

" . . . Hereby know we the spirit of truth and the spirit of error"

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THE JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES AS DANGEROUS INNOVATORS

Prof. John E. Dahlin, *Editor*

In the current Issue of The Discerner we are featuring two important discussions relative to the kingdom. The first article by Rev. George Darby sets forth clearly what the Bible teaches with reference to this climatical goal in God's dispensational purposes. It adheres loyally to the Scriptures and it provides comprehension with reference to God's revelation concerning the kingdom. The second article by Rev. Roy Knuteson deals vigorously with the erroneous concept of the kingdom as taught and promoted by the Jehovah's Witnesses. It makes it very clear to any reader who wants to understand the truth how widely the Jehovah's Witnesses have misinterpreted and distorted the blessed doctrine of the kingdom as revealed in the Word of God.

I wish to broaden the discussion by pointing out that the pattern of interpretation followed by the Witnesses, relative to the kingdom, manifests the same deviation from the Scriptural truth in other doctrines which are basic to the Christian faith. Not only is their concept of the kingdom spurious, but these modern innovators follow a path of recklessness in all of their teachings, perhaps greater than that of any other cult extant.

First of all, it should be recognized from the outset that the leaders of

this cult are past masters in wrenching texts out of their proper context for their own subjective purposes in reinforcing their interpretations of the Scriptures. In addition, it is equally true that they have no regard for the laws of grammar, and they usually repudiate the careful study of the Scriptures by recognized Hebrew and Greek scholars. It is imperative that an agency, such as Religion Analysis Service, should, unveil the reckless methods followed by the Jehovah's Witnesses. Since the kingdom truth is a basic one in the Bible it was selected for the main consideration in this Issue. Were the Jehovah's Witnesses in error only on matters pertaining to the kingdom, one might be inclined to be more charitable to this group. But unfortunately their innovations and deviations extend to practically all of the great doctrines of the Bible. Let me now point out a few of their gross errors pertaining to doctrines of the Bible other than that of the Kingdom.

DOCTRINE OF TRINITY REPUDIATED

The Biblical as well as the historically accepted doctrine of the Trinity is affirmed by the Witnesses to be of pagan origin. They openly accuse evangelicals of believing in many Gods. They say that the trinity

of Gods appears as a teaching of pagan religions in Egypt, Babylon, Greece and elsewhere. Their charge is completely false and lacks merit altogether. While human reason cannot comprehend the full mystery of the Trinity, the doctrine has a firm basis in the Word of God and finds an empirical response in Christian consciousness. Now let us look at the Scripture: "The spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters" Gen. 1:2, then the proof is clear that Elohim (Uni-plural Hebrew word for Deity) in Gen. 1:1 must imply the Father, the Son and Spirit. In Gen. 1:26 we read, "And God, (Elohim) said let us make man! This cannot mean that God spoke to angels, for this conflicts with the story of creation. It proves that the Father, Son and Spirit spoke together. The Messiah is represented as the Son of God, the servant of God: "Jehovah said unto me, Thou art my son: this day have I begotten Thee" (Ps. 2:7). In the New Testament we have instruction regarding baptism: "In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Mt. 28:19). And in the apostolic benediction as referred to by Paul we have clearly established the doctrine of the triune God, "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all" (2 Cor. 13:14). In the doctrine of the Trinity Christians believe that God is not divided into three persons, but the three persons share the divine essence indivisibly so that each one possesses the divine essence without multiplication or division. Rightly we confess in the Athanasian creed: "The Godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, is all one: the glory equal, the majesty co-eternal. Such as the Father is, such is the Son, and such is the Holy Ghost. And in the Trinity none is afore, or after the other; none is greater, or less than another. But the whole three persons are co-eter-

nal together, and co-equal." This declaration is a correctly stated one because the Bible presents the three divine personalities as possessing simultaneously the one essence. No human analogy or mathematical formula can adequately explain the Trinity.

The Jehovah's Witnesses object to the Triune Godhead because it does not conform to their subjective reasoning. They are Unitarian in this regard and are the modern followers of Arius whose teachings were condemned and repudiated at a great Church Council held at Nicea in the year 325 A.D. On the vital doctrine of the Trinity, the Jehovah's Witnesses are out of step with the Scriptures, and they part company with Christians throughout Church History in being anti-trinitarian. The unitarian concept is simply a vicious attempt at rationalization of Scriptural Truth.

SUBJECT OF SALVATION NOT UNDERSTOOD

There is no room in the theology of the Jehovah's Witnesses for the assurance of salvation of a born-again believer. If you ask a member of the Jehovah's Witnesses cult if he is saved or born-again you never get a direct answer, simply because that person knows nothing of the grace of God and salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. They talk freely about receiving the blessings of God if you study the Bible, and if you meet with other people who have the same knowledge and faith. They also talk about changing your living from the former way to God's way. And, in order to achieve such blessings a door to door routine is required selling books and literature printed by the Watchtower Society. What all this amounts to is to dedicate yourself to a career of book-selling and indoctrinating others even as you have been indoctrinated. Their favorite text is Phil. 2:12 "Work out your own salvation with

fear and trembling." This verse is completely taken out of its context and a salvation program by works is introduced. The best that a disciple of the Jehovah's Witnesses can say is, "Well, I hope to be saved one day." The fact of the matter is the Jehovah's Witnesses do not believe one can be completely saved here and now.

What does the Scripture say on the subject of salvation? "But to him that worketh not but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness" (Rom. 4:4). "He that heareth my word and believeth on Him that sent me hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation but is passed from death unto life" (John 5:24). Moreover, Jesus declared "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have eternal life." (John 3:14-15).

We see clearly that in the system of the Jehovah's Witnesses there is no grace, no free salvation for anybody who believes. To illustrate, if a dying person asked a member of this cult how he might be saved, that cultist would stand by with helpless hands with no hope, nor capability of offering immediate aid to the needy soul. Since the Witnesses have a perverted view of the person of Christ, it in turns leads to a perverted concept of salvation. Indeed, man cannot work for his salvation by going from door to door with the Watchtower message. "Only the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanse us from all sin" (Jn. 1:7). Truly the dictatorship of the Jehovah's Witness leads to spiritual bondage, and rightly W. J. Schnell writes about himself following a glorious deliver-

ance "Thirty Years a Watchtower Slave." These thousands of misguided people know nothing of redeeming grace and the blessed certainty of being born again and possessing the assurance of salvation.

REJECTION OF ETERNAL PUNISHMENT

The Jehovah's Witnesses say Jehovah is a God of perfect justice, and he does not prescribe any punishment of His creatures after death. They simply rationalize and explain away the doctrine of eternal punishment for the unsaved. This contradicts Heb. 9:27, "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." The Jehovah's Witnesses manifest a calloused disregard for such clear passages as Mt. 25:46, "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into everlasting life." Mt. 25:41, "Then He shall say also unto them on the left hand, depart from me ye cursed, into everlasting fire . . ." Luke 12:4.5, "Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do . . . Fear Him which after he hath killed hath power to cast you into hell." The account of the Rich Man and Lazarus found in Luke Chapter 16, is brushed aside by the Witnesses as a parable of no significance with reference to the doctrine of punishment after death.

We might continue to examine further innovations by the Jehovah's Witnesses on other significant doctrines, but the above treatment will suffice. A cult which will completely misconstrue the lofty doctrine of the kingdom, apparently has no hesitation in treating all major doctrines of the Scripture with a rationalistic attitude.

CONCLUSION

In view of this extreme deviation from the Scriptures by the Jehovah's Witnesses, Christian people need to know that these innovators and quacks are dangerous to every community in which they operate and disseminate their literature. In the distribution of literature no other cult has as impressive a record as that of the Witnesses. These emissaries who go from house to house have a zeal that is astonishing. Their literature must be countered by wholesome and informative material based on Scriptural Truth.

Fortunately much fine literature is available which explains the doctrines of cultists. Our own depot of

literature is uniquely equipped in dealing with nearly all of the cults of our time. Indeed, every Pastor, Church, Sunday School and adult organization should have an assortment of books, pamphlets and tracts which provide essential information on present-day cults. Our own magazine, *The Discerner*, is an excellent quarterly which is devoted to the discussion of cult organizations and particularly their doctrines. It is well to be a subscriber to the magazine and keep posted on cult activity in our land. Many send in gift subscriptions for their friends or to those who especially need the information covered by our quarterly.

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THE COMING KINGDOM OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST

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The biblical teaching concerning the coming kingdom of Christ is summarized for us in Revelation 11: 15, in the words, "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever." The singular form of the word "kingdom" in its second occurrence here, undoubtedly represents the text more accurately than our King James version. Perhaps an even more literal rendering would be, "Now is come the world kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ."

The fact of Christ's kingship is accepted by all believers. The Church, with one voice acclaims Him "King of Kings and Lord of Lords." His right to universal sovereignty is recognized by Christians of all communions. That He will one day establish His authority over the entire creation is a belief common to the whole of Christendom.

When, however, we come to inquire by what means, at what time and in what form the kingship of Christ is to be made manifest, differences of opinion and belief are immediately apparent.

There are those who think and talk in terms of what they call "the invisible spiritual kingdom of Christ." The rule of Christ, they contend, is in the hearts of men, and this rule is to extend and increase until all men own His sway. Without taking time or space to consider some of the scriptures used to support this view, it may be sufficient to notice certain objections to it. In the first place, this theory tends to equate

spirituality with invisibility—a somewhat untenable hypothesis. Was Christ's ministry while on earth unspiritual because it was exercised in the realm of the physical, the visible, and the tangible—healing the sick, feeding the multitudes, and raising the dead? Furthermore, it is difficult to see how the words of the text quoted in the beginning of this article can have anything but an outward and earthly fulfillment. It is the kingdoms of this world which become the kingdom of Christ. Nor is this an isolated instance of the use of literal physical terminology to describe the coming kingdom of Christ. The Lord Jesus, Himself, speaking to His apostles said "In regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." (Matthew 19:28). Language like this can hardly be limited to inward spiritual experience. It is true that those who own the Lordship of Christ are even now citizens of the kingdom, but this in no wise precludes its future, visible manifestation.

The Word of God clearly recognizes both a present and a future aspect of the kingdom of Christ. Every time we pray "Thy kingdom come," we acknowledge that in some sense the kingdom of Christ is not yet established. Its qualities of "righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost" (Romans 14:16), find expression in the lives of Christians, but they will not be regnant in the world until the kingdom itself shall have come.

A second school of thought relating to the kingdom of Christ defers the establishment of His rule until the end of time and the introduction of the eternal state. This is the position taken by the so-called "crisis" theologians. They find no place within the framework of history for Christ's reign. Not until history and time itself have concluded in one final catastrophe, will the throne of Christ be erected and His kingdom prevail. This line of thinking leads logically to a-millennialism and the rejection of the concept of a world kingdom under the personal administration of Christ.

The foregoing eschatology we reject, because it reduces all of history to a meaningless, purposeless jumble of events, going nowhere, accomplishing nothing, and ending in futility. The long centuries through which humanity has suffered and striven and hoped and prayed became nothing more than "a tale told by an idiot full of sound and fury, signifying nothing."

The old theory of the inevitability of human progress has long since fallen by the way, thanks largely to two world wars and the imminent danger of a third. The airy optimism with which this century began has given place to the bleak pessimism so prevalent in modern philosophy. But to reject the inevitability of human progress is not tantamount to asserting the impossibility of *any* progress. In and through history, "one increasing purpose runs"; the purpose of God "to gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth", Ephesians 1:10. That purpose will not fail, and human failures will prove ultimately to have been not a deterrent but a means to its accomplishment.

"God is working His purpose out

As year succeeds to year;

God is working His purpose out

And the time is drawing near."

Yes, nearer and nearer draws the time—

The time that shall surely be

When the glory of God shall cover the earth

As the waters cover the sea."

A second objection to this supra-historical interpretation of Christ's kingdom, is that it denies to the Son of God the vindication He deserves. Once He presented Himself as earth's rightful ruler and was refused. "We will not have this man to reign over us" was the world's answer to His claims. He was crowned with a crown of thorns in derogation of His kingly rights and set at naught by those who ought to have yielded to His authority. Will God allow the judgment to stand? We believe not, for although now as at His crucifixion "the nations rage and the people imagine a vain thing; the kings of the earth set themselves and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord and against His anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder and cast away their cords from us," God says, "I have set my king upon my holy hill of Zion." In the very place where He was disgraced, He is to receive the glory due unto His name. The same scenes which witnessed His humiliation and ignominy will see Him lauded and honored by all men, with kings and rulers bowing down before Him. Is it not meet that it should be so?

Again it may be said as against the viewpoint we are now discussing, that Scripture speaks very plainly of Christ's kingdom as having its fulfillment in this present earthly environment. The second chapter of Isaiah's prophecy presents to us one of the most beautifully ideal pictures of a coming golden age to be found

anywhere in God's Word. It is significant, therefore, that this prophecy is introduced with the statement "the word that Isaiah, the son of Amoz, saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem." No sober interpretation of Scripture can transfer these terms to an order of things beyond our geographical and historical comprehension. Words like "Judah" and "Jerusalem" tie down this glorious prediction to the earth and its peoples.

The concept of an earthly kingdom of the Messiah is clearly contained in the covenant God made with David as recorded in II Samuel 7:1-29. That covenant has to do with the house of David, which expression signifies a royal house or a dynasty. We speak, for example in more recent times, of the house of Windsor, or the house of Hapsburg. The covenant guaranteed to David a throne which is the symbol of royal authority, a seed to sit upon the throne, that is a king from among his own descendants, and a kingdom, implying a territory and subjects. All this was pledged to David in perpetuity. Divine chastisement would be dealt to those of his descendants who transgressed the law of God but the covenant itself would not be abrogated. Concerning it, God said in Psalm 89, verses 34-36, "My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips. Once have I sworn by my holiness that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the sun before me."

Even when God delivered His people into captivity because of their sins, the covenant was not forgotten. The angel Gabriel re-affirmed its provisions to Mary in his annunciation of the birth of Jesus. "Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great,

and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end." Inasmuch as the first four provisions of this announcement were fulfilled with exact literalness, namely the birth of the Son, the name given to Him, the greatness He would display, and the title He would bear of Son of the Highest, is it not reasonable to expect that the remaining ones shall find similar fulfillment?

The Lord Jesus does not now sit upon David's throne. He certainly does not rule over the house of Jacob. Israel, as such, still rejects Him. It was this situation that disturbed the early church and led to the calling of the Council at Jerusalem described in Acts 15. Side by side with Israel's rejection of Jesus as her Messiah was the remarkable response to the Gospel on the part of the Gentiles. James, the president of the Council, explained this situation in the light of Old Testament prophecy as follows: "Men and brethren, hearken unto me: Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name. And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, After this I will return and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all things." (Acts 15:13-17). The reference to the tabernacle or house of David is significant. Though now in ruins, it is to be restored, but not until after God has completed the work which He is doing among the Gentiles. This accomplished,

Christ will return and build again the house of David. He will fulfill the promise made to David of one to sit upon his throne.

The Lord Jesus, Himself, distinguished between His present position or His Father's throne from His future place on His own throne, (Rev. 3:21). In speaking of His own throne, He is affirming His right to the throne of David. As the legal but not the natural son of Joseph, He inherited the royal title without incurring the curse pronounced upon the seed of Coniah, (Jeremiah 22:28-30). As the child of Mary, He can lay claim to being a physical descendant of David. Thus, His title is placed beyond dispute. According to Psalm 2, this title included not only Christ's kingship over Israel, but His sovereignty over all nations. The hour will come when the Lord Jesus will ask the Father for the nations as His inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth as His possession. Again it seems impossible to understand these words as applying to anything but an earthly kingdom.

Christ is to be king over all the earth. Zechariah 14:9. When this comes to pass, a better happier day than the world has known since the fall of man will dawn upon the nations. The passage we have looked at in Acts 15 contemplates this. It declares that the effect of the setting up of the house or kingdom of David will be that the residue of men and all the Gentiles will seek after the Lord. This same result is described in the second chapter of Isaiah, to which we have already alluded. Here is a picture of world conversion. God's program for our age does not call for the world to be converted, but rather for the taking out of the nations a people for His name. The kingdom age, however, will be marked by the universal acknowl-

edgement of Christ's kingship. When the kingdom is established, Isaiah says "all nations will flow into it." Here will be the true united nations, with representatives from every land coming up regularly to Jerusalem to receive instruction and direction from the Great King. The effect of this will be righteousness in international affairs, and the effect of righteousness will be peace, for "nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore." For one thousand years a warless world will bask in the beams of the Sun of Righteousness, and reap the benefits of His glorious reign. Psalm 72 describes the peace, plenty, and prosperity coupled with true piety which will obtain among men in that coming day.

We repeat, that this is not a vision of eternity, but of time yet future. Alas that it should have to terminate according to Revelation 20, in the final rebellion of Satanically deceived humanity, a rebellion that will be quickly quelled by the fire of divine wrath. Then the Son will "deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father" and the eternal day will have begun. (I Corinthians 15:24 and 28).

Perhaps it needs to be added that there can be no kingdom without the presence of the King. Paul writes in II Timothy 4:1 of His appearing and His kingdom. The order of the words is important. When the king comes, He will set up the kingdom. When the Prince of Peace appears, peace will ensue. We wait for His coming, first to receive unto Himself His bride whom He has taken from among all nations, and then subsequently to reign with her over the earth in fulfillment of the divine covenant.

THE KINGDOM CONCEPT OF THE JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES

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Jehovah's Witnesses major in prophecy. Their entire theological system revolves about the field of Eschatology. Remove the prophetic elements from their teachings and the whole structure collapses. The Society stands today upon only one-fourth of the Bible.

Beginning Concepts

Theological thinking in general, took on new interests in the field of prophecy about a century ago. Significantly, most of the major systems of eschatology, or the study of last things, had their origin during the same era. British-Israelism, Seventh-Day Adventism, Mormonism, Jehovah's Witnesses, and even the systematized study of biblical dispensations all trace their roots to the 19th century.

Jehovah's Witnesses' "Kingdom Theology" originated with Chas. Taze Russell and his "Studies In The Scriptures" in 1886. This system was further developed and refined by the prolific pen of one "Judge" Rutherford. Spawned in troublesome times internationally, and nurtured by a decadent Christendom, this cult arose with characteristic claim of being the only true work of God upon the earth. Satan used the combined elements to inject chaos into the study of Bible prophecy through the apparently sincere attempts of these men to give a Bible answer to the conditions of the day.

A Growing Theology

Accepting the Bible as their basic source of revelation, the Witnesses, however, believe in an "unfolding program of revelation" through their leaders. Russell had the audacity to declare that "people cannot see the

divine plan in studying the Bible by itself . . . if anyone lays aside the "Scripture Studies" (J. W. Teachings) within two years he will go into darkness" (Watch-Tower, Sept. 15, 1910). This means, as subsequent writings prove, that the only infallible guide to understanding God's program of the ages are the books and pamphlets of the Watch Tower Society. And no wonder. Their ideas are ever changing as we shall see in an analysis of their "kingdom theology".

THE THEOCRATIC RULE

In the tradition of all Millennialists, the Jehovah's Witnesses view all history as foreordained of God. As the Lord of history, Jehovah controls the destiny of all nations and empires. He regulates the affairs of men according to His appointed times and seasons. Accordingly, they have worked out a fantastic schedule of future events.

1. The Time of Establishment

In their understanding, Jehovah established a principle of interpretation applicable to every situation by stating, "I have appointed thee each day for a year" (Ezek. 4:6). Without regard for the context of the statement in the prophecy of Ezekiel, the Jehovah's Witnesses reckon that the "seven times" mentioned in Daniel 4:32 (again ignoring the context) actually mean seven years of 360 prophetic days each. Mathematically calculated, they arrive at 2520 days which, of course, now means years! According to the "chronology of Jehovah", here's their conclusion:

"Therefore since God's typical kingdom with its capital at Jerusalem ceased to exist in the Autumn of 607

B.C., then by counting the appointed times from that date, the 2520 years extend to the Autumn of 1914 A.D." (Let God Be True, P. 252)

This means that the year 1914 marks the end of Satan's uninterrupted rule, as well as, the end of the present world system. It was also the year that the "Times of The Gentiles" (Lu. 21:24) ended. Chas. T. Russell made the "official" announcement of these great events at his dinner table on October, 1 1914 in Brooklyn, New York (The Watch Tower, July 15, 1950). The symbolic tree stump of Daniel 4, they claim, was released from its bands. A new theocratic government came into being as Satan was cast out of heaven (Rev. 12:9). Christ was then enthroned as the King of the Heavens. This decisive action by Jehovah, they state, marked the beginning of the time of the Lord's "second presence".

2. The Kingdom Established

The most distinctive belief of the Witnesses is their claim that Christ was enthroned as the "King of Heavens" in 1914. Current events of that day seemed to prove it. This was the year that World War I broke out, and by October, the month of Russell's declaration, the war had become global in scope.

The kingdom birth in 1914 made a difference throughout all of God's universe. Things could never be the same again after 1914 as they were before, not only among the nations of the earth, but also throughout the heavens . . . From that date on, the nations of the earth would march on steadily and inexorably to their own violent end to which they were doomed by their faithless opposition to the kingdom of Jehovah and His Christ (New Heavens and New Earth, p. 247).

Earlier, however, both Russell and Rutherford had postulated that Christ began His rule in 1874, and that "the beginning of the end" was in 1799. (The Harp of God, pp. 235-36). Cleverly, they have rejected that date for the more pivotal one of 1914.

Satan, they say, tried to deter Christ's place of rule and so a war raged in heaven from 1914 to 1918. Satanic activity was reflected on earth during those years by World War I, widespread epidemics, earthquakes, and the establishment of the League of Nations, which they view, as a "man made substitute for the Kingdom of God" (Let God be True, p. 257). The year 1919 marked the real beginning of the phenomenal growth of the Witnesses activity. Several of their officials were released from prison where they were held on charges of subversion for failure to participate in the war and country allegiance. This year also, they say, saw the outpouring of the Spirit upon the Witnesses in fulfillment of Joel 2:28-30. Jehovah's Witnesses then began proclaiming: "The Kingdom has Come!", "The Lord is Present!", "Prepare For Armageddon!"

3. The March To Armageddon

The final revolution in heaven will have its counterpart again on this earth, as the forces of Satan and Jehovah clash. Since 1918, Satan has been marshalling his forces for the showdown with Jehovah. Soon, the Witnesses believe, Jehovah will triumph over the organization of Satan. Nathan Knorr, their present president said:

Worlds will be in collision, Satan's old world, and Jehovah's new world. Invisible, and not merely visible powers of evil in opposition to God's kingdom will be knocked out of business, demons and their dupes, altogether destroyed,

the Mastermind behind this world and its wickedness must be overthrown and shorn of power . . . God will have at His disposal appalling forces of destruction to unleash against the puny foes of flesh and blood" (After Armageddon-God's New World, p. 18).

The only survivors of this final battle will be the remnant and "other sheep" supernaturally protected from the wrath of Jehovah. Following the battle of Armageddon, according to the Society's calendar, the "new heavens and new earth" (this same planet purged of evil) will be transformed into a garden of Eden by the hard work of the faithful witnesses who "convert old world-war tanks, cannons and murderous weapons of destruction into implements of construction" (Let God Be True, p. 266).

4. Citizens Of The Kingdom

Great stress is placed upon the 144,000 of Revelation 7 and 14, whom Russell taught would reign with Christ in His heavenly kingdom. This "Royal Court of Heaven" will be made up of the "cloud of witnesses" (Heb. 12:1) from Abel's day until Jesus Christ, plus the true witnesses (meaning Jehovah's Witnesses only) from apostolic times until 1914. This latter group, they believe, were resurrected in 1918 to join the Old Testament saints who now await the remaining members on earth who comprise the 144,000. (The Kingdom Is At Hand, p. 337). These, who comprise the "True Church," will rule with Christ in His **heavenly** kingdom. Presently, they believe, that "only a small remnant, sufficient to complete the fulness of the body, now remain on earth" (Let God Be True, p.231).

In order to provide a reward for the rest of the faithful witnesses, and to bail themselves out of the dilemma of this limited number, the Society leaders devised and proclaimed the "good news" that a great innum-

erable crowd of faithful witnesses called the "other sheep" or "Jonadabs" would, if they endured, have everlasting life **on earth**, in marked contrast to the **heavenly** rule of the 144,000. Other class distinctions were made throughout the history of this movement in accordance with the Society's growth. Since 1931, the "Jonadabs" however, form the official serving class who will **never** be Spirit-begotten, and thus are limited to a vague earthly hope at best. They cannot expect to go to heaven for they are not reckoned with the Body of Christ. (Let God Be True, p. 264).

Some of the "Jonadabs" from the New World Society will never die, for Jehovah will preserve them through the battle of Armageddon. Like the survivors of Noah's day, they will be hid in the antitypical ark of Jehovah's Theocratic system of things and come through to a world cleansed of all evil (Let God be True., p. 265).

And so, the Witnesses have a "dual kingdom" concept. A heavenly rule for the 144,000 and an earthly rule for the remaining faithful "Jonadabs". Today, the call is being made for those who desire to qualify to join the "other sheep" of the Jehovah's Witnesses in proclaiming the heart-cheering news of the established kingdom, and the end of the world.

5. Life In The Kingdom

Theocratic work for the survivors of the battle of Armageddon continues. They are required to "fill the earth".

Filling the earth will include transforming it into a paradise like Eden and will not require the full 1000 years of Christ's reign. An extensive educational work will be necessary in the course of the thousand years reign when millions of "unrighteous" dead, needing instruction in God's law, are

scheduled to arise from their tombs. (A second-chance salvation) Then in the righteous world, the Almighty by means of His kingdom will shower down upon the earth's billions of perfectly loyal inhabitants, an overflow of divine blessings that will fill their hearts with everlasting gladness. Here will be a world without Adamic death, illness, sorrow, tears, and religious confusion. It will remain not a thousand, or a million, or a thousand-million years, but forever. (Let God Be True, p. 271).

Woven into this somewhat Biblical concept of the coming kingdom are the subtleties of Satanic error that corrode the whole picture and thus condemn it.

Doctrinal Gyations

Jehovah's Witnesses have a "theology in flux." Notable changes of thought appear throughout the history of their "infallible" declarations. Just as we noted the change in dates for the establishment of the kingdom, so, many other adjustments have been made in this man-made theology.

In 1929 the Society published a book called "Life", which declared that the literal nation of Israel would be restored to the land of Palestine at the second advent of Christ. One year later, this teaching, as originally held by Russell, the founder, was scrapped for the new revelation that Jehovah's Witnesses were the true Israel of God displacing God's ancient covenant people. Today they state:

"Nothing in the modern return of the Jews to Palestine and the setting up of the Israeli Republic corresponds with the Bible prophecies concerning the restoration of Jehovah's name-

people to His favor and organization" (Let God Be True, p. 217)

The two million Jews with their own government in Palestine, and a restored Hebrew language mean nothing to this cult. Instead they declare:

There are many prophecies that do speak about a return of the Jews to their homeland, however, but these prophesies do not find their fulfillment in the modern state of Israel. They were fulfilled over five hundred years before Christ, when a Jewish remnant returned from Babylon to reoccupy the desolate site of Jerusalem. That was in 537 B.C. (The Watch-Tower, March, 1958).

Once it was claimed that the sum total of the kingdom constituents would number 144,000. This concept too, had to be enlarged to make room for the present-day workers for the new world society. Thus, the Watch-Tower Society in one generation, changed from a group of independent Bible study congregations into a world-wide organization or "theocracy" ruled from Brooklyn, New York.

These notable switches in doctrine regarding the Kingdom of Jehovah are clear witness to the fallibility of the whole system. If once-authoritative statements needed revision, who is so bold to say that the present-day teachings may not also be in error and through later revelation be changed? Dare anyone rest the destiny of his eternal spirit on such a faulty system?

Prophecy Being Fulfilled

Jehovah's Witnesses unwittingly are fulfilling the prophecy of Jesus Christ of Matthew 24:23, where the Lord states that false prophets will declare that Christ is already here! True believers know that when Christ returns

to rule, He will be visible for "every eye shall see Him" (Matt. 24:27-30). He has not yet come, nor is His kingdom yet established. But, "He that

shall come, will come, and will not tarry" (Heb. 10:37). And until that day, we pray:

"Even so, come Lord Jesus!"

"Jehovah's Witnesses" Do Not Believe

1 Jehovah's Witnesses do not believe that the Lord Jesus is the Eternal Word

"Judge" Joseph Franklin Rutherford, prolific writer and (for 26 years) head of the sect wrote as follows:

"The beginning of God's creation was the Logos." (Harp of God. p. 27)

"The Logos, the Word, was a god, a mighty one." (Harp of God. p. 27)

". . . Jesus, the Logos, is designated as 'the bright and morning star.'" (Harp of God. p. 29)

". . . a star is used to symbolize a heavenly creature." (Harp of God. p. 29)

"The Logos was the first and only direct creation of Jehovah." (Harp of God. p. 99). (Deliverance. p. 13)

"The Scriptures clearly teach that there were two mighty creatures designated 'morning stars,' to wit, the Logos and Lucifer." (Deliverance. p. 16)

Read what the Bible says:

According to John 1:3 the Lord Jesus created everything that was ever created. How dare anyone call Him a creature? We ask reverently, could He have created himself?

2 Jehovah's Witnesses do not believe in the person or deity of the Holy Spirit

"The holy spirit is the invisible power and energy of Jehovah." (Harp of God. p. 15)

Read what the Bible says:

In John 16:13 the Lord Jesus refers to the Holy Spirit by use of the personal pronoun exactly seven times.

Acts 5:3, 4 teaches that the Holy Spirit is God. Dare we doubt this?

3 Jehovah's Witnesses do not believe that there is a hell

"Hell means the tombs, the grave, the condition of death . . ." (Harp of God. p. 15)

"Purgatory and eternal torment, commonly called "hell fire," do not exist. Those who are dead are not conscious anywhere." (Harp of God. p. 174, Riches, p. 181)

Read what the Bible says:

"The wicked shall be turned into hell and all nations that forget God." Psalm 9:17. If sheol is merely the grave or a state of death, this is also shared by the righteous. But God warns us in this verse that for the wicked and the God-forgetters there is something else. Dare we equate sinners and saints in death?

4 Jehovah's Witnesses do not believe in the return of the Lord Jesus

". . . for those who love his second appearing," ". . . they are small in number." (Harp of God. p. 266)

"Through the Apostle John he designates the number as 144,000." (Harp of God. p. 267)

"As the great divine plan has been revealed to these they have learned that the Lord has returned and is here, invisible to human eyes." (Harp of God. p. 269)

Read what the Bible says:

Acts 1:11 unequivocally states that the Lord Jesus will be seen when He returns. Dare anyone say He is here and invisible as a fulfillment of Acts 1:11?

5 Jehovah's Witnesses do not believe in the Church

"... he (the Lord Jesus) was qualified to be a priest." (Harp of God, p. 285)

"... The church of Christ consists of Jesus Christ the head and the 144,000 members of his body." (Harp of God, p. 285)

Read what the Bible says:

Our Lord was not qualified as to the Aaronic priesthood, (Hebrews 7: 14) and the church is made up of more than 144,000. Rev. 7:9 speaks of a greater number, regenerated and saved, whereas verse 4 states that the 144,000 were of Israel. Dare we number the church saints?

6 Jehovah's Witnesses do not believe in the Great White Throne Judgment

"As the dead came back from the tombs, provision will be made for them by their friends who are living on earth." (Harp of God, p. 350)

"... shall be brought back ... for the purpose of being given a trial." (Harp of God, p. 351)

Read what the Bible says:

Rev. 20:15 convinces me that the unregenerate will not return, no provision can be made for them by friends and they shall not get a trial here on earth. Rutherford says they will. Shall we believe him or the Word of God?

By Charles E. Pont, Pastor, Evangelist
(taken from his tract by this title)

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PERTINENT QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

By Pastor "Mac"

Rev. R. F. McInay, Minneapolis, Minn.

QUESTION . . . *Do you believe that some of the cults have a "natural" appeal to certain types of personalities?*

ANSWER . . . While this may be a hard thing to clarify with facts, I do believe that certain personality traits become a factor in the reason why some people get involved in a cult. Let me suggest to you a most enlightening book in this area—"Temperament and the Christian Faith" by Dr. O. Hallesby. If you make a study of the cults you will understand why some people with certain temperaments become easily involved in a cult that "fits" that temperament.

QUESTION . . . *Is it right to say that all cults base their idea of salvation on a system of works or human achievements?*

ANSWER . . . Yes, you are absolutely right! All cults are man-centered and therefore have to be built on a system of works. This is also the reason why no cult can ever offer their followers salvation in the present tense. Read carefully Romans 4:1-8; Galatians 1:1-10; and I John 5:9-13 and you will have God's answer to the whole cult mess!