

Exodus 20:4,5 (KJV) - Verse 4- (God speaking) “You shall not make for yourself a ‘*carved image*’ - any likeness of ‘*anything*’ that is in Heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth;

Verse 5 - You shall ‘*not bow down nor serve them*’...”

1 Corinthians 10:14 (KJV) - (Paul speaking) “Therefore, my beloved, ‘*flee from idolatry*’.”

The Jehovah’s Witnesses argue that the Greek word for “*cross*” in Philippians 2:8 means “*upright stake*” or “*pale*” proving that Jesus was not crucified on a “*cross*” but on an “*upright stake*”. They state that Exodus 20:4,5 forbids the wearing of a “*cross*” because it is a “*carved image*” and as such is idolatrous. They further state that 1 Corinthians 10:14 demonstrates that believers of God should flee from such idolatrous items. The Jehovah’s Witnesses say, “How would you feel if one of your dearest friends was executed on the basis of false charges? Would you make a replica of the instrument of execution? Would you cherish it, or would you rather shun it?” They say that people who display or wear “*crosses*” today dishonor God because they are practicing idolatry by “*bowing down and serving*” these “*carved images*”.

CHRISTIAN RESPONSE:

Christians should begin this discussion by informing the Jehovah’s Witnesses that their organization reversed their position concerning the cross in 1931. A sample of the written proof of this position reversal is listed as follows:

<u>Date/Year</u>	<u>Publication</u>	<u>Watchtower’s Position</u>
11/1/1891	Watchtower Magazine	Literature and picture of Jesus on the cross
1921	Watchtower Book, <i>The Harp of God</i>	Literature and picture of Jesus on the cross
1927	Watchtower Publication <i>Creation</i>	Literature and picture of Jesus on the cross
1928	Watchtower Book, <i>Reconciliation</i>	Literature and picture of Jesus on the cross
10/15/1931	Watchtower Magazine	The cross and crown symbols were removed from its cover
11/8/1972	Watchtower Publication <i>Awake!</i>	Stated, “no biblical evidence even intimates that Jesus died on a cross”

Not surprisingly, most Jehovah’s Witnesses today are unaware that this position reversal ever took place.

With this information behind us, let’s now focus on the original Greek word for “cross”. Whereas it is true that the Greek word, “*stairos*”, used in Philippians 2:8 can be translated as a upright stake, it is not limited to that one interpretation. One needs to be aware that this same Greek word can represent *any* of the following four shapes:

Plus sign or cross (+)

2. 1. Greek letter Tau (T)
3. Two diagonal beams (X)
4. Simple upright stake with no crossbeam (I)

Now let's further analyze this claim of the Jehovah's Witnesses. If Jesus had been crucified on a simple upright stake, His hands would have been nailed together with a single nail that was driven into the stake,

positioning His hands in a vertical position above His head. The following Scripture verses dispute the Jehovah Witnesses' claim that this method of crucifixion was used for Jesus:

John 20:25 - Unless I (the Apostle Thomas) see in His hands, the print of the "**nails**" and put my finger into His side, I will not believe.

John was knowledgeable as to the different methods of crucifixion and knew exactly how Jesus was crucified. If Jesus was crucified on an "**upright stake**" then why did John say that "**nails**" were used as opposed to a single "**nail**"? An embarrassing fact for the Jehovah's Witnesses is that their *New World Translation* has not yet changed "**nails**" to "**nail**" in order to back up their "**upright stake**" position.

John 21:18 - Most assuredly, I (Jesus) say unto you (Peter), when you were younger, you girded yourself and walked where you wished; but when you are old, you will "**stretch out**" your hands and another will gird you and carry you where you do not wish (referring to Peter's impending crucifixion).

How was it possible to crucify Peter on a "**upright stake**" if his hands were to be "**outstretched**"?

Matthew 27:37 - And they put up "**over His head**" the accusation written against Him: THIS IS JESUS, THE KING OF THE JEWS.

If Jesus had died on an upright stake instead of a cross, the words, "**over His head**" would have been more accurately written, "**over His hands**".

Now, what about Exodus 20:4,5? These two Scripture verses deal with the "**images**" of idols and false gods that a person bows down and worships. In these two passages, it is these "**images**" of worship and reverence that are prohibited. You will remember that the Egyptians made idols and images of false gods that resembled things in Heaven (angelic beings), on the earth (humans and animals) and in the sea (sea creatures). If we go back one verse to Exodus 20:3 (The Second Commandment), we read God's edict, "You shall have no other gods before me." God is warning us that one must be faithful to God alone! No competing deities will be tolerated! Clearly, such a prohibition has nothing to do with the symbol of the cross since Christians neither worship or revere the cross itself.

Finally, with regard to 1 Corinthians 10:14, when a true Christian displays or wears a cross on his or her clothing, they are simply acknowledging that he or she believes in the "**message**" of the cross, that message being, "**that Christ died for our sins and was raised from the dead**". The cross then represents a worshipful attitude towards Christ. For this reason, the displaying or wearing of a cross cannot be viewed as a form of idolatry.

In conclusion, the Jehovah Witnesses' position on the cross did a 180 degree reversal in 1931, an embarrassing fact for an organization that has claimed to be "God's mouthpiece" since 1884. Malachi 3:6 says, "For I (God) am the Lord, I do not change ..."

Exodus 20:3-5 and 1 Corinthians 10:14 clearly warns God's people against worshipping images of idols and false gods. If the cross is used only as a symbol for acknowledging the message of the cross and not worshipped or revered as a graven image, then the displaying or wearing of a cross cannot be viewed as a form of idolatry. While it is true that the cross reminds us that our very dearest friend (Jesus) was executed on the cross on the basis of false charges, we are soberly reminded that each one of us, because of our sinful nature, should have been nailed on that very cross instead of Jesus. Jesus Christ voluntarily experienced a horrifying death on that cross, as a perfect sacrifice for our sins, so that we, as believers, could be redeemed from our sins and spend eternity in Heaven with the Father, Jesus and the Holy Spirit.

Question No. 8: How can the Jehovah's Witnesses continue to assert that the displaying and wearing of crosses brings dishonor to God if that Cross is used as a remembrance of Christ's sacrificial death?

CHAPTER 8
**The Human Soul Ceases to Exist at Death; therefore Hell is Simply
the Common Grave for the Righteous and the Unrighteous**

The Jehovah’s Witnesses exhaustively misinterpret and alter Scripture verse after Scripture verse in their attempt to validate their belief that the human soul ceases to exist after death. The following Scripture verses are used by the Jehovah’s Witnesses as their basis for this belief:

<u>Scripture</u>	<u>Jehovah Witnesses’ Interpretation</u>	<u>Section</u>	<u>Page</u>
Genesis 2:7 Genesis 9:5 1 Peter 3:20 Joshua 11:11 Genesis 3:4	The human soul ceases to exist at death; therefore Hell is simply the common grave for the righteous and the unrighteous.	1	55
Luke 16:22-28	The story about the rich man and Lazarus is a parable without reference to any historical personage.	2	59
Luke 23:43 Psalm 146:3,4	The believing thief on the Cross is not yet in Heaven.	3	62
Matthew 25:46	There is no eternal punishment for the unrighteous.	4	64
Revelation 14:9-11 Ecclesiastes 9:5	Worshippers of the beast will not face a “ <i>fire and brimstone</i> ” Punishment.	5	68

CHAPTER 8 - (Section-1)

The human soul ceases to exist at death; therefore Hell is simply the common grave for the righteous and the unrighteous

Genesis 2:7 (KJV) - And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the *“breath”* of life, and man *“became”* a living *“soul”*.

Genesis 9:5 (KJV) - (God’s promise to Noah) “And surely your blood of your lives will I require.”

1 Peter 3:20 (KJV) - ...in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight *“souls”* were saved through water.

Joshua 11:11 (JKV) - And they (Joshua’s army) smote all of the *“souls”* that were therein, with the edge of the sword, utterly *“destroying”* them. There was not any left to breathe:...

Genesis 3:4 (KJV) - Then the serpent said to the woman (concerning the eating of the forbidden fruit) “You will not surely die.”

The Jehovah’s Witnesses do not believe that man’s soul or spirit is distinct from man’s physical body, rather they believe that man is a combination of body and *“breath”* that together form a living soul. They also believe that when a person dies, he or she is completely out of existence, incapable of experiencing pleasure or suffering. Hell simply refers to a common grave for the righteous and the unrighteous. The righteous will remain unconscious and inactive in the grave until the resurrection. The unrighteous will remain forever in the grave, with their *“Hell”* being the eternal separation from God.

The Jehovah’s Witnesses interpret the five above listed Scripture verses, as follows, in order to back up their belief:

Genesis 2:7 points out that man was not given a soul but rather *“became”* a soul when the body and the *“breath”* were combined.

Genesis 9:5 points out that Noah and his family were mortal *“living beings”* and 1 Peter 3:20 points out that Noah and his family were *“souls”* thus proving that *“souls”* are *“living beings”*.

Joshua 11:11 points out that *“souls”* can be *“destroyed”*.

Genesis 3:4 shows that after God warned Adam and Eve that disobedience would bring death, it was the liar Satan who invented the false idea that the spiritual part of man survives the death of the body. Later, of course, Adam and Eve did die, thus proving that the spiritual part of man (*“the soul”*) does not survive the death of the body.

CHRISTIAN RESPONSE:

Genesis 2:7 is simply telling us what man is, not what he is not. In other words, Genesis 2:7 affirms that man is a living being, but it does not deny in any way that man has an immaterial nature. Genesis 2:7 is more accurately interpreted in the *New King James Version* as: And the Lord formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and

man became a **“living being”**. *The Matthew Henry Commentary* analyzes Genesis 2:7 in this manner: The body of man was made by the dust of the ground, a very unlikely thing to use to make man. The same God that made the world of nothing, made man from next to nothing. The body would be a worthless, useless, loathsome carcass if it did not have a soul to animate it. Whereas the body was made of the earth, the soul came directly from God at the instant that He breathed into his nostrils the breath of life.

Now, let’s look at the word **“soul”**. While it is true that the Hebrew word for **“soul”**, **“nephesh”**, in Genesis 2:7 can be used in reference to a living being, it is not limited to that use. In order to get a better understanding, let’s see how the word nephesh is used in other Scripture verses:

2 Kings 4:27 - The man of God (Elisha) said, “Let her alone, for her **“soul”** is troubled **“within”** her:...”

Psalms 42:6 - (David speaking) “Oh my God, my **‘soul’** is in despair **‘within’** me.”

Psalms 43:5 - (David Speaking) “Why are you in despair, oh my **“soul”**? And why are you disturbed **“within”** me?”

These three Scripture verses seem to equate the **“soul”** to the **“inner man”**, **“within”** the living being.

Other Scripture verses indicate that man’s **“soul”** can experience a wide range of emotional ups and downs that take place from **“within”** the body, namely:

<u>Scripture Verse</u>	<u>Emotion</u>
Deuteronomy 28:65	Anguish
Job 30:25	Grief
Psalms 13:2	Sorrow
Genesis 42:21	Distress
Job 3:20	Bitterness
Psalms 6:3	Trouble
Psalms 86:4	Rejoicing

Still not convinced? Then let’s look at the following other Scripture verses that deal with the soul:

Matthew 10:28 - And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the **“soul”**. But rather fear Him (God) who is able to destroy both **“soul”** and body in Hell.

Here Jesus is clearly saying that it is possible to kill the body without killing the **“soul”**.

Revelation:6:9,10 - Verse 9 - When He (The Lamb) opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar, the **“souls”** of those who had been slain for the Word of God, and for the testimony which they held.

Verse 10 - And they cried with a loud voice, saying “How long, oh Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?”

Notice that verse 9 indicates that “*souls*” exist and are conscious despite the fact that they have been physically slain. How do we know that they are conscious? Verse 10 clearly indicates that “*souls*” can cry out and be spoken to.

Luke 23:46 - And when Jesus had cried out with a loud voice, He said, “Father, into your hands I command my spirit.” After saying this, He breathed His last.

Since Christ’s body was not resurrected until three days after his crucifixion, we must conclude that His spirit (“*soul*”) went directly to the Father’s presence in Heaven while His body remained in the tomb.

Acts 7:59 - And they stoned Steven as he was calling on God and saying, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.”

In this Scripture verse, it would make virtually no sense for Steven to ask Jesus to receive his spirit (“*soul*”) if it was about to cease to exist at his death.

1 Thessalonians 4:13-17 - Verse 13 - But I do not want you to be ignorant concerning those who have fallen *asleep*, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope.

Verse 14 - For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again , even so God will bring with Him those who “*sleep*” in Jesus.

Verse 15 - For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord, will by no means precede those who are “*asleep*”.

Verse 16 - For the Lord Himself will descend from Heaven with a shout with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.

Verse 17 - Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.

The term “*sleep*” in the Bible always applies to the physical body alone since in death the body takes on the appearance of one who is asleep. Nowhere in the Scriptures is it stated that the “*soul*” passes into a state of unconsciousness. To be more explicit, 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17 tells us that the spirits or “*souls*” of those who are now with Christ in glory will someday be reunited with their resurrected bodies. The following Scripture verses give additional support to the belief that the soul survives the physical death of the body:

2 Corinthians 5:8 - (Paul speaking) We are confident, yes, well pleased to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord.

1 Corinthians 15:44 - (Paul speaking) It (the body) is sown a natural body, it is raised a supernatural body.

Luke 20:38 - (Jesus’ words to the Sadducees regarding the Old Testament saints Abraham, Isaac and Jacob) “For He (God) is not the God of the dead but of the living, for all live to Him.” Jesus’ words clearly indicate that the Old Testament patriarchs such as Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are spiritually living at this present moment even though they all died physically many years ago.

Philippians 1:21-23 - Verse 21 - For me (Paul) to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

Verse 22 - But if I live on in the flesh, this will mean fruit from my labor; yet what I choose I cannot tell.

Verse 23 - For I am hard pressed between the two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better.

How could Paul refer to death as gain if death meant non existence? Gain to Paul meant having his spiritual body depart from his physical body in order to be with Christ. Note that these verses are not speaking of a future resurrection, but rather Paul is saying that at that very moment after his physical death occurs, he will be with Christ in Heaven.

Now what about Genesis 9:5 and 1 Peter 3:20? Noah and his family were living beings. That's true! Noah and his family were eight souls. That's also true! But saying that souls are living beings based only on these two isolated Scripture verses is an example of incorrect reasoning that even a Philosophy 101 student would reject.

What about Joshua 11:11? Can the "**soul**" be utterly destroyed? Whereas the Hebrew word for soul, "nephesh" is most commonly interpreted as the "**inner man**", this is another example of this word be used in reference to living beings ("**people**"). This Scripture verse is more accurately interpreted in the *New King James Version* as: And they struck all of the "**people**" who were in it with the edge of the sword utterly destroying them. There was none left breathing.-- In other words, Joshua 11:11 demonstrates that physical bodies can be utterly destroyed but the Scripture verses studied in conjunction with Genesis 2:7 demonstrate that "**souls**" survive the physical death of their bodies, even the bodies that are utterly destroyed.

Finally, let's look at what Genesis 3:4 teaches us. When he said the words, "**you will not surely die**", Satan was doing to Eve what he does to each of us everyday. He tries to make us doubt what God has clearly instructed us to do. Satan teaches men and women first to doubt and then to deny. He first makes them skeptics concerning small items and so by degrees attempts to make them atheists or cultists. Simply put, Satan's purpose for Adam and Eve and all mankind, is to deceive each one of us to our own ruin. Satan managed to deceive Adam and Eve then, and is attempting to deceive Christian believers through the false teaching of the Jehovah's Witnesses now.

In summary, the Scripture verses studied in this section of this Chapter clearly demonstrate the following points:

1. Man is made up of two parts, a physical body, made of the earth, and a spiritual body ("**soul**") that comes directly from God.
2. The spiritual body ("**soul**") lives "**within**" the physical body.
3. The spiritual bodies ("**souls**") of the righteous and the unrighteous remain forever alive and conscious after their physical bodies die.

Clearly, the Scripture verses studied in this section of this Chapter alert us that the spiritual part of man survives the death of the physical body and the four additional sections within this Chapter will demonstrate that Hell is much, much more than just a common grave for the righteous and the unrighteous.

CHAPTER 8 - (Section-2)
**The story about the rich man and Lazarus is a parable
without reference to any historic personage**

Luke 16:22-28 (KJV) - (Jesus speaking to His Disciples) Verse 22 “So it was that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham’s Bosom. The rich man also died and was buried.

Verse 23 - And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.

Verse 24 - Then he cried and said, ‘Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am tormented in this flame’.

Verse 25 - But Abraham said, ‘Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted and you are tormented.

Verse 26 - And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed. So those who want to pass from here to you cannot, nor can those from there pass to us’.

Verse 27 - Then he said, ‘I beg you therefore, father, that you would send him to my father’s house.

Verse 28 - For I have five brothers, that he might testify to them, lest they also come to this place of torment’”.

The Jehovah’s Witnesses say that the story about the rich man and Lazarus is a parable that does not refer to actual persons. They say that this teaching of Jesus is entirely symbolic and ***does not prove that man has a conscious existence after death***. If taken literally, this passage would mean that all of God’s people fit at the bosom of one man, Abraham. Also, the water on a man’s fingertip is portrayed as not being evaporated by the fire of Hades – and this single drop of water is supposed to bring relief to a suffering man. The Watchtower Society asks, “Does this sound reasonable to you?” Obviously this passage is not to be taken literally. The Society says that the rich man in this passage symbolizes the Jewish religious leaders, and Lazarus is a symbol of the Jewish followers of Jesus who were despised by the leaders. This parable is told by Jesus to demonstrate that the religious leaders who found favor while on earth, faced rejection by God after death, while the followers of Jesus who were despised here on earth came into a position of divine favor.

How about the torment that the rich man experienced? The Society says that the torment experienced by the rich man was not physical suffering but rather public exposure as to their hypocrisy by the preaching of Jesus’ apostles.

CHRISTIAN RESPONSE:

Let’s start off by saying that Luke 16: 22-28 is probably not a parable at all. What is a parable? *The Layman’s Bible Encyclopedia* defines a parable as “a short, ***fictitious*** and comparative narrative of something that might occur in real life from which a moral is pointed or a lesson taught.” Rich men and beggars were common at that time. There is no reason why Jesus might

not have had in mind a particular instance, because none of any of the individuals in Jesus' fifty three other recorded New Testament parables were named. Regardless, Luke 16:22-28 is either the only parable with a named individual, or an actual story where an individual is identified by name.

When Jesus taught people in parables and stories, He always used "*real-life*" situations that were common occurrences of that time period. The following are examples of eleven of the fifty three recorded parables told by Jesus in the New Testament:

<u>Scripture Verse</u>	<u>Real Life Situation</u>
Matthew 13:3-9	Sowing Seeds
Matthew 13:24-30	The Tares
Matthew 13:31,32	Mustard Seed
Matthew 20:1-16	Hired Laborers
Matthew 21: 28-32	The Two Sons
Matthew 25:14-30	The Talents
Luke 10:30-37	The Good Samaritan
Luke 13:6-9	The Barren Fig Tree
Luke 14:34,35	The Savor of Salt
Luke 15:11-32	The Prodigal Son
John 15:1-5	The Vine and the Branches

In keeping with *The Layman's Bible Encyclopedia's* definition, each of the eleven listed parables teach a simple, moral lesson that can be understood by everyone, especially those for which direct language might be beyond their comprehension.

Now let's review how *The Matthew Henry Commentary* interprets Luke 16:22-28. It should be noted here that this commentary refers to this teaching of Jesus as a "*description*" instead of a parable. Their interpretation begins by analyzing and isolating the main points of Jesus' teaching as follows (words are paraphrased for clarity):

1. The two main characters in this teaching are:
 - A. Lazarus, a diseased beggar who longed for scraps from the rich man's table.
 - B. The rich man, who was splendidly clothed and lived each day in mirth and luxury.
2. Both men died and were buried.
3. Both of their souls separated from their bodies and went to Hades, the unseen abode of the dead.
4. The rich man's soul went to the *Torments'* compartment of Hades, where he was in torment, weeping and wailing.
5. Lazarus' soul was carried by angels to Abraham's Bosom (The *Paradise* compartment of Hades) where he was comforted by Abraham, the father of the faithful.
6. A great chasm separated Lazarus and the rich man, a chasm so great that it was utterly impossible to go from *Paradise* to *Torments* or vice versa.
7. The rich man made the following two requests of Abraham which were denied:
 - A. Send Lazarus with a drop of water on his finger to cool the rich man's tongue.
 - B. Send Lazarus to the rich man's five brothers to warn them about this place of torment.

Now, *The Matthew Henry Commentary* extracts the main points that Jesus was demonstrating in this teaching (words are paraphrased for clarity):

1. Death is common for the rich and the poor, and the godly and ungodly.
2. God often takes the godly people out of this world, allowing the ungodly to flourish.
3. Souls exist in a state of separation from the bodies that are in the grave. Souls do not die nor do they fall asleep.
4. The soul of Lazarus was immediately carried into *Paradise*, into the presence of Abraham, after he was delivered from the burden of his flesh.
5. Being declared by God at his physical death to be godly, Lazarus instantly found himself eternally sharing and enjoying the unlimited and everlasting riches of God.
6. The soul of the rich man was instantly plucked from the pleasures of the flesh at his death, and taken into *Torments*.
7. Being declared by God at his physical death to be ungodly, the rich man instantly found himself eternally facing the judgmental misery, anguish and torture of God without any hope of mercy.
8. The rich man was denied his pathetic little request for a single drop of water on Lazarus' finger in the same manner that he denied Lazarus a single crumb from his table.
9. The rich man was also denied his request to warn his five alive brothers of their impending peril. Simply put, there are absolutely no requests granted in *Torments*, no matter how well intentioned they might be.

From these Scripture verses, the following three basic questions need to be asked concerning the evidence for conscious existence after death:

1. If the rich man was nonexistent and unconscious after his death, then why was he being tormented and why was he pleading for relief?
2. Why did the rich man beg Abraham to have Lazarus warn his five brothers about their impending peril if he believed that the worst thing that could happen to them at death would be that they would eternally cease to exist?
3. Why would the rich man, if he were eternally nonexistent and unconscious, be the least bit concerned about having his hypocrisy exposed publicly?

The Jehovah's Witnesses at this point may say that Christians are entitled to their interpretation just as the Jehovah's Witnesses are entitled to their interpretation. Let's pause and think for a moment. If Luke 16:22-28 does not refer to an actual person and is entirely symbolic, then why did Jesus choose this teaching as the only one in which He identified one of the persons with an actual name? As mentioned earlier, Jesus always used "*real-life*" situations in His parables or stories. If, at death, people simply lapse into a state of nonexistence or unconsciousness, then what is the point of Luke 16:22-28? ***If the rich man and Lazarus were not conscious after death, then Jesus was teaching something based on a falsehood, something impossible for Him to do!***

Clearly, Jesus never illustrated His teachings with a falsehood. We must conclude that Luke 16:22-28 portrays a real life situation and ***should be taken as solid evidence for conscious existence after death***. Jesus used these Scripture verses to acquaint us with, and to warn us about, the world that is to follow this world. Any other interpretation makes an absurdity of this text.

CHAPTER 8 - (Section-3) The believing thief on the Cross is not yet in Heaven

Luke 23:43 (KJV) - And Jesus said to him (the believing thief on the cross), “ *Truly I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise.*”

Psalm 146:3,4 (KJV) - (David praising God) Verse 3 - Do not put your trust in princes nor in a son of man in whom there is no help.

Verse 4 - His spirit departs to his earth; in that day his “*plans*” perish.

The Jehovah’s Witnesses say that the second comma in Luke 23:43 needs to be repositioned rendering this verse to read: And Jesus said to him, “*Truly I say to you today, you shall be with me in Paradise.*” They go on to say that since Psalm 146:3,4 is another scripture that clearly demonstrates that there is no conscious existence after death, it is obvious that Jesus did not say to the believing thief on the cross that he would be in Paradise with Him on that first Good Friday. Since there is no conscious existence after death, the believing thief on the cross is still in his grave awaiting the resurrection.

CHRISTIAN RESPONSE:

With the simple movement of just one single comma, the Jehovah’s Witnesses have changed the entire meaning of Jesus’ words in Luke 23:43. How do the Jehovah’s Witnesses justify this change in punctuation? The Jehovah’s Witnesses would immediately argue that the early Greek Bible manuscripts contained no punctuation whatsoever, and therefore the placement of the comma in this verse is subject to their interpretation. But why would the Jehovah’s Witnesses do this? The Jehovah’s Witnesses have done this in order to refute the idea that the believing thief on the cross consciously existed with Jesus in Paradise on the very same day that they were both crucified. This, of course, would validate the Christian concept that there is conscious existence after physical death. Instead, they have attempted to make it appear that the word “*today*” only referred to the day that the statement was made and not when the promise was to materialize.

How do we determine which interpretation is correct? The Greek words for, “*Truly, I say to you*”, are “*amen soi lego*”, words often spoken by Jesus as an introductory expression. It is somewhat similar to the Old Testament phrase, “Thus says the Lord”. Jesus repeatedly used this expression to introduce a truth that was very important. The following four Scripture verses are a sample of how this introductory expression was used by Jesus in each of the four Gospels:

Matthew 18:18 - *Truly I say to you*, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in Heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in Heaven.

Mark 13:30 - *Truly I say to you*, whoever says to this mountain, be removed and be cast into the sea, and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things will come to pass, he will have whatever he says.

Luke 21:32 - *Truly I say to you*, this generation will by no means pass away till all things are fulfilled.

John 13:21 - *Truly I say to you*, one of you will betray Me.

The expression, "*Truly I say to you*" appears a total of seventy-four times in the four Gospels of the *King James Version*, and like the four above Scriptures, every one of those Scripture verses has a comma after the word, "*you*". The expression, "*Truly I say to you*" also appears seventy-four times in the four Gospels

of the Jehovah Witnesses' *New World Translation*. In all but one of these seventy-four Scripture verses, the

Jehovah's Witnesses agree with the *King James Version* that a comma should be placed after the word, "*you*". Surprisingly, this expression in Luke 23:43 is the only occurrence in the *New World Translation* where a comma is not placed after the word, "*you*". Furthermore, never in any of the other seventy-three Scripture verses in which Jesus used this expression, did He add the word, "*today*". Let's pause for a minute. Would it make good sense for Jesus to say, "*Today*" I am telling this to you? What other day would He have been referring to? Also, if Jesus was informing the believing thief on the cross that his occupancy in Paradise would be delayed, shouldn't Jesus' have rephrased His promise by saying "Truly I say to you, *someday* you will be with me in Paradise? Simply put, Jesus never added the word "*today*" to this introductory expression in the seventy-three other times it was spoken. The concept of the believing thief on the cross being with Jesus in Paradise on that first Good Friday is contrary to the teachings of the Jehovah's Witnesses, hence the repositioned comma.

Why did Jesus use the word, "*today*", in this Scripture verse? We need to go back one verse, in Luke 23:42 where the believing thief on the cross made this sincere plea to Jesus - "*Lord, remember me when you come into your Kingdom.*" When the thief said these words, he supernaturally realized that he was in the very presence of the Son of God and that someday Jesus would establish His kingdom and rule over the entire world. The most important thing on the thief's mind at that moment, was to somehow be a part of that Kingdom, whenever it was established. What he did not know was when that Kingdom would be established. Jesus' reply promised him much more than he had asked for. Jesus told the believing thief that not only would he be with Him in Paradise, but that he would be with Him "*today*" ("*today*" meaning the day of Christ's Crucifixion)! Later at His Ascension, Jesus took all of the occupants, including the believing thief on the cross, from this compartment of Hades into Heaven.

But what about the words in Psalm 146:3,4? Psalm 146:3,4 is simply warning us not to put our trust in mortal beings whose "*plans*" (intentions, ambitions, promises, schemes and ideas) for the future cease to exist at death. *The Living Bible* accurately paraphrases Psalm 146:3,4 as follows: ***Don't look to men for help; their greatest leaders fail; for every man must die. His breathing stops, life ends, and in a moment all he planned for himself is ended.*** Clearly, Psalm 146:3,4 cannot be used to support the erroneous idea that there is no conscious existence after death. It is mankind's "*plans*", not his consciousness that perishes at death.

Again, the study of Luke 23:42,43 and Psalm 146:3,4 unmasks the deception of the Jehovah Witnesses' position that there is no immaterial nature (*soul*) that consciously survives the death of the physical body.

CHAPTER 8 - (Section-4) There is no eternal punishment for the unrighteous

Matthew 25: 46 (KJV) - (Jesus speaking) “And these (the unrighteous) will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”

The Jehovah Witnesses’ *New World Translation* renders this verse as: And these (the unrighteous) will depart into everlasting “*cutting off*”, but the righteous ones into everlasting life. The Jehovah’s Witnesses claim that the punishment of the unrighteous will be “*a wiping out of existence as an eternal punishment*”. The Greek words being challenged in the 25th Chapter of Matthew are “aionios” (eternal or everlasting) and “kolasis” (punishment). The Jehovah’s witnesses back up their translation by saying that the word, “kolasis”, was originally interpreted as, “*pruning*”, which justifies their use of the words, “*cutting off*”. Since the unrighteous will be forever “*cut off*” and “*wiped out*” of existence at death, there shall be no eternal punishment for them.

CHRISTIAN RESPONSE:

In order to more fully understand what is being said here, we need to reread verse 46 along with verses 33, 34 and 41 in the 25th Chapter of Matthew:

Verse 33 - “And He (Jesus) will set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.”

Verse 34 - “Then the King (Jesus) will say to those on His right hand, ‘Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.’”

Verse 41 - “Then He (Jesus) will also say to those on the left hand, ‘Depart from me, you cursed, into the *‘everlasting’* fire prepared for the Devil and his angels.’”

Verse 46 - “And these will go away into *‘everlasting’* punishment, but the righteous into *‘eternal’* life.”

In these four Scripture verses in the 25th Chapter of Matthew, Jesus is concluding His discourse to His disciples about His second coming and the end of the world. *The Matthew Henry Commentary* says that in these verses, Jesus is avowing that every living being will someday face one of the following two sentences:

1. The wicked shall go away into everlasting punishment.
2. The righteous shall go away into life eternal.

But what about the Jehovah Witnesses’ claim that instead of the wicked going into everlasting punishment, that they will go away into everlasting “*cutting off*”? While it is true that the Greek word “kolasis” was originally interpreted as meaning “*pruning*”, the following Greek scholars collectively agree that there is no justification for translating “kolasis” as meaning “*cutting off*” in Matthew 25:46. They agree that the word “kolasis” used in this Scripture verse is more accurately translated as meaning, “*punishment*”.

<u>Greek Scholar</u>	<u>Book Title</u>
William Arndt & F. Wilber Gingrich	<i>Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament</i>
Moulton & Milligan	<i>The Vocabulary of the Greek New Testament</i>
Joseph Thayer	<i>Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament</i>
Gerhard Kittel	<i>Theological Dictionary of the New Testament</i>

The Greek word “aionios” (eternal or everlasting) in Matthew 25:46, is used to describe both the length of punishment for the wicked and the length of life for the righteous. One cannot limit the duration of punishment for the wicked without at the same time limiting the duration of eternal life for the redeemed.

Also, the punishment spoken of in Matthew 25:46 cannot be defined as a non-suffering extinction of consciousness. For a person who is suffering excruciating pain, the extinction of his consciousness would actually be a blessing rather than a punishment. Punishment entails suffering. One can exist and not be punished, but one can not be punished and not exist.

Contrary to the Jehovah Witnesses’ belief, the Bible teaches us, in the following other Scripture verses, that the unrighteous will, indeed, face everlasting punishment:

<u>Scripture Verse</u>	<u>Scripture Verse Reading</u>
Matthew 10:15	(Jesus instructing His disciples) “Truly, I say to you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah <i>‘in the day of judgment’</i> than of that city.” (any city refusing to welcome the disciples that Jesus had sent)

Question: - Can anyone facing the wrath that Sodom and Gomorrah experienced, consider this severe punishment from God as simply a ***“wiping out of existence”***?

Matthew 13:41,42	(Jesus explaining to His Disciples how the Parable of <i>the tares among the wheat</i> relates to the end of this age) <u>Verse 41</u> - “The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness, <u>Verse 42</u> - and will cast them into the furnace of fire. <i>‘There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth’</i> .”
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Question: - If there is no punishment in Hell, then why is there a ***“furnace of fire”*** and why is there ***“wailing and gnashing of teeth”***?

Daniel 12:2	And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake. Some to everlasting life, some to shame and everlasting contempt.
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Question: How is it possible to awaken and show everlasting contempt to an unrighteous soul if he was forever “*wiped out of existence*” at his death?

Mark 3:29 (Jesus Speaking) But he who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is subject to eternal condemnation.

Question: - How can one eternally condemn an unrighteous soul that has eternally ceased to exist?

Now let’s look at some additional Scripture verses that deal with degrees of rewards and punishments:

Matthew 16:27 For the Son of Man (Jesus) will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will reward “*each*” according to his works.

Luke 12:47,48 Verse 47 - “And that servant who knew his master’s will, and did not prepare himself to do according to his will, will be beaten *with “many stripes”*”.

Verse 48 - But he who did not know, yet committed things deserving of stripes, shall be beaten with “*few (stripes)*”. For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required; and to whom much has been committed, of him they will ask the more.

Hebrews 10:29,30 (Generally thought to be Paul speaking) Verse 29 - Of how much “*worse punishment*” will he be thought worthy, who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of Grace?
Verse 30 - For we know Him who said. “Vengeance is Mine, I will repay, says the Lord. And again, The Lord will judge His people.”

Revelation 22:12 (Jesus speaking) “And behold, I am coming quickly, and my reward is with Me, to give to everyone ‘*according to his work*’.”

These above Scripture verses clearly demonstrate that in addition to there being varying degrees of rewards in Heaven, there will be varying degrees of punishment in Hell. There are no varying degrees of annihilation! The very fact that people will suffer varying degrees of punishment in Hell, shows that annihilation, or the extinction of consciousness, is not being taught in Matthew 25:46.

Now, on to the real meaning of Matthew 25:46. As mentioned earlier, *The Matthew Henry Commentary* says that Matthew 25:46 is the rendering of two, totally opposite, judicial sentences. The first sentence is for those who had served the Devil while they lived. As Matthew 25:41 warns, Their sentence is to face eternal punishment in the everlasting fire prepared for the very ones they had served, the Devil and his angels. Although these people, at their death, fully realize that they have missed their opportunity to accept God’s Grace, they now stand powerless in their own ability to rectify their unrighteousness, with the terrible realization that God will never again extend His Grace to them to reverse this sentence. The curse of the everlasting fire

that they are facing is the wrath of the eternal God! This fire is everlasting because God's mercy and Grace are forever excluded from them, leaving nothing to extinguish it. The second sentence is for those who had served Christ while they lived. As Matthew 25:34 declares, they shall inherit the Kingdom of Heaven. Heaven is eternal life and eternal happiness. There is no death to put a period to life itself, nor old age to put a period to the comfort of it, nor any sorrow to embitter it. Matthew 25:46 warns us that life and death, good and evil, and the blessing and the curse are set before each one of us, so that we may choose which sentence we will receive.

Contrary to the teachings of the Jehovah's Witnesses, one must conclude, after investigating the above Scripture verses, that Matthew 25:46 is one of the clearest passages in the Bible that teaches that the unrighteous will, indeed, be eternally punished.

CHAPTER 8 - (Section-5)

Worshippers of the beast will not face a “*fire and brimstone*” punishment.

Revelation 14:9-11 (KJV) Verse 9 - Then a third angel followed them (the two previous angels), saying with a loud voice, “ If any one worships the beast of his image, and receives the mark on his forehead or on his hand,

Verse 10 - he himself shall also drink of the wine of his wrath of God, which is poured out full strength into the cup of his indignation. He shall be tormented with ‘*fire and brimstone*’ in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb.

Verse 11 - And the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever: and they shall have no ‘*rest*’ day or night ...”

Ecclesiastes 9:5 (KJV) For the living know that they will die; “But the dead know nothing”, and they have no more reward, for the memory of them is forgotten.

The Jehovah’s Witnesses claim that the “*fire and brimstone*” tormenting referred to in Revelation 14:9-11, cannot refer to eternal conscious torment after death because Ecclesiastes 9:5 says that “*the dead do not know anything*”. The actual “*tormenting*” will be the “*humiliating exposure*” that the unrighteous people, living at that time, will experience because of the condemning message of the proclaiming prophets. The symbolic references to “*fire, brimstone and smoke*” indicate that the destruction of these worshippers of the beast will be eternal and will never be forgotten. The unrighteous dead, incapable of experiencing pain or pleasure, will not be eternally tormented by “*fire and brimstone*”.

CHRISTIAN RESPONSE:

You will remember that in the story about the rich man and Lazarus, studied earlier in this Chapter, that the Jehovah’s Witnesses claimed that the torment experienced by Lazarus (and all of the other unrighteous dead) was not physical suffering but rather public exposure as to their hypocrisy by the preaching of Jesus’ Apostles. When faced with these Scripture verses in Revelation 14:9-11 that seem to dispute this claim, the Jehovah’s Witnesses counter by saying that the “*fire and brimstone*” torture spoken of in these verses is not for the unrighteous dead, but rather for the unrighteous worshippers of the beast that are still living.

Let’s begin, by responding to the Jehovah Witnesses’ claim that the word “*tormented*” in the 10th verse of the 14th Chapter of Revelation means “*humiliating*” exposure”. Being tormented as a result of the humiliation of experiencing the condemning message of the proclaiming prophets is a mental type of torment. The Greek word for torment, “*basanizo*” used in this verse refers to real, genuine physical pain. Joseph Thayer’s *Greek - English Lexicon of the New Testament* interprets the Greek word *basanizo* as meaning “to vex with grievous pains”. William Arndt and F. Wilber Gingrich’s *Greek - English Lexicon of the New Testament* interprets the same word to mean “to torture”.

The following other Scripture verses use this same Greek word “*basanizo*”:

Scripture Verse

Revelation 12:2

Matthew 8:6

Torment Description

Woman crying out *with “labor pains”* in childbirth

Centurion’s Servant lying home paralyzed and “*dreadfully tormented*” by the palsy

Would anyone dare ask the pregnant woman, the diseased servant or the anguished rich man in Hades if the tormenting that they were experiencing was in reality the humiliation caused by the condemning message of the proclaiming prophets? Clearly the Greek word for torment communicates the idea of a horrendous “*physical*” torment rather than a “*mental*” humiliation.

How long will this “*physical*” torment last? Revelation 14:11 says, “And the smoke of their torment ascends *forever and ever*’...” The Greek words for “*forever and ever*”, “*eis aionas aionas*”, are more accurately interpreted as “unto the ages of the ages” which clearly emphasizes the concept of eternity.

Now, how about the words “*fire and brimstone*”? Has God previously used “*fire and brimstone*” as a method of destruction? Let’s read Genesis 19:24 - Then the Lord rained “*brimstone and fire*” on Sodom and Gomorrah from the Lord out of the heavens. Note that in verse 28, the smoke of the land, as it was being utterly destroyed, went up like the smoke of a furnace.

Are the words “*fire and brimstone*” symbolic in this verse? *Eerdman’s Handbook to the Bible* defines the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah in this manner: “A catastrophe which emptied this area of settled occupation is known from archaeology. An earthquake and explosion of gases was the probable cause, and the shallow southern waters of the Dead Sea now covers the cities. The Dead Sea is so far below sea level that it has no outlet; the water evaporates, leaving a high concentrate of salts which kills all life.”

The entire population of Sodom and Gomorrah, with the exception of Lot and his two daughters, were physically tormented and destroyed when God rained down His “*fire and brimstone*” upon these two cities. Surely, the words “*fire*”, “*brimstone*”, and “*smoke*” in Genesis 19:24 are more than just symbolic. And if the words “*fire*”, “*brimstone*” and “*smoke*” are not symbolic in Genesis 19:24&28, why should one think that they are symbolic in Revelation 14: 9-11? The people that were destroyed during the destruction of those two cities, would all vehemently agree that their torture was much, much more than a mental humiliation that they experienced as a result of their unrighteousness.

Other Scripture verses where fire was used as an instrument of physical destruction are listed as follows:

<u>Scripture Verse</u>	<u>Fire as an Instrument of Judgment</u>
Exodus 9:23	God reined fire on Egypt as one of the ten plagues.
Leviticus 10:1,2	Fire destroyed Nahab & Abihu, the sons of Aaron, who placed unholy fire in their censers.
Numbers 11:1	Fire destroyed the complainers during the Exodus.
Numbers 16:35	Fire destroyed 250 wicked men offering incense just as Moses had prophesied.
2 Kings 1:10	Fire destroyed 50 soldiers who were about to arrest Elijah.
2 Thessalonians 1:8,9	In the final judgment, Jesus will use flaming fire to take vengeance on those who do not know God and refuse to obey the Gospel.

Dueteronomy 32:22

God's anger kindles a fire that burns to the depth of the underworld.

Scripture Verse

Everlasting Fire

Isaiah 33;14

The sinners of Zion shall dwell with the devouring fire.

Mark 9:45

Hell is described as a place where the fire shall never be quenched.

Now, let's look at the 11th verse. Revelation 14:11 tells us that they (the unrighteous) shall have no rest, "***day or night***" The expression "***day or night***" is also used in the following two Scripture verses, this time, indicating the never-ending worship of God:

Revelation 4:8 - The four living creatures (lion, ox, man, and eagle), each having six wings, were full of eyes around and within. And they do not rest "***day or night***".

Revelation 7:15 - Therefore they (those arrayed in white robes) are before the throne of God, and serve Him "***day and night***" in His temple. And He who sits on the throne will dwell among them

It is clear that the expression "***day or night***" in Revelation 4:8, 7:15 and 14:11 is indicative of ceaseless activity. If the four living creatures and those arrayed in white robes will never cease to exist, then it is not unreasonable to believe that the unrighteous will also never cease to exist, even after their physical deaths? This, of course, flies in the face of the Jehovah's Witnesses who say that the unrighteous are annihilated at the moment of death and are eternally unconscious. Ask your self the question, How can a person who has been annihilated experience "***no rest***", forever?

Now, let's look at some additional Scripture verses in the Book of Revelation that deal with the "beast":

Revelation 20:4 - Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the Word of God, who had not worshipped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.

Revelation 20:5 - But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection..

Revelation 20:10 - The Devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night, forever and ever.

Revelation 20:12 - And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, which were written in the books.

Revelation 20:13 - The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works.

Revelation 20:14 - Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

Revelation 20:15 - Anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.

The 10th, 14th, and 15th verses of the 20th Chapter of Revelation declare that the Devil, the beast, the false prophet and everyone not found in the Book of Life will be cast in the lake of fire. If the Devil, the beast and the false prophet will be tormented day or night, forever and ever in the lake of fire, how can anyone argue that anyone, alive or dead, not found in the Book of Life will not also be tormented day or night, forever and ever in that same lake of fire?

Up until now, we have concentrated all of our efforts on words like *“torment”*, *“punishment”*, *“fire”*, *“brimstone”*, and *“smoke”*, all relating to the Scripture verses in Revelation 14:9-11. What about Ecclesiastes 9:5?

H. C. Leupold’s commentary on Ecclesiastes says that the writer of the 5th verse of the 14th Chapter “is only expressing the relation of the dead to this world”. Evangelical scholars, Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset and David Brown say that the dead know nothing “so far as their bodily senses and worldly affairs are concerned”. They use the following Scripture verses to back up this belief:

Scripture verse

Scripture Verse Teaching

Job 14:20-22

When a person dies, the memory of their children also dies, and they do not know whether or not their children have come to honor or dishonor.

Isaiah 63:16

Isaiah acknowledges that God is still the Father of his people even though Abraham and Jacob, their dead ancestral fathers, no longer has any knowledge of them.

All four of these Bible scholars agree that Ecclesiastes 9:5 point to the fact that the dead (righteous and unrighteous) are no longer associated with the events of the physical, earthly realm. Clearly this Scripture verse cannot be cited as proof that the unrighteous dead are eternally unconscious. Convincingly, the words in Revelation 14:9-11 emphatically point to the eternal, conscious suffering of the unrighteous dead, quite possibly by an unquenchable, eternal fire from God.

CHAPTER 8

Summary

Contrary to what the Jehovah's Witnesses believe, the Bible teaches following concerning the existence of the "*soul*" after death:

1. The word "*soul*" refers to an immortal spiritual body that is separated from the physical body at the time of death.
2. Since "*souls*" continue to exist at the time of death, they are capable of experiencing pain and pleasure. For that reason, Hell is much more than just a common grave for the righteous and the unrighteous.
3. The story about the rich man and Lazarus is a teaching from Jesus that probably portrayed a real life situation and is a teaching that should be taken as solid evidence that the spiritual part of man ("*soul*") survives the physical death of his body.
4. The "*soul*" of the believing thief on the cross has been in the presence of Jesus since that first Good Friday .
5. The unrighteous "*souls*" of the dead face eternal punishment in Hell.
6. The words "*fire*", "*brimstone*", and "*smoke*" are not just symbols indicating eternal death. Instead, they represent the method of excruciating punishment that the wicked "*souls*" will eternally face after death.

Question No. 9 : Many of the Scripture verses studied in this Chapter that speak of eternal punishment of the wicked came directly from the very lips of Jesus. If Jesus wished to teach the annihilation of the wicked dead, is it reasonable that he would have selected language guaranteed to lead people, other than the Jehovah's Witnesses, astray? The Jehovah's Witnesses must be made to face the implications of this question.

CHAPTER 9

Salvation The Watchtower's Way

The Jehovah's Witnesses often give "lip-service" to the idea of salvation by Grace through faith in Jesus Christ. In reality, they believe in a "works-oriented" salvation with total obedience to the Watchtower Society's programs. The following Scripture verses are used by the Jehovah's Witnesses as their basis for this belief:

<u>Scripture</u>	<u>Jehovah Witnesses' Interpretation</u>	<u>Section</u>	<u>Page</u>
1 Timothy 2:5,6	Jesus, a human mediator between God and man, sacrificed Himself for Adam's sin " only ".	1	74
Acts 16:30-34	Salvation is by faith " and " works.	2	77

CHAPTER 10 - (Section-1)
**Jesus, a human mediator between God and man,
sacrificed Himself for Adam's sin "Only."**

1 Timothy 2:5,6 (KJV) - Verse 5 - For there is one God and one Mediator between God and man, the Man, Christ Jesus,

Verse 6 - Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.

The Jehovah Witnesses' *New World Translation* renders these verses as: "For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, a man, Christ Jesus, who gave himself a corresponding ransom for all."

The Jehovah's Witnesses argue that because Jesus is said to mediate between God and man, it is clear that He cannot be viewed as God. After all, "since by definition, a mediator is someone separate from those who need mediation, it would be a contradiction for Jesus to be one entity with either of the two parties he is trying to reconcile." Their conclusion then, is "that Christ, as a mediator, cannot be viewed as God. How could Jesus mediate between God and man if he Himself was God?"

Regarding the "*corresponding ransom*" that Jesus paid, the Watchtower Society teaches that "the human life Jesus laid down in sacrifice was exactly equal to the human life Adam fell with". They state, "Jesus, no more and no less than a perfect human, became a ransom that compensated exactly for what Adam lost. A basic principle even of human justice is that the price paid should fit the wrong committed.

CHRISTIAN RESPONSE:

What is a mediator? A mediator is one who intervenes between two parties who are in a dispute with one another, with the purpose of effecting a reconciliation. The Jehovah's Witnesses are not arguing that 1 Timothy 2:5,6 teaches that Jesus Christ is the one and only Mediator between God and man. Their argument is that since Jesus is that Mediator, and since that Mediator must be separated from God and man, that Jesus cannot be God, Himself. Using that same faulty logic, one would also have to assume that since that Mediator must be separated from God and man, that Jesus cannot be man either. The fact is, Jesus can mediate between God and man precisely because He is both God and man. Only as man, could Christ represent humanity, and only as God the Son, could He represent God the Father.

The Jehovah Witnesses need to be made aware of an Old Testament concept of the "*Kinsman-Redeemer*". This concept referred to one who was related by blood to someone that he was seeking to redeem from bondage. Leviticus 25:47-53 is an example of this concept. These seven Scripture verses speak of a person who was sold into slavery. It was the duty of a blood relative to act as that person's "*Kinsman-Redeemer*" and buy him out of slavery. Jesus, through the incarnation, became related by blood to the human race, thus paving the way for Him to become the "*Kinsman-Redeemer*" for sin-enslaved humanity. Simply put, Jesus became a man in order to redeem mankind.

Related to Christ's role as Mediator, is Christ's role as Savior. A study of the Old Testament indicates emphatically that only God can save. Isaiah 43:11 asserts, "I (God), even I, am the Lord. And besides Me there is no Savior." There are two very important points that can be taken from this extremely important Scripture verse:

1. The claim to being the Savior is a claim to deity.
2. There is only one Savior, God!

The following New Testament Scripture verses refer to Jesus Christ as Savior:

<u>Scripture Verse</u>	<u>Scripture Reading</u>
Luke 2:1	"For there is born to you this day in the city of David a ' Savior ', who is Christ the Lord."
John 4:42	Then they said to the woman, "Now we believe, not because of what you said, for we ourselves have heard Him and we know that this is indeed the Christ, the ' Savior ' of the world."
Titus 3:6	Whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our " Savior ".

God the Savior, became a human, and this enabled Him to fulfill His role as Mediator between God and man, since He himself was both God and man.

Now what about the *New World's Translation's* argument that Jesus gave Himself as a "**corresponding ransom**"? The Greek word for ransom in 1 Timothy 2:6 is "antilutron". Thayer's *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* says that "antilutron" means "what is given in exchanged for another as the price of his redemption". The following other Scripture verses help to support this translation:

1 Corinthians 15:22 - "For as in Adam '**all**' die, even so in Christ '**all**' shall be made alive."

1 John 4:10 - "... He (God) loved us and sent His Son (Jesus) to be the propitiation (atoning sacrifice) for "**our**" sins."

1 Corinthians 15:22 and 1 John 4:10 collectively demonstrate that Jesus' death on the Cross was much more than just a "**corresponding ransom**" for Adam's sin. Jesus' died on the Cross to redeem us "**all**" from "**our**" sins in order to give us the opportunity to accept His free gift of eternal life.

1 Timothy 2:6 speaks simply of a substitution – of Christ taking our place. Saying that "antilutron" refers to a "**corresponding ransom**" is an example of over-translation and under-research by the Jehovah's Witnesses. And what about the Jehovah Witnesses' statement that "Jesus is no more and no less than a perfect human"? In reality, the Jehovah's Witnesses can give

no reason why God needed to send His Son to earth as man at all. If all that was required was a perfect human, God could have simply created one from scratch. Mark 10:45 says “For even the Son of man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many.” An all knowing God chose not to create a perfect man from scratch, but rather chose to send Jesus Christ because He knew that Jesus was the only Mediator acceptable between God and mankind. An all knowing God also knew that Jesus Christ was the only acceptable Person who could and would give His life as a ransom for many.

In summary, the Bible clearly demonstrates that Jesus Christ, who is both God and man, is the one and only Person who could act as the “*Kinsman-Redeemer*” for sin-enslaved humanity. Since Jesus is referred to as the Savior many times in the New Testament, and since the Old Testament teaches that there is no Savior other than God, then how can anyone come to any other conclusion than the fact that Jesus Christ is indeed, God Himself, and that He is the only Mediator between God and “*all*” mankind with regard to “*all*” of “*our*” transgressions against God.

CHAPTER 9 - (Section-2) Salvation is by Faith “*and*” Works

Acts 16:30-34 (KJV) Verse 30 - And he (the jailer) brought them (Paul and Silas) out and said, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?”

Verse 31 - So they said, “ ‘*Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ*’, and you will be saved, you and your household.”

Verse 32 - Then they spoke the Word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house.

Verse 33 - And he (the jailer) took them the same hour of the night and washed their stripes. And immediately he and all of his family were baptized.

Verse 34 - Now when he had brought them into his house, he set food before them; and he rejoiced, “*having believed in God*” with all his household.

Philippians 2:12 - (Paul speaking) “... ‘*work*’ out your own salvation with fear and trembling.”

The Jehovah’s Witnesses acknowledge that faith is necessary for salvation, but they always add works to this faith. Commenting on Acts 16:30-34, the Jehovah Witnesses’ *Reasoning From The Scriptures* says “if that man (the jailer) and his household truly believed, would they not ‘*act*’ in harmony with their belief? Certainly.” In other words, “faith must be demonstrated by consistent works.” The Jehovah’s Witnesses say that in Philippians 2:12, Paul found it necessary to warn even the Philippian saints that they were not to be overly confident but to realize that their salvation was not yet assured.

According to the *Watchtower* magazine, dated February 15, 1983, page 12, the Jehovah’s Witnesses must meet the following four requirement for their salvation:

1. Take in knowledge by studying the Bible with the aid of the Watchtower publications.
2. Obey the laws of God and the laws of the Watchtower Society.
3. Be baptized into the Watchtower Organization.
4. Publish the good news of the Watchtower Society from door to door.

CHRISTIAN RESPONSE:

Acts 16:30-34 represents a very strong argument for the Deity of Christ. When the jailer asked Paul and Silas how to become saved, they responded, “‘*Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ*’, and you shall be saved, you and your household (Acts 16:31).” Then after he became saved, we are told that the jailer was filled with joy because he had come to “*believe in God*” - he and his whole family (Acts 16:34). Believing in God and believing in Christ are seen in Acts 16:30-34 as identical acts!

Is believing in Christ sufficient for Salvation, or must we combine believing in Christ with good works? Let’s let the Bible answer that question. In addition to Acts 16:31, there are almost 200

instances in the New Testament where salvation is said to be by faith in Jesus Christ without any mention of good works. The following Scripture verses clearly demonstrate this fact:

<u>Scripture Verse</u>	<u>Scripture Reading</u>
John 3:15	“ That whoever believes in Him (Jesus) should not perish but have everlasting life.”
John 5:24	“Most assuredly, I say to you, He who hears My (Jesus) word and believes in Him (God) who sent Me, has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment but has passed from death into life.”
John 11:25	Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live.”
John 12:46	“I (Jesus) have come as a light into the world, that whoever believes in Me should not abide (stay) in darkness.”
John 20:31	“But these things are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing, you may have life in His name.”

Clearly, salvation is by faith in Christ alone! But what about works? The Jehovah’s Witnesses say that Jesus’ work of atonement removed the inherited sin from Adam, which paved the way for mankind to work his way towards salvation. Is the Jehovah Witnesses’ position on the necessity of works for salvation a valid one? The following Scripture verses demonstrate how the Bible settles this “Grace-alone” versus “Grace plus works” argument:

<u>Scripture Verse</u>	<u>Scripture Reading</u>
Ephesians 2:8,9	“For by Grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.”
Titus 3:5	“Not by works of righteous which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit.”
Romans 3:20	“Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.”
Galations 2:16	“Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified.”

Clearly, these last four Scripture verses demonstrate that salvation is by faith alone!

Now, what about Philippians 2:12? Does **“this”** Scripture verse teach that salvation is by faith **“and”** works? Absolutely not! If that were the case, The believing thief on the cross who, at the

last possible moment, had faith in Jesus and yet had zero good works to his credit, would not have been saved. How do we know he had zero good works? Romans 8:8 says, “So. Then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God.” By definition, a work can’t be a good work if it is not pleasing to God. The believing thief had never pleased God with a single good work because he lived his entire life in the flesh.

In Philippians 2:12, Paul is instructing each one of us to work diligently with regard to our “*own*” salvation without judging the salvation of “*others*” around us. We are to revere our gift of salvation in an extremely serious manner, constantly working at it with fear and trembling, that is, with great care and diligence with the knowledge that fear is a great guard and protector against evil. How can anyone say that works are necessary for salvation with the knowledge that we are unable to perform a single good work, acceptable to God, until the Holy Spirit empowers us at the moment of our salvation. *The Living Bible* accurately paraphrases Paul’s instructions in Philippians 2:12 as “do the good things that “*result*” from being saved, obeying God with great reverence, shrinking back from all that might displease Him.” Simply put, “*good works are the result of salvation, not the other way around!*”

When the Jehovah’s Witnesses assert that no one can ever be assured of their salvation they are going against what the rest of the Bible clearly teaches. The following Scripture verses demonstrate that this statement is true:

<u>Scripture Verse</u>	<u>Scripture Reading</u>
John 5:24	Most assuredly, I (Jesus) say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life.
John 6:37	“All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me, I will by no means cast out.”
John 10:28	“And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand.”
Romans 5:1	Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.
1 Corinthians 1:8	Who (Christ) will also confirm you to the end, that you may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.
2 Corinthians 1:22	Who (God) also has sealed us and given us the Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee.
Ephesians 1:4	Just as He (God) chose us in Him (Jesus) before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love.
Philippians 1:6	Being confident of this very thing, that He (God) who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ.

1 Thesalonians 5:23

Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

2 Timothy 4:18

And the Lord (Jesus) will deliver me from every evil work and preserve me for His Heavenly Kingdom.

1 John 2:2

And He (Jesus) Himself is the propitiation for our sins and not for our sins only, but also for the whole world.

1 John 5:12

He who has the Son, has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life.

We have merely touched upon the tip of an iceberg in dealing with the Bible passages that speak of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ alone. Suffice it to say that the entire weight of the New Testament stands against the Watchtower's fearful works-oriented view of Acts 16:30-34 and Philipians 2:12.

CHAPTER 9

Summary

Jesus Christ is the Only Mediator between God and all mankind with regard to all of our transgressions against God. Jesus, as the second Person of the Godhead, allowed Himself to be crucified on the Cross and gave Himself as a ransom for all that would believe. Nothing we can ever do will add to His eternal sacrifice. The Jehovah's Witnesses bring insult to Jesus when they say that Jesus can't be God and that His death on the Cross is insufficient for salvation.

Question No. 10: How can the Jehovah's Witnesses continue to say that Christ's death on the Cross is insufficient for salvation, knowing that His very last words on that Cross, recorded in John 19:30, were "*It is finished!*"

CHAPTER 10 Controversial Issues

This Chapter focuses upon the following three controversial issues that many Christians would argue as being secondary issues, not worthy of any in-depth investigation. Since the Jehovah's Witnesses claim that their position on these issues is the only possible position for Bible believers, it is felt that Christians need to be aware of why they believe as they do:

<u>Scripture</u>	<u>Jehovah Witnesses' Interpretation</u>	<u>Section</u>	<u>Page</u>
Genesis 9:4 Leviticus 3:17 Leviticus 7:26,27 Leviticus 17:12 Acts 15: 29	Blood Transfusions	1	83
Genesis 40:20-22 Matthew 14:6-10	Birthday Celebrations	2	86
Romans 14:5	Christmas and Easter Celebrations	3	88

CHAPTER 10 - (Section-1) **Blood Transfusions**

Genesis 9:4 (KJV) - “But you shall not eat flesh with its life, that is, its **‘blood’**.”

Leviticus 3:17 (KJV) - “This shall be a perpetual statute (ordinance / law) throughout your generations in all of your dwellings, you shall eat neither fat nor **‘blood’**.”

Leviticus 7:26 (KJV) - “Moreover, you shall not eat any **‘blood’** in any of your dwellings, whether of bird or beast.”

Leviticus 7:27 (KJV) - Whoever eats any **‘blood’**, that person shall be **“cut off”** from his people.”.

Leviticus 17:12 (KJV) - “Therefore I said to the children of Israel, no one among you shall eat **‘blood’**, nor shall any stranger who dwells among you eat **‘blood’**.”

Acts 15:29 (KJV) - “... abstain from things offered to idols, from **‘blood’** from things strangled, ...”

The Jehovah’s Witnesses say that the six Scripture verses listed above forbids blood transfusions. They argue that a blood transfusion is the same as eating blood because it is so similar to intravenous feeding. They ask, “Would the person who refused to partake of blood through the mouth be obeying God’s command if he accepted blood by transfusion?” They add that the prohibition against eating blood is based on Old and New Testament teaching and say, “Apart from what the Bible teaches on this subject, getting a blood transfusion is bad for one’s health. Blood transfusions have resulted in the spread of crippling diseases, fatal in many cases, not to speak of deaths directly caused by this medical practice.” Those who deliberately violate this command of God by having blood transfusions, are **“cut off”** from God’s people, and shunned by family and friends who are forbidden to even greet such offenders.

CHRISTIAN RESPONSE:

Let’s begin our Christian response with a comment made by former Jehovah’s Witnesses Leonard and Marjorie Chretien concerning the seriousness of the Jehovah Witnesses’ position on blood transfusions. “One man told of the heartrending decision he was forced to make between the Jehovah Witnesses’ religion and the life of his child. His baby boy was born with a serious hernia. An immediate operation was required to save the boy’s life, but that would require a blood transfusion. Since the Jehovah’s Witnesses teach that blood transfusions are against **‘God’s law’**, the heartbroken father chose to obey **‘God’s law’**, and two days later his baby died.” It is tragic to note that thousands of Jehovah’s Witnesses and their children have needlessly died because they have put their confidence in the Watchtower Society’s inconsistent and distorted interpretation of the six Scripture verses listed above.

An example of one of these inconsistencies is demonstrated in the study book, *How to Respond - Jehovah’s Witnesses*, by Herbert Kern, which states that, “A Jehovah’s Witness hemophiliac in danger of bleeding to death may take repeatedly the blood components he needs, but a Jehovah’s Witness accident victim in danger of bleeding to death must refuse the different blood components needed to survive.” In addition to this inconsistency, the Jehovah’s Witnesses have a very bad track record regarding its position on the following medical issues:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Jehovah Witnesses' Informational Source</u>	<u>Jehovah Witnesses' Position</u>
1931	<i>The Golden Age Magazine</i>	Prohibited vaccinations (vaccinations said to be a direct violation of God's covenant with Noah)
<u>Year</u>	<u>Jehovah Witnesses' Informational Source</u>	<u>Jehovah Witnesses' Position</u>
1945	Watchtower Society	Banned blood transfusions (blood transfusions permitted the previous 60 years)
1950	Watchtower Society	Lifted ban on vaccinations
1965	<i>Awake Magazine</i> (Aug. 22)	Acknowledged that vaccinations have caused a decrease in diseases
1967	<i>The Watchtower Magazine</i> (Nov. 15)	Prohibited organ transplants
1968	<i>Awake Magazine</i>	Said that organ transplants are cannibalism
1980	<i>The Watchtower Magazine</i> (Mar. 15)	Lifted ban on organ transplants (said that organ transplants are not necessarily cannibalistic)

The Watchtower Society prohibited vaccinations for almost twenty years and then reversed their position. They also banned organ transplants for thirteen years before changing their position again. One can only wonder how long it will take until the Watchtower Society changes its position on forbidding blood transfusions. It can't be too soon!

In order to back-up our allegation that the Jehovah's Witnesses are guilty of distorted interpretation, let's reread and refocus our concentration on the words of each of the six Scripture verses listed above and determine their true meaning in accordance to their surrounding verses:

Genesis 9:4 - "But you shall not eat *'flesh'* with its life, that is, its blood." (Genesis 9:2 defines the word "*'flesh'*" used in Genesis 9:4 as "every beast of the earth, every bird of the air, and all the fish of the sea".)

Leviticus 3:17 - " '*This*' shall be a perpetual statute (ordinance / law) throughout your generations in all of your dwellings, you shall eat neither fat nor blood." (In Leviticus 3:1, 3:6 & 3:7, the word "*'this*" refers to the directions for sacrificing animals such as bulls, cows, goats, sheep or lambs in which the blood was sprinkled on the altar and the fat was made an offering to God.)

Leviticus 7:26 - “Moreover, you shall not eat any blood in any of your dwellings, whether of *‘bird or beast’* ” (The *“bird or beast”* in the seventh Chapter of Leviticus refers to sacrificial offerings to God.)

Leviticus 7:27 - “Whoever eats any *‘blood’*, that person shall be cut off from his people.” (The *“blood”* .in the seventh Chapter of Leviticus refers to the blood of sacrificial offerings of animals to God.)

Leviticus 17:12 - “Therefore I said to the children of Israel, no one among you shall eat *“blood”*, nor shall any stranger who dwells among you eat blood.” (The *“blood”* spoken of in the seventeenth Chapter of Leviticus refers to the sacrificial blood of an ox, a lamb or a goat)

Acts 15:29 - “... abstain from *“things”* offered to idols, from blood from things strangled, ...” (*“Things”* in the fifteenth Chapter of Acts refer to the eating of food from animals that have been sacrificed to idols.)

After reading these Scripture verses in the context that they were offered, it becomes clear that these Scripture verses teach that only the eating of animal blood is prohibited. The transfusion of human blood is not even addressed in these Scripture verses. Truly, the provision against eating blood has no bearing upon the modern day medical practice of blood transfusions.

The question needs to be asked, *Why was it necessary to establish these dietary regulations for God’s people?* Pagan nations surrounding Israel had no respect whatsoever for blood. They ate blood on a regular basis, sometimes as a part of their worship to false gods. They even thought that the drinking of blood might bring them supernatural power. Therefore, the prohibition against eating blood was done to set Israel apart from such ungodly nations.

Now we need to ask, *Is there a difference between eating blood and receiving a blood transfusion?* The answer to this question is a resounding yes! A blood transfusion replenishes the supply of an essential, life-sustaining fluid that has otherwise drained away or become incapable of performing its vital tasks in the body. A blood transfusion is not equivalent to intravenous feeding because the blood so given does not function as food. Walter Martin in *Jehovah and the Watchtower* puts it this way, “When one gives a transfusion, it is not a sacrifice of life and the eating of forbidden blood, but a transference of life from one person to another, a gift of strength offered in a spirit of mercy and charity.” Apologist Norman Geisler points out that, “Even though a doctor might give food to a patient intravenously and call this ‘feeding’, it is simply not the case that giving blood intravenously is also feeding.” The six Scripture verses listed above cannot be used to support a prohibition on transfusions since transfusions are not a form of eating. Even orthodox Jews to whom the law was originally given and who meticulously drain the blood from kosher food, will accept blood transfusions.

Leviticus 3:7 says that, “You shall not eat neither fat nor blood”. Are the Jehovah’s Witnesses being consistent by interpreting this Scripture verse by prohibiting blood transfusions but allowing the eating of fat? Also, if the Jehovah’s Witnesses believe that Leviticus 7:27 demonstrates that those who have blood transfusions are *“cut-off”* from God’s people, then they must not believe what Jesus said in John 3:16, “For God so loved the world that he gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him (*including those who have had blood transfusions*) should not perish but have everlasting life.”

The Jehovah Witnesses’ position on blood transfusions, based on the six Scripture verses listed above, is a clear example of a cultic distortion of the Bible.

CHAPTER 11 - (Section-2) **Birthday Celebrations**

Genesis 40:20-22 (KJV) - Verse 20 - Now it came to pass on the third day, which was Pharaoh's birthday, that he made a feast for all his servants; and he lifted up the head of the chief butler and of the chief baker among his servants.

Verse 21 - Then he restored the chief butler to his butlership again and he placed the cup in Pharaoh's hand,

Verse 22 - but he hanged the chief baker, as Joseph interpreted to them.

Matthew 14:6-10 - Verse 6 - But when Herod's Birthday was celebrated, the daughter of Herodias danced before them and pleased Herod.

Verse 7 - Therefore he promised with an oath to give her whatever she might ask.

Verse 8 - So she, having been prompted by her mother said, "Give me John the Baptist's head on a platter."

Verse 9 - And the king was sorry; nevertheless, because of the oaths and because of those who sat with him, he commanded it to be given her.

Verse 10 - So he sent and had John beheaded in prison.

The Jehovah's Witnesses argue that the above listed Scripture verses are the only two references to birthday celebrations in the Bible. In both cases, the individuals involved were pagans who celebrated their birthdays by putting someone to death. In view of this, it is clear that no follower of God should ever celebrate a birthday. To do so would be an affront against God Himself. Birthdays are evil and Christians should not celebrate them.

CHRISTIAN RESPONSE:

Concluding that a particular day is evil simply because something bad happened on that day is truly warped logic. The words in Genesis 40:20-22 and Matthew 14:6-10 prove only that Pharaoh and Herod were evil, not their birthdays. If one uses the logic that Pharaoh, doing something evil on his birthday makes birthdays evil, shouldn't it follow that Pharaoh, doing something good (giving amnesty to his chief butler - Genesis 40:21) makes birthdays good? There is no Scriptural command to celebrate birthdays, but that fact does not warrant that such celebrations should be forbidden.

It is not true that there are only two references to birthday celebrations in the Bible. In Biblical times, the celebration of the anniversary of one's birth was a universal practice with the privileges and responsibilities of life attached to the attainment of a certain age. Job 1:4 reads: And his (Job's) sons would go and feast in their houses, each on "*his appointed day*", and would send and invite their sisters to eat and drink with them. At the end of each celebration, Job would summon his children to sanctify them in case they had sinned and turned away from God during these celebrations. Note that nothing in this text indicates that Job's children did evil

things on these days, and this celebration is not portrayed as a Pagan practice. Surely, if the observance of birthdays was offensive to God, then Job, a man who was blameless and upright, a man who feared God and shunned evil as stated in Job 1:1, would have forbidden this practice among his own children. Speaking of another memorable birthday, even the most skeptical person would have to agree that there was a very important significance associated with Jesus' visit to the temple when He was twelve years of age!

A birthday celebration if it is done in a manner of rejoicing and in thankfulness to the Father, is not an evil thing. God does not condemn those who celebrate birthdays when they are celebrated in His honor.

CHAPTER 10 - (Section-3) Christmas and Easter Celebrations

Romans 14:5 (KJV) - One person esteems one day above another; another esteems every day alike. Let each be fully convinced in his own mind.

The Jehovah's Witnesses oppose the celebration of Christmas because the actual date of Jesus' birth is unknown, because the date that Christmas is celebrated was once a pagan holiday, and because the Lord is opposed to the overeating and the overdrinking that occurs at Christmas celebrations. The Jehovah's Witnesses also oppose the celebration of Easter because they affirm that it is a pagan custom. They backup their opposition of celebrating this holiday by saying that, "Even the word 'Easter' is derived from the mythical Norse god 'Eostre' ".

CHRISTIAN RESPONSE:

Concerning the celebration of Christmas, the fact that we don't know the exact date of Jesus' birth should not be a legitimate reason for ignoring His birth. The early Jewish Christians were bold enough to set the celebration of Jesus' birthday on the 25th of December in order to replace the festival of Saturnia, the pagan worship of the Sun. Thanks to their efforts, the 25th of December is no longer associated with pagan worship. If we continue to associate the 25th of December with a pagan holiday, we are blindly ignoring the efforts of those early Jewish Christians. Christians as well as Jehovah's Witnesses, should object to the secular abuses of Christmas, but those abuses, done in the name of ignorance and/or defiance, should not keep believing Christians from praising God in a very special way for the birth of His Son and our Savior.

Now, with regard to the celebration of Easter, the Jehovah's Witnesses automatically reject this holiday because its name was originally associated with a pagan custom. Does that mean that everything that has its name derived out of paganism must also be rejected? If the Jehovah's Witnesses truly profess to this type of distorted logic, then they should also reject the days of the week because their names, like the name Easter, originated out of paganism. This fact is demonstrated as follows:

<u>Day of the Week</u>	<u>Pagan Name</u>	<u>Pagan Definition</u>
Sunday	Sun	Day of the Sun
Monday	Moon	Day Sacred to the Moon
Tuesday	Twi	God of War
Wednesday	Woden	Mythical Chief God
Thursday	Thor	God of Thunder
Friday	Fria	Goddess of Love
Saturday	Saturn	God of Saturn

The resurrection of our Lord was so important to the early Jewish Christians that they changed their chief day of worship from Saturday to Sunday. The importance of that supernatural event was further demonstrated by the fact that it was celebrated in every one of their Sunday services. In time, the Church developed a Christian calendar in which Jesus' resurrection was celebrated in a festival manner on one special day of the year. The name of this holiday is insignificant when measured against the importance of the event itself. How can anyone who understands the

importance that the early Christians placed on that event, criticize Christian believers who celebrate the resurrection of our Lord and Savior with reverence and humility?

Romans 14:5 instructs us that it is up to every individual to decide whether to observe the birth and resurrection of Jesus on single days of the year, every day of the year or not at all. John 3:16 says, “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, so that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.” With the realization that Jesus Christ was born specifically to die on the Cross for our salvation, how can we not celebrate this gift from God?

CHAPTER 10

Summary

Controversial issues such as blood transfusions, the celebration of birthdays, and the celebration of Christmas and Easter should be investigated thoroughly before arriving at a decision as to their Biblical acceptance. Allowing an innocent baby to die on the operating table because of the Jehovah Witnesses' banning of blood transfusions, reminds one of the self-righteous and heartless Pharisees who were so caught up in being "religious" that they condemned and chastised Jesus because He dared to heal someone on the Sabbath (Luke 6:6-11).

In a similar manner, the banning of birthday, Christmas and Easter celebrations can become a method of discouraging the praising of God for the gift of physical life and for the gift of eternal life through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Telling anyone that he or she faces separation from God because they have intravenously accepted a pint of blood, or has mailed a birthday, Christmas, or Easter card, is an indication that the person who is judging others in this manner, has never come to the full realization as to God's perfect love for His creation.

Question No. 11: After finding out that the provision against eating blood has no bearing upon the modern day practice of blood transfusions, and after finding out that birthday, Christmas and Easter celebrations are acceptable to God when they are done in a thankful and reverent manner, how can the Jehovah's Witnesses continue to view these issues as being evil in the sight of God?

CHAPTER 11 Overall Summary

The following is a listing of the Jehovah Witnesses' errant claims that were investigated in this study, along with the corresponding Biblical teachings regarding each of these claims:

<u>Jehovah Witnesses' Claim</u>	<u>Biblical Teaching</u>	<u>Chapter. No.</u>	<u>Page No.</u>
The Watchtower Society is God's propagator of truth.	The Watchtower Society is a false prophet.	1	3
Jesus is inferior to God.	Jesus is God.	2	7
Jesus was God's first creation.	Jesus has always existed.	3	16
Jesus was Michael the Archangel.	Jesus was never Michael the Archangel.	4	21
The Holy Spirit is an active force of God	The Holy Spirit is the third Person of the Godhead.	5	31
The concept of the Trinity is an unbiblical and blasphemous teaching.	God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit are three coequal Persons in the Trinity.	6	40
Jesus Died on a stake instead of a Cross and therefore the symbol of the Cross is a graven image.	Jesus died on a Cross and the Cross has become a symbol that is a reminder of the message of that Cross.	7	51
The human soul ceases to exist at death and therefore Hell is simply the common grave for the righteous and the unrighteous.	The human soul lives eternally. After death, the righteous souls go to be with Jesus and the unrighteous souls face eternal punishment in Hell.	8	54
Salvation is by faith plus works.	Salvation is by faith in Jesus Christ alone.	9	73
Blood transfusions and the Celebrations of birthdays, Christmas and Easter are Biblically unacceptable.	Blood transfusions and the Celebrations of birthdays, Christmas and Easter are Biblically acceptable.	10	82

Although this study has been too brief to investigate all of the Jehovah Witnesses' beliefs, it is hoped that it was sufficient enough to expose the Jehovah's Witnesses for what they are, a cult. A cult is defined as any religious movement which claims the backing of Christ and the Bible, but instead distorts the essential doctrines of that teaching. By now we must realize that the Jehovah's Witnesses are a group of very dedicated people who are gathered around the

Watchtower Society's misinterpretations of the Bible. Clearly, the Watchtower Society is guilty of taking Biblical texts out of context and using Christian terminology, while deceptively pouring their own meanings into these words. Hopefully, the Scriptural investigations done in this study will give each one of us the tools, the desire and the courage to effectively witness to the Jehovah's Witnesses. 2 Peter 2:1 warns us... ***“There will be false teachers among you who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them...”***

If you have been “taken in” by the false claims of the Jehovah’s Witnesses and have never been exposed to true Creator of this great universe, you are respectfully asked to read one more article titled, “**Because I Care.**”

Because I Care

I care what happens to you now, and I care what happens to you eternally. That's why I ask you to read this as though your life depends on it. Because it does . . .

Listen to how specifically Jesus spoke of what will be required of us:

HE SAID

"Unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

HE SAID

"I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father, except through Me."

HE SAID

"He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him."

Listen to some things Jesus did not say:

HE DID NOT SAY BEING A NICE PERSON IS ALL THAT IS REALLY NECESSARY. If that were true, we wouldn't need a Savior. But God says, "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." All of us have failed to live up to God's law and therefore stand guilty before Him.

HE DID NOT SAY BEING RELIGIOUS AND GOING TO THE RIGHT CHURCH IS WHAT REALLY COUNTS. The need to be "born again" was originally presented not to a criminal off the streets, but to Nicodemus, a sincere, respected religious leader of his day—a man who prayed and kept the commandments. To such a man Jesus said: "You must be born again." And He says the same thing to you and to me.

HE DID NOT SAY IF YOU JUST LIVE BY THE GOLDEN RULE, YOU'LL MAKE IT. God does expect us to live by the Golden Rule, but good works can never be the basis of salvation. The Bible says of born again Christians, "you have been saved through faith; . . . not of works."

HE DID NOT SAY A LOVING GOD WOULD NEVER CONDEMN ANYONE TO HELL. God is perfect love. But He's also perfectly just.

And that justice makes it impossible for Him to allow our sinfulness to go unpunished. "The wages of sin is death but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." When Christ died on the Cross, He paid the penalty for the sins of people like you and me in order to forgive us. The Bible says, "God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." What we need to do to be born again is to turn from our sins and wholeheartedly put our faith and trust in Jesus. If we refuse His offer of forgiveness, then we must suffer the penalty of our own sins. I'm not talking about a religion or a denomination but a personal relationship with the Living God who "so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Jesus says, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him."

He's offering you that opportunity right now. If you would like to open the door of your life to Jesus, here's what to do. Honestly tell him that you realize you need forgiveness and that you want to turn away from your sins to Him. Tell Him that from this moment on you will trust Him as your Savior who died for you, and as your Lord whom you will obey. Then thank Him for forgiving you and giving you eternal life.

I have no way of knowing what's going on in your heart right now. I only know that this message is important enough for me to risk offending you by passing it along to you. My hope and prayer is that you will make this commitment if you haven't already done so and that God will do for you what He's already done for me.

Bible verses quoted:

John 3:3

John 14:6

John 3: 36

Romans 3:23

John 3:7

Ephesians 2:8,9

Romans 6:23

Romans 5:8

John 3:16

Revelation 3:20