

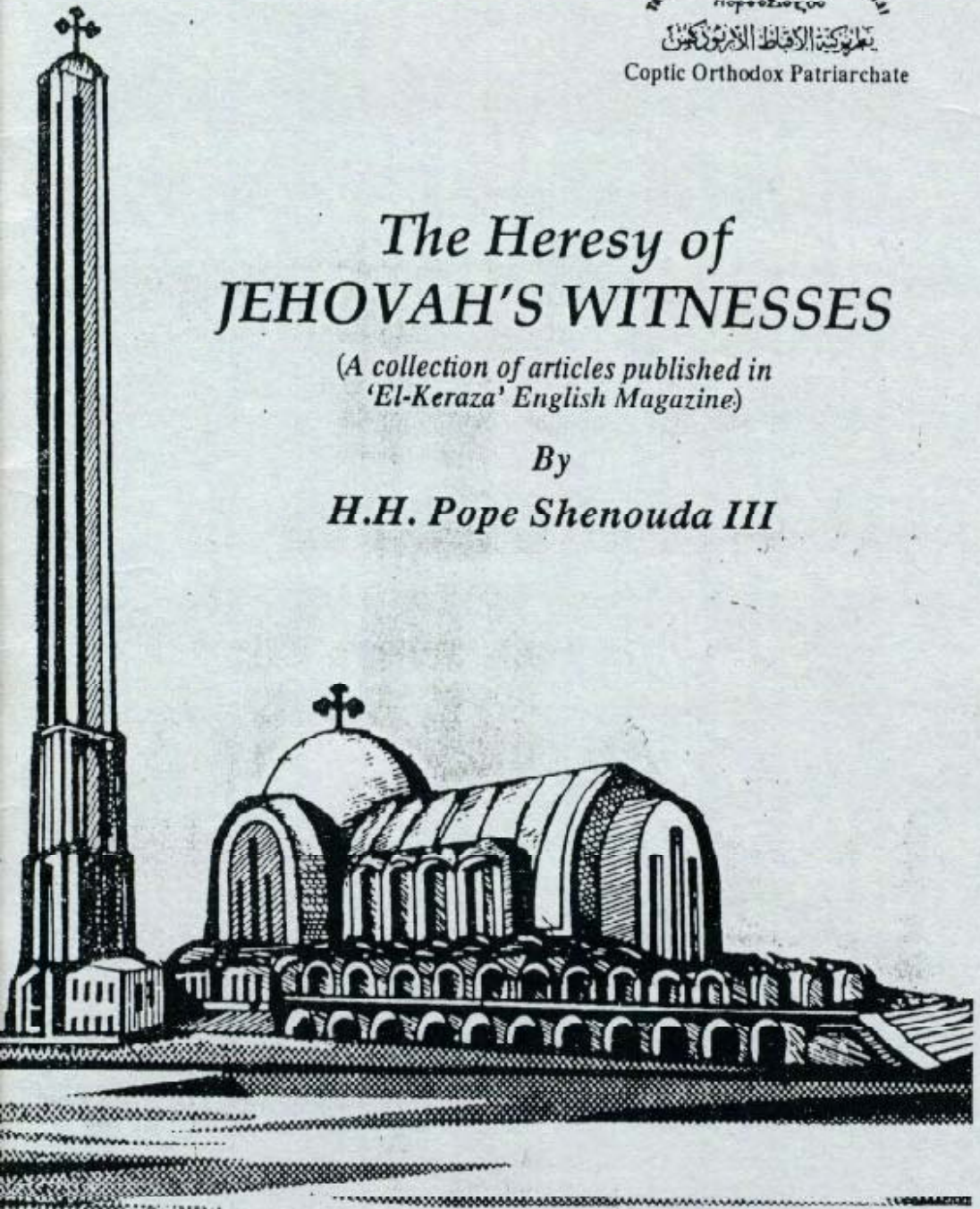
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Coptic Orthodox Patriarchate

The Heresy of **JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES**

*(A collection of articles published in
'El-Keraza' English Magazine)*

By

H.H. Pope Shenouda III





**COPTIC ORTHODOX
PATRIARCHATE**



See of St. Mark

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**BY
H.H. POPE SHENOUDA III**

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*H.H. Pope Shenouda III, 117th Pope of
Alexandria and the See of St. Mark*

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INTRODUCTION

Jehovah's Witnesses are not Christians. Although they believe in the New Testament, it is their own incorrect translation that is misconstrued to suit their beliefs. They do not call themselves Christians, but 'Jehovah's Witnesses' - 'Jehovah' being a name of God used in the Old Testament.

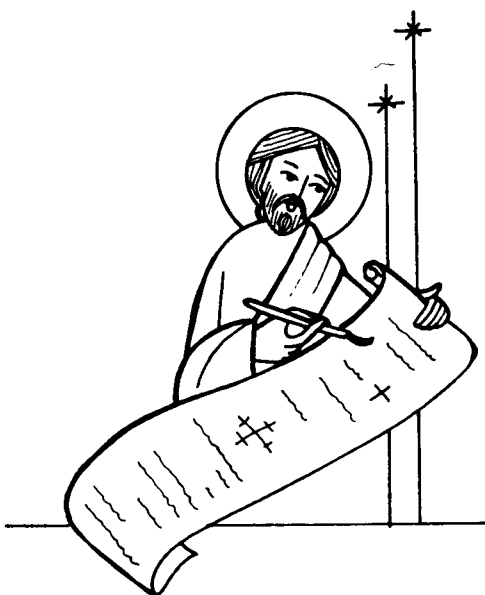
Their doctrine regarding the Lord Jesus Christ is completely different to the Christian doctrine; it is a mixture of the heresy of Arius, and other new heresies. They have even reached a level much worse than that of Arius by far.

Many governments have expelled Jehovah's Witnesses from their countries because they sensed the danger which they {presented to the country's general peace}. Therefore, {it can be said that} they do not only propagate false religious beliefs, but they also propagate dangerous political ideas.

As they say that the Church is a product of the devil, they also say that governments are a product of the devil, and encourage people not to enter the armed forces. They also consider saluting the flag as idolatry.

Jehovah's Witnesses do not believe in the immortality of the soul and say that this is the teaching of the devil. They also say that after a person dies, he lives happily in the 'earthly paradise', thus contradicting all the promises of the heavenly kingdom.

We are currently in the process of preparing a detailed book about Jehovah's Witnesses. {It will respond to their ideas which have now spread to many countries in the East and West.} This booklet is merely a collection of articles that were published in the 'El-Keraza' English magazine, and which we considered publishing and distributing as an introduction to the upcoming book.



THE HERESY OF JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES

Historical Background

Jehovah's Witnesses are a group which appeared in the second half of the nineteenth century. Their founder, Charles Russell, was born in 1854 in Pennsylvania, U.S.A.

Russell was a Christian, but was influenced in his youth by Arian and Seventh-Day Adventist teaching, as well as the ideas of some atheists. From amongst all this mixture, he formed his doctrine around the year 1872 and published it in the United States of America. He was able to collect a fortune worth approximately five million dollars, which he used for industrial and commercial projects.

His wife sued him on the grounds of marital betrayal at the Hamilton court which ruled in her favour, making him pay a fine and approving her divorce application. Some farmers also commenced proceedings against him on the grounds of fraud and swindling because he sold to them wheat which he called, 'miracle wheat' at a very high price, claiming that it was from the holy land and that it was many times more abundant than the normal harvest. {Of course none of this was true, the wheat was normal American wheat.}

In 1878 he renounced all Christian doctrine and in 1879 he published the 'Watch Tower' magazine, and thus this name distinguished the publications and societies of Jehovah's

Witnesses. In the year 1884 he incorporated the “Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society”.

Russell died in 1916 and was succeeded by Judge Joseph Rutherford.

Their False Prophecies

One of the most amazing doctrines preached by Jehovah’s Witnesses is that dealing with the Second Coming. Russell said that the world would end in 1914 with the Second Coming of Christ and that the Jews would be assembled together and govern the earth. However, the prophecy was not fulfilled and he died shortly afterwards in 1916. Jehovah’s Witnesses {then} changed their thoughts to the following:

They said that the Lord Jesus Christ did not actually physically come in 1874, but did so spiritually, and that He commenced ‘harvesting’ in 1878, gathering the ‘chosen’. In the year 1914 the Father (Jehovah) enthroned Him and Judgement began. Hence, many wrote their wills and left their riches to Jehovah’s Witnesses in preparation for Judgement and the end of the world.

As for Russell’s successor, Rutherford, he said that Abraham, the father of the prophets, would come to the world with a group of prophets in 1925 and he prepared a palace in California to receive them which cost \$75 000.

He dwelt with his wife in this palace awaiting their visitors, the prophets who, of course, have not come till now.

Jehovah's Witnesses are not Christians

Although they believe in the New Testament, they are not Christians; they do not accept this title nor are they related to Christ. They are related to 'Jehovah', one of the names of God in the Old Testament. They are against Christianity, they do not believe in it and attack it as they do every other religion without exception.

The copy of the New Testament which they have is their own special translation, in which they delete and change as they wish, and they do not accept any other translation.

Therefore, extensive discussions with them are not fruitful, for there is nothing easier than quoting a verse to them and having them deny its existence, saying that it is not so in their translation, or interpreting it in a roundabout way.

Jehovah's Witnesses are a dangerous organisation

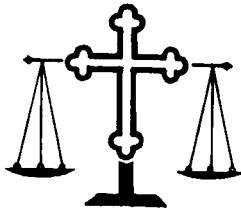
They are dangerous from a political point of view. They view all governments as products of Satan. They do not acknowledge armies, regarding them also as a product of Satan; they refuse to carry out any military service. Some see them as a Zionist or Communist organisation.

Their Publications

They have many books, pamphlets and tracts as well as a magazine called 'Watch Tower'. Amongst their most famous books are, *Let God be True, The Harp of God, You Can live Forever on Earth, Let Your Kingdom Come, The Truth That Leads to Eternal Life, The Bible: God's Word or Man's, Preparation,* as well as many others.

Their Beliefs

We can say that they are an assembly of all the heresies, both old and new.



THEIR FALSE TRANSLATION OF THE BIBLE

✧ Jehovah's Witnesses are not Christians. They are not attributed to Christ and they do not call themselves Christians.

They are attributed to Jehovah, one of the names of God in the Old Testament. This is evidence that their doctrine has a Jewish influence, proving their belief in the Sabbath.

✧ They believe that Christ is a god, but not God.

This is probably because they were influenced by certain doctrines of Neo-Platonism or Gnosticism. This is the reason they alter John 1:1 and say that 'the Word was a god'.

✧ They have their own translation of the Holy Bible,

In which they alter the verses in order to suit their doctrines, such as John 1: 1. Acts 20: 28 reads "...the church of God which He purchased with His own blood", and this indicates that God took flesh, purchased the Church with His own blood, and thus, Christ is God. As for the translation used by Jehovah's Witnesses, it replaces the last phrase with '*with the blood of His own*'.

✚ The Jehovah's Witnesses' translation of the Bible is called the New World Translation of the Scriptures.

In this translation they alter the Holy Bible to suit their teachings. We can take one such example:

Jehovah's Witnesses do not believe that the spirit is everlasting; they do not even agree with the existence of the spirit and they {say}, as do Seventh Day Adventists, that when a person dies, that person neither senses, nor feels, nor knows; having neither life nor consciousness. Here, the words of our Lord to the repentant thief in Luke 23: 43, "*Assuredly I say to you: 'today you will be with Me in Paradise'*" stand against this teaching. As long as he will be with the Christ in Paradise, then he has a living spirit which can enjoy the association with the Lord Jesus Christ.

In this case, what do they do? They merely change the beginning of Christ's words, making the translation read as follows: "I say unto you today: 'you shall be with me in Paradise...'" When will the Lord be in Paradise? Perhaps after the general resurrection, according to their teachings.

One of the verses which indicates the Divine Incarnation clearly is, "... *great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in the flesh*" (1 Timothy 3:16). Jehovah's Witnesses translate this verse as, '...great is the mystery of godliness which was manifest in flesh', with the deletion of the word 'God', the meaning is incorrect.



SOME OF THEIR HERESIES REGARDING CHRIST

✧ Despite their belief that the Lord Jesus Christ is a god, and that He is a mighty god (Isaiah 9:6), they do not consider that He is the Almighty God, {hence implying that they believe in polytheism.}

✧ Jehovah's Witnesses say that the bowing of the Magi before our Lord Jesus Christ proves that they were led by Satan.

✧ They say that Christ was created and pre-existed in heaven. The purpose for His coming down from heaven is to be a witness to the kingdom of Jehovah. In this way they fall into the heresy of Arius which was anathematised by the Nicene Ecumenical Council in 325 A.D. Saint Athanasius was the hero who defended the Divinity of Christ there.

✧ They believe that the Lord Jesus Christ was assigned as a son to God in Baptism, which was the beginning of his second birth. The Lord Jesus Christ became a spiritual son to God in it, and a king over the Kingdom of Jehovah. Actually, Baptism was one of the occasions in which the Father witnessed to this Sonship saying, "*This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased*" (Matthew 3:17). John the Baptist also witnessed to this, saying, "*And I have seen and testified that this is the Son of God*" (John 1:34).

However, at the time of the Annunciation, prior to the Baptism and Birth, the angel said to the Virgin, “*that (the) Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God*” (Luke 1:35). It is said in the Creed that the Son is, ‘born of the Father before all ages’. The Father witnessed to Him in the second Psalm saying, “*You are MY Son, Today I have begotten You*” (Psalm 2:7). Saint Paul quoted this phrase saying, “For to which of the angels did He ever say: You are My Son, Today I have begotten You ... And again...But when He again brings the firstborn into the world, He says: “*Let all the angels of God worship Him*” (Hebrews 1:5-6).

✚ They say that the Lord Jesus Christ took the Divine Nature in Baptism. This, of course, is against Christ’s ability to create: “All things were made through Him” and “*He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him*” (John 1); how could He then create the world if He is not God?

✚ Jehovah’s Witnesses say that the Lord Jesus Christ does not have an immortal soul, but that He gained immortality as a reward for His success in examination and His loyalty to His Father until death. They say that Christ was not immortal at the beginning of His creation, thus meaning that eternal life is dependent upon eternal obedience. However, the time came when Jehovah (God) granted his son immortality, after a test of obedience. This is impossible, because how can Christ be without an immortal soul, when He is the One who created everything, “*All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made*” (John 1:3).

✚ They also say that Christ did not rise in flesh, and did not ascend to heaven in flesh, but that His crucified Body was taken out from the tomb and hidden by the angel with the penetrating power of God and that He arose in spirit only. Naturally, this is against the saying of the Lord Jesus Christ to His disciples after the Resurrection, “*Handle Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see I have ... And He took it (fish) and ate in their presence*” (Luke 24:39-43). {Furthermore}, He let Thomas touch the place of His wounds (John 20:27-29).

✚ The actual meaning of resurrection is that it is a resurrection of the body because the spirit does not die; it is the body which is resurrected after the spirit’s reunion with it. Therefore, if the body does not rise, then there is no resurrection at all.

✚ They {say} that Christ did not ascend to heaven with a disfigured body, because if He did then He would be less than the angels. We do not see Christ’s wounds as a disfigurement of His Body, but as a sign of His love for and Redemption of us; we say with Isaiah the prophet, “... *and by His stripes we are healed*” (Isaiah 53:5).

The Book of Revelations states that He was seen in heaven in the appearance of “*a Lamb as though it had been slain*” (Revelations 5:6), and that the Priests worshipped Him, saying “...*You are worthy to take the scroll (the Bible) and to open its seals; for You were slain, and have redeemed us to God by Your blood*” (Revelations 5:9).



IS JESUS CHRIST THE ARCHANGEL MICHAEL ?

Jehovah's Witnesses say that Jesus Christ is the Archangel Michael, and this belief is expressed in their book, *This Means Everlasting Life*, which is their commentary on Revelations 12:13-19:5. *The Harp of God* is their commentary on Daniel 12:1 and *Salvation* is their commentary on Revelations 12:7-9.

In Reply to this:

✠ **Saint Paul the Apostle clarified that the Divinity of Christ is much higher than that of angels.**

In Hebrews 1:3-14, he presented proof of this in the following points:

(1) The sitting of Christ on the right hand of God on high (Hebrews 1:3). This fact is also mentioned in Mark 16:19 and Acts 7:56. The Father said to the Son, "*Sit at My right hand, till I make Your enemies Your footstool*" (Hebrews 1:13 and Psalm 110:1).

(2) The angels worshipping the Lord Jesus Christ in Hebrews 1:6. This worshipping was also mentioned in Philippians 2:10.

(3) There is witness in the book of Psalms to Christ when it says, *“Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; A scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your kingdom”* (Psalm 45:6), whereas it is said about the angels, *“Who makes His angels spirits, His ministers a flame of fire”* (Psalm 104:4).

(4) Christ is ‘the Creator’ in Psalm 102:25-27. This is also mentioned in John 1:3, *“All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made”* and *“He was in the world, and the world was made through Him”* (John 1:10). As long as He created all things, then this includes the angels, amongst whom is the Archangel Michael.

(5) It was said about the Lord Jesus Christ, “You have put all things under His feet” (Psalm 8:6 and Hebrews 2:8), whereas, *“He has not put the world....in subjection to angels”* (Hebrews 2:5). However, the Lord Jesus Christ said about Himself, *“All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth”* (Matthew 28:18). This authority, of course, includes authority over angels.

We wish to add the following points to all of this:

(1) It was said about the Archangel Michael in his contention with the devil that he *“dared not bring against him a reviling accusation, but said, ‘The Lord rebuke You!’”* (Jude 9), whereas, the Lord Jesus Christ rebuked the devil many times (Mark 1:25, 27). He also cast out demons from many people and He gave His disciples authority to cast out demons (Matthew 10: 1, 8 and Luke 10:17).

(2) It was said about the Lord Jesus Christ that, “*(He) made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a servant*” (Philippians 2:7) whereas the angel is a servant to God by his nature (Revelations 19:10).

(3) It was said about the angels that they are sons of God (Job 1:6 and 38:7). As for Christ, He is the Only Son (John 3:16 & 18; 1:18 and 1 John 4:9) which means that He is the only One of His Nature and Essence.

(4) The Lord Jesus Christ said that He and the Father are one (John 10:30), a statement which neither angel nor archangel could dare make.

(5) Neither the Archangel Michael nor any of the other archangels were described with the characteristics which are unique to God alone, such as His omnipresence, immortality, ability to create and reading thoughts.

(6) It was said about the Lord Jesus Christ that the angels are “*His angels*” (Matthew 13:41; 16:27 and 24:31). This means that they all conform to Him, including the Archangel Michael.

✚ Another point which we can add is that Jehovah’s Witnesses mix between the Lord being an angel and His appearance in the form of an angel.

The Lord’s occasional appearance in the Old Testament in the form of an angel does not mean that He is an angel, for He also appeared in the form of a man, as in Genesis 32: 24-30... does this mean that God is a man?



THE ETERNAL EARTHLY PARADISE

Jehovah's Witnesses and Seventh Day Adventists believe that the reward of the righteous will be a paradise on earth. Regarding this they say, that:

- There is no inspired scripture which contains a promise that the redeemed will be given heaven as an eternal homeland.
- God created the earth for the people to dwell in, Satan took the earth by force and sin delayed the divine plan- until this earth returns to the children of God.
- God's promise to Abraham regarding the ownership of the earth shall be realised after He purifies it; Jerusalem will then become the capital of this kingdom.
- People will live happily in this earthly paradise and Isaiah's prophecy will be fulfilled in them, "*They shall build houses and inhabit them; They shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit*" (Isaiah 65..21).

In reply to this heresy we say:

(1) The promise of granting them the earth, houses and trees is against the eternal joy that the Holy Bible spoke about, "*Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of*

man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him” (1 Corinthians 2:9).

(2) All of these physical pleasures such as eating, drinking, living in houses and the enjoyment of gardens are materialistic matters, whereas the Bible teaches us that the Day of Resurrection will be with spiritual, heavenly bodies (1 Corinthians 15:44, 49-50). Therefore, how can these heavenly bodies enjoy materialistic things?

(3) It is not possible that people will labour in eternity in building houses and planting vines - and the prophecies of the Old Testament were not about an eternal earthly life. Likewise, God’s promise to Abraham was with respect to his children on earth, and a symbol of heaven.

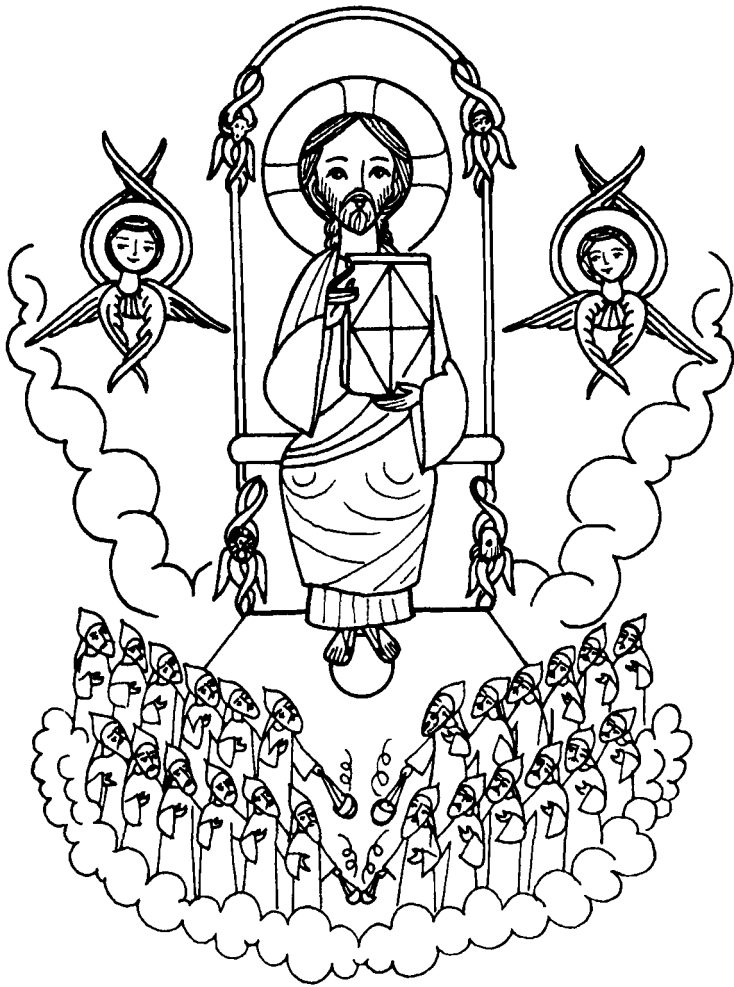
(4) The Bible says that this earth will pass away, it will not be purified and prepared for inhabitancy. The Lord Jesus Christ said, *“heaven and earth (will) pass away”* (Matthew 5:18), this was also mentioned in the book of Revelation (21:1).

(5) The Parables that the Lord said about *‘the kingdom of heaven’*, as in Matthew 13, 24:31-47, 18:23, 20:1, 22:2 and 25:1, are numerous. The verses about the kingdom of heaven are many and the most famous are: *“...but whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven”* (Matthew 5:19), and *“Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven”* (Matthew 7:21). The promise of the kingdom of heaven can be found in the sermon on the mount; Our Lord said, *“Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven”* (Matthew 5:12, Luke

6:23); “...but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven” (Luke 10:20); and “...lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven” (Matthew 6:20).

Saint Paul the Apostle is clear in saying, “*For we know that if our earthly house, this tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens*” (2 Corinthians 5:1, 2). This verse is clear and does not agree with the phrase, “They shall build houses and inhabit them.” Also read Colossians 1:5, Hebrews 12:23, Mark 12:25, 2 Timothy 4:8 and Hebrews 11:16.

(6) Saint Paul the Apostle speaks about all the believers being ‘caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air’, “*And thus we shall always be with the Lord*” (1 Thessalonians 4:17). The Lord says about His Second Coming that, “*He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other*” (Matthew 24:31). He also says, “*And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also*” (John 14:3).



JEHOVAH’S WITNESSES DO NOT BELIEVE IN THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL

They say that man’s soul dies when his body dies, and that there is no difference between the death of man and the death of animals. They believe that immortality is a specific characteristic of Jehovah alone.

The only person that will gain immortality is he who passes the test during his life on earth. The soul is not immortal by its nature, but immortality is granted to it by God if it succeeds in its spiritual wars.

Jehovah’s Witnesses say that Jesus Christ Himself does not have an immortal soul, but gained immortality as a reward for His success in the test and for His faithfulness to the Father until death.

They say that Satan is the first teacher of immortality. He proclaimed immortality when he said to Adam and Eve, “*You will not surely die*” (Genesis 3:4). He was a liar in saying this, and hence immortality is a lie from Satan.

They proclaim that when man dies, he will have no sensation, feeling or comprehension, and will continue as such until the day of the resurrection.

That is why they do not believe in the intercession of the saints who departed from our world, considering that their spirits have died, not returning to a state of feeling or hearing.

Hence, they say that Christ Himself cannot be God, since He is not immortal by His nature, but gained immortality after His success.

In like manner, they deny eternal suffering for the wicked; considering that if their spirits are not immortal, how can they live eternally in suffering?

Jehovah's Witnesses attempt to prove mortality of the soul by what was mentioned in the book of Ezekiel, "the soul who sins shall die". The explanation of this verse is that here, the word "soul" means 'the whole person', as it was said that eight souls were saved in the ark (1 Peter 3:20), meaning eight persons. The king of Sodom also said to our father Abraham, "*Give me the souls (persons), and take the goods for yourself*" (Genesis 14:21). Likewise, it was said in Acts 2:41, "Then those who gladly received his word were about three thousand souls", that is to say 'persons'. Similarly, refer to: Acts 27:37, James 5:19, 20, 1 Peter 1:9, Proverbs 25:25, Exodus 31:14, Leviticus 19:8, Genesis 12:5, and Genesis 3:7.

In Reply to the Heresy of Jehovah's Witnesses:

- 1. The creation of man in God's likeness and image (Genesis 1:26,27).**

God is immortal and hence man is also immortal.

- 2. Man is not like animals.**

Since God breathed the breath of life into Adam and he became a living being (Genesis 2:7).

- 3. The Bible says that God is "*the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of the living and not of the dead*" (Luke 20: 37, 38).**

Hence Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and the like were and are still alive and their spirits have not died through their {physical} death.

- 4. The book of Revelations mentions the souls that were killed under the altar (Revelations 6:9-11), and how they spoke to God, and God spoke to them.**

Hence their souls were not dead.

5. At the time of Saint Stephen's martyrdom he said, "*Lord Jesus, receive my spirit*" (Acts 7:59).

This, of course, does not mean that He would receive a spirit which does not feel or sense.

6. It is said in the book of Ecclesiastes about death, "*Then the dust will return to the earth as it was, and the spirit will return to God who gave it*" (Ecclesiastes 12:7),

Its return to God means it is alive.

7. In the book of Job, it is said, "*and after my skin is destroyed, this I know, that in my flesh I shall see God*" (job 19:26,27).

How can he see God if in his death his spirit cannot feel, see or comprehend?

8. What can we then say about the miracles of raising the dead, which are many.

Like the story of the rich man and Lazarus (Luke 16).

9. As for the Lord's saying to the repentant thief, "*Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise*" (Luke 23:43), Jehovah's Witnesses, {as was

mentioned before}, have tried to alter the translation to become, ‘Assuredly I say to you today, you will be with Me in Paradise.’

It is clear that this misconstruction is not logical.

10. The expression, ‘the death of man’ means the separation of his spirit from his body, and it does not mean the death of his spirit.

Jehovah’s Witnesses mix between the spirit and the body - See 1 Thessalonians 5:23. The expression, “*the soul that sins will die*” (Ezekiel 18:4), means that the person who sins will die the eternal death in “*the lake of fire and brimstone*” (Revelations 20:10).

11. What about the spirit of Moses the prophet then, that appeared on the Mount of Transfiguration with Christ?

Our Lord was speaking with Moses (Mark 9:4), who had died 1400 years beforehand. Was Moses’ spirit dead, without feeling or comprehension?



THE DOCTRINE OF ANNIHILATION

Jehovah's Witnesses believe in the annihilation of the wicked and not in their torture; even Satan will be annihilated and not tortured. Our father Adam has also died and will not rise again.

1. They do not believe in the immortality of the soul.

They {say} that the idea of the immortality of the soul was invented by Satan when he said to Adam and Eve, "*You will not surely die*" (Genesis 3:4). It is as if the soul of man is like that of an animal, being annihilated and terminated! Eternal life, in their view, is a gift which God grants to the righteous, but it is not of the nature of the soul.

2. They believe that the punishment of annihilation is for all the wicked, even Satan himself.

In their doctrine Satan will be annihilated, he will cease to exist and not be tortured. This, of course, is against the teaching of the Bible. Thus it was written in the book of Revelations, "*And 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 20:10). All the wicked will share in this fate, as the Lord said to those on His left, "*Depart from Me, you cursed, into the*

everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels” (Matthew 25:41).

3. The Bible did not say ‘annihilation’, but ‘torture’, day and night, forever and ever.

Satan will share in the punishment of the fire and brimstone, along with his angels, the beast, the false prophet and all the wicked. Hence, the Lord {has clearly defined the fate of both the wicked and the righteous;} “*And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life*” (Matthew 25:46). He {spoke about} the fate of all those who worship the beast and his image {saying} that they will be “*...tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever; and they have no rest day or night*” (Revelation 14:10-11).

The phrase, “they have no rest” does not agree with annihilation, and likewise, the phrase, “*tribulation and anguish*” as is found in Romans 2:8,9 (“tribulation and anguish, on every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek”). {Furthermore,} it was said about the Second Coming of the Lord that, “*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, and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth*” (Matthew 13:41,42). Naturally, annihilation does not agree with wailing and gnashing of teeth. Likewise, the rich man asked of our father Abraham to send to him Lazarus with a

drop of water to cool his tongue, for he was tormented in that flame (Luke 16:24).

4. The question of annihilation and the lack of torment leads people to carelessness.

The lack of punishment will make them say, as some atheist philosophers have said, “*Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die*” (1 Corinthians 15:32), {{in order to satisfy themselves with the desires of the world.}}

5. The idea of annihilation encourages those who commit suicide.

He who commits suicide thinks that death will relieve him from his torment in the world, but we warn him of the torment after death, since through suicide, he will meet death while being a killer of a soul. In this way, eternal punishment awaits him. If however, he was to be annihilated, then he truly would have been liberated from earthly torment, and without torment after death.

6. Similarly, annihilation is against the resurrection and the judgement of the wicked.

For what does it mean that God raises thousands of millions of wicked people from death to say to them, “I have raised you to say to you go and die again”?

If Jehovah's Witnesses, however, say that the dead will not rise, then we can place before them the Lord's saying, "*....all who are in the graves will hear His voice and come forth - those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation*" (John 5:28,29). Likewise, what is the meaning of the judgement which is found in (Matthew 25:31-46), in which the Lord will separate the righteous on His right and the wicked on His left?

7. In the same way, the punishment of annihilation makes all the wicked equal in reward.

Whereas it was said that the Lord will reward each according to his works (Matthew 16:27), the works of the wicked differ in levels and ugliness. For this reason the Lord said about the city of Capernaum which rejected Him, "*that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgement than for you*" (Matthew 11:24).



THEIR BELIEF IN NUMEROUS RESURRECTIONS

Jehovah's Witnesses believe in numerous resurrections, each one being for a particular group of people, whereas the Holy Bible teaches that there is only one resurrection for all people, the righteous and the wicked, together. It says, "*...the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice and come forth - those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation*" (John 5:28-29). As for Jehovah's Witnesses, they believe in the following resurrections:

1. The resurrection of the little flock.

This title was mentioned in Luke 12:32, and what is meant by it is those who will enter through the narrow gate, of which the Lord said, "*Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it*" (Matthew 7:14).

Jehovah's Witnesses, however, see that this resurrection is for them, those of them who have died, as well as the living who, when they die, will complete the number, which is only 144 000. They will rise with heavenly, or spiritual, bodies. This description is mentioned in 1 Corinthians 15:44 & 49, but this

was said about everyone and not just about the 144 000; perhaps they took the number 144 000 from Revelations 7:4. The details of what was mentioned in this verse do not apply to Jehovah's Witnesses, neither does what was mentioned in Revelations 14:1-5.

They {say} that this resurrection started in the year 1914, and that it is the first resurrection, but since the number is not complete, the resurrection will be completed with those Jehovah's Witnesses who are still alive.

It is impossible that the heavenly or spiritual resurrection is only for one seventh of a million people from amongst the hundreds of millions of believers, this being repeated in many generations!

If we complete what was mentioned in Revelations 7, we read these verses: *"After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne (i.e. in heaven) and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands..."*, *"Therefore, they 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"* (Revelations 7:9-15).

2. The second resurrection that Jehovah's Witnesses believe in is the earthly resurrection.

They call it the resurrection of 'the Other Sheep'. These people will remain in earthy bodies, living on earth, and will be governed from heaven by the 144 000. These include the

righteous people of the Old Testament, amongst them being Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and David, whom they call, ‘the princes of earth.’

This resurrection also includes evil-doers, who will be given a chance of one thousand years to repent.

A righteous government on earth will be established for the people of this earthly resurrection and they will marry and give birth in the shadow of the rule of the kingdom.

3. There is a resurrection for a third group, this being for righteous people who are not from amongst Jehovah’s Witnesses.

They will rise in the second resurrection in the second thousand years.

Jehovah’s Witnesses also say that the day of judgement is one thousand years and that some people will not rise at all, such as Adam, who perished and was annihilated.



THE HOLY SPIRIT, HYPOSTASIS OR POWER?

Jehovah's Witnesses do not believe that the Holy Spirit is a Hypostasis (a 'Person' of the Holy Trinity), but that He is merely a power!

To this view, we say that the verses speaking about the Holy Spirit in the Bible prove that He is a Hypostasis in the following ways:

- **He speaks.**

For the Lord said to His saintly disciples *"for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you"* (Matthew 10:20). And Saint Paul the apostle says, *"Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts"* (Hebrews 3:7-9). It is the Spirit who said, *"Now, separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them"* (Acts 13:2). Therefore, He speaks and calls.

- **He teaches, reminds, guides, tells and convicts.**

This is evident in the words of the Lord to the disciples about the Holy Spirit, for He says, *"He will teach you all things, and*

bring to your remembrance all the things that I said to you” (John 14:26), and “When He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth ... and He will tell you things to come” (John 16:13), and “He will convict the world of sin” (John 16:8).

- **He leads the believers, whether they be congregation or individuals.**

Saint Paul the apostle says that, *“For as many as are led the Spirit of God, these are sons of God” (Romans 8:14).*

- **He also sets up shepherds.**

Saint Paul the Apostle said to the bishops of Ephesus, *“Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers” (Acts 20:28);* also see Acts 13:2.

- **It is also the Holy Spirit Who determines the way and movement of ministers.**

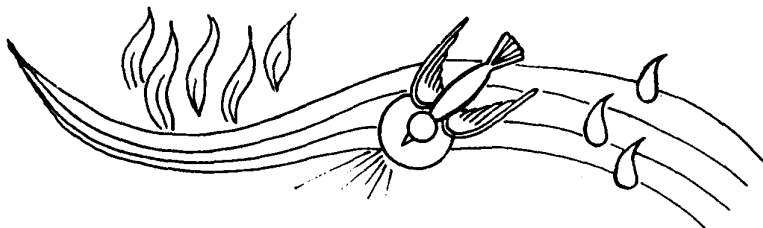
Saint Luke the Evangelist says of Saint Paul and his companions, *“Now when they had gone through Phrygia and the region of Galatia, they were forbidden by the Holy Spirit to preach the word in Asia. After they had come to Mysia, they tried to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit did not permit them” (Acts 16:6,7).*

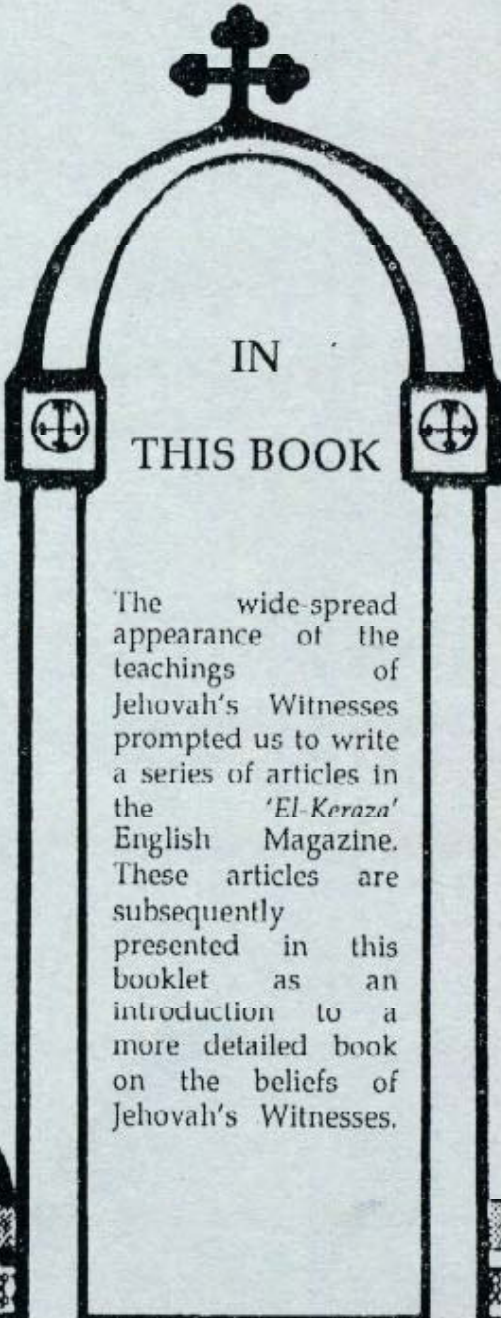
The Holy Spirit helps and comforts the believers, making intercession for them.

The Lord Jesus Christ says, *“And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever”* (John 14:16). Saint Paul says of Him, *“the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered”* (Romans 8:26).

Since He speaks, teaches, reminds, guides, tells, convicts, leads the believers and sets up shepherds, determining their movement and helping and interceding, does it not follow that He is a Hypostasis?

As for the power, it is a consequence of His coming upon the believers, *“But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you”* (Acts 1:8). His coming upon believers also gives zeal and wisdom and knowledge.





IN
THIS BOOK

The wide-spread appearance of the teachings of Jehovah's Witnesses prompted us to write a series of articles in the 'El-Keraza' English Magazine. These articles are subsequently presented in this booklet as an introduction to a more detailed book on the beliefs of Jehovah's Witnesses.

