



WHY I AM NOT A JEHOVAH'S WITNESS

By Harry Whittaker

The fact is there are just too many reasons to put down here in a few words, especially if full Biblical explanation is to be given.

But, let's be fair, it would be a big mistake to assume that there's nothing good to be said for Jehovah's Witnesses. There are plenty of things to be admired in these people — their reverence for the Bible, their unmatched zeal for preaching what they believe to be the truth, their unshakable resolution to have nothing to do with war, the importance they attach to baptism by immersion, and so on.

Yet, when all such good things have been listed the fact remains that, as one who wants Christian truth more than anything else, I could never join the "Jehovah's Witnesses," and here's why.

1. On the great foundation truth of Christian faith — **the resurrection of our Lord** — Jehovah's Witnesses are hopelessly astray from the teaching of the New Testament (as I will try to show later on). So if they were shown to be right on everything else, this by itself would put me off.
2. Their teaching and practice about Communion, the Breaking of Bread in memory of the death of Christ, is astray from early Christian teaching and practice. They celebrate it **once** a year. More than that is wrong, they say.
3. They put great emphasis on the Second Coming of the Lord, and if only they did it in the right way, this would be splendid. But alas, they don't. They **used** to say that the Lord came back to the earth in 1914, invisibly, as a spirit, and that he has

been reigning ever since. However, in recent years there has come a different emphasis. Now they say that in 1914 the Lord took his seat at Jehovah's right hand and assumed kingly authority in heaven. Either way this seems rather odd. The rule of Christ, whether on earth or from heaven, doesn't seem to have made much difference to the sticky mess the world is getting into. Worse and worse; not better and better towards a divine ideal! Very strange! And why 1914? Simply because one of their pre-1914 calculations about the Second Coming gave that result. But Jesus said: "Of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only." (Matthew 24:36)

4. They say that the Lord's redeemed people — the 144,000 of Revelation — are to be taken up to heaven to rule the world from that higher sphere. But it is easy to see (at first reading) that Revelation Ch. 7 and 14 are highly **symbolic** passages; indeed, every Jehovah's Witness would agree that they are. Yet they pick up just one detail and give it the most literal meaning possible: exactly 144,000, they say. And, in any case, those chapters do not say a word about going to heaven.
5. The Jehovah's Witnesses' teaching about the Devil is another big error. It is true that the New Testament has a lot to say about Satan and the Devil. But, badly missing the meaning of two or three scattered passages, the Witnesses present a picture of an archangel rebelling against the Almighty, being cast out of heaven (but, strangely enough, not stripped of his wonderful powers), and yet being given complete freedom in God's earth to work as much havoc as he wishes.

This is all wrong. The Bible provides plenty of hints to show that Satan is a kind of Bible parable for the sinful tendencies of our human nature. You see the Devil every time you look in a mirror. This view squares with Bible teaching and with all human experience of temptation and sin. The badness is **in ourselves**, (see, for example, Jeremiah 17:9; Matthew 15:18,19), not from some invisible influence outside us. A lot more could be written on this, but there isn't space for it here.

6. As a Christadelphian who believes that Israel has yet a great part to play in God's developing Purpose, I find especially distasteful the Witnesses' insistence that God has cast off the Jews for ever and has no more use for them as a nation. They insist that there are no Bible prophecies about the return of the Jews to Palestine, and that Jesus will never be King of the Jews, sitting on David's throne in Jerusalem. They seem to find no place for Bible statements about Israel being "beloved for the fathers' sakes" (that is, for the sake of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob). What a mistake! What an omission! Yet how plain the Bible is in its teaching about that nation, both regarding the present and the future.
7. Along with this goes another point almost as important — **these people have no right to the name Jehovah's Witnesses!** Jehovah is the Covenant Name of God in the Old Testament. But according to the prophet Isaiah, His Witnesses are the people of Israel in their **blindness** and **deafness** to God's Truth "Bring forth the blind people that have eyes, and the deaf that have ears... Ye are my witnesses, saith Jehovah" (Isaiah 43:8,12) — the other verses show that it is Jews who are referred to. But I have never yet come across a Jehovah's Witness who knows that his religious name has been wrongly taken, and that in any case it describes those

who are spiritually blind and deaf. You would think they would want to change it. One J. W. to whom I showed this promptly changed her religion (this wasn't the only reason, let me say).

Now back to the most important point of all — the serious J. W. error about the **Resurrection of Jesus**. They maintain:

- (a) The Lord gave his body as a ransom for sinners.
- (b) Therefore he could not receive his body back again in the day of his resurrection.
- (c) Therefore when he appeared to the disciples he was a “spirit” (that is, without a material body).
- (d) But he **seemed** to have a body just so as to help the weak faith of his disciples.

According to the Bible, this is wrong in every point.

The Bible nowhere says that he gave his **body** as a ransom. What it does say is that he came to give **his life** a ransom for many (Matthew 20:28). So there is no reason why God should not have restored Jesus in the very body that was crucified.

This is exactly what happened. Jesus challenged his awe-struck disciples: “Handle me and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have” (Luke 24:39). Remember doubting Thomas? “Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side...” (John 20:27). And the Lord actually ate food in their presence. Were all these drastic measures intended to prove to them that he **didn't** have a body really?

Of course, the fact is indisputable that the resurrection body of the Lord was in certain respects far superior to that of the Jesus who was crucified. He was now immortal. “I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore” (Revelation 1:18). And the risen Jesus also had the power to appear and disappear (Luke 24:31), and to pass through a shut door (John 20:19). But, for all that, it was a real body that could be handled. He carried the marks of crucifixion. (Remember Thomas: “Reach hither thy finger”).

So in teaching that the risen Lord was a “spirit” without a body the J.W.'s fly right in the face of plain Bible evidence.

One last point. Remind any Witness you talk to that the tomb was found empty. The body was gone. Ask him: If the dead body of Jesus did not come to life again, what happened to it? I have asked this question of J.W.'s in **eight** different countries, and have always received the same answer in exactly the same words: “Jehovah God disposed of it. “ They say this not because the Bible says so, but because this is what their Brooklyn-printed text-book says.

And it is wrong. For, on the day of Pentecost, Peter quoted this Old Testament prophecy about the Lord's resurrection: “Neither wilt Thou suffer thine Holy One

(Jesus) to see corruption... His flesh did not see corruption” (Acts 2:27,31). So the body of Jesus never corrupted. It is still in existence somewhere. Where is it? The Bible says it was raised to life, and glorified. Jesus is now in heaven till the day of his visible bodily return. But J.W.’s say: “Jehovah God disposed of it.”

Now you can see why I am not a Jehovah’s Witness. Can a true Christian be a Jehovah’s Witness?

HARRY WHITTAKER

SEND FOR A FREE COPY OF THE BOOKLET:
“THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST”

C. A. L. S.,
3 REGENT STREET,
BIRMINGHAM B1 3HG.



Issued by the
Christadelphian Auxiliary Lecturing
Society

Printed by Reliance Printing Works, Halesowen, West Midlands