

THE WATCHTOWER HERESY VERSUS THE BIBLE

by

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CHAPTER FOUR

WORKING OUT SALVATION-HOW GREAT THE PRICE?

NOW WE FACE THE QUESTION: ARE JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES ALLOWED SALVATION? The answer is, No! Neither now nor on the deathbed. There is no room in their theology for the assurance of salvation of a born-again believer.

Speaking of sin and the price for its removal, the book *From Paradise Lost to Paradise Regained* says on page 143: "However, God could arrange for the price to be paid by another who was willing and able to do so. In this way those who suffered wrongly because of Adam's sin could have AN OPPORTUNITY for life" (Emphasis mine). Notice it is not suffering for OUR OWN sins, but only Adam's. Also it is not LIFE, but an OPPORTUNITY!

Now on page 241 we read these discouraging words: "Now what have we learned about judgment? We have learned that a person could fall away and be judged unfavorably either now or at Armageddon, or during the thousand years of Christ's reign, or at the end of the final test."

Here, in a nutshell, is their formula for salvation:

- First, page 242 of the same book: "First, if you want to receive God's blessings you must study his Bible."
- Now on to page 244: "What is the second of the things you must do to get ready for life in the new paradise? You must meet with other people who have this same knowledge and faith."
- Then, page 246: "The third thing that you must do in order to receive God's favor is to change your living from the former way to God's way."

Note that all of this is NOT for salvation, but for "God's blessings" and/or "favor." In order to get people to believe all this, a door-to-door routine is required, selling books printed by the Watchtower Society. Page 249 says: "We have to do more than merely accept the kingdom message. . . . We must also publicly declare that Kingdom to others." Their final word of advice on how to get started in this bookselling career is found on page 250: "Follow him by dedicating yourself." What they mean is, dedicate yourself to a career of bookselling and indoctrinating others even as you yourself have been indoctrinated.

To discourage the Witnesses from entertaining hopes of a present and lasting salvation, the book *Make Sure Of All Things* under the subject, "Salvation" raises this question on page 332: "If 'Once Saved Always Saved,' Why Did God Reject Israel Whom He Saved From Egypt?" They then quote their favorite text (taken out of its context, of course), Philippians 2:12: "**Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.**"

In this book they make an interesting statement on page 336: "To Jehovah the Saviour-God, belongs all credit for salvation." At Titus 1:3, 4 we find that Jesus is the Saviour-God! If the Witnesses deny Jesus as Saviour, they deny Him as Messiah, or Christ. Yet if they admit Him to be the Christ, then they have to admit Him to be the Saviour-God Jehovah! That is why you will never get a direct answer from a Jehovah's Witness on this question.

The Bible way of salvation is vastly different from the salvation-by-works plan of the Watchtower. If you ask a Witness whether or not he is saved, he cannot give you a straight-forward answer. He will say, "Well, I hope to be saved eventually." Or, "If I die faithful I have a chance to come back in the New World." Or again, "As long as I stay in the organization I have a chance to go through Armageddon, for the organization will be spared, not individuals." The Jehovah's Witness does not believe one can lose salvation, because he does not believe salvation can be possessed here and now.

Let us look at the Biblical promise of salvation that Jesus Christ brought down. In Isaiah 53 we find that Messiah was to accomplish the following: Bear our griefs and sicknesses; be wounded for our transgressions; become bruised for our iniquities and be chastised for us; Jehovah would lay our iniquity on him; He would bear our sin and intercede for us as transgressors.

A promise of Messiah's deliverance was also found in the time of Moses, when deadly serpents were sent throughout the land, taking the lives of the people. **'And the LORD said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live. And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole, and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived'** (Numbers 21:8, 9). This was not a salvation by good works, but by faith.

We read in John 3:14, 15: "**And 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.**" How plain and simple! Far different from the salvation by works as taught by the Witnesses is the salvation by the grace of God as taught by the Bible.

"For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not" (Ecclesiastes 7:20). **"Your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear"** (Isaiah 59:2). **"Yet thou sayest, Because I am innocent, surely his anger shall turn from me. Behold, I will plead with thee, because thou sayest, I have not sinned"** (Jeremiah 2:35). You are free from the law you say, and therefore have not broken it? **"For as many as have sinned without the law shall also perish without law: and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law"** (Romans 2:12).

In their publications within the last few years, the Watchtower Society has recommended a self-eradication of sin. They teach that we can control over sin; that sin is only made up of bad habits, which, when constantly practiced, wear permanent “circuits” into our nervous system. They suggest that a gradual elimination of these practices will remove the “circuits.” Their method for accomplishing this is, of course, performing works for their organization. They suggest that such works thereby become works of righteousness, which will count up toward a treasure, which treasure could add up to salvation. Of course, this salvation is never fully paid for, so a follower can never get off the Watchtower treadmill!

To answer their favorite text on this subject, Philippians 2:12, note please the verse that follows: **“For it is GOD WHICH WORKETH IN YOU both TO WILL AND TO DO of his good pleasure.”** We see that it is GOD who is performing works, not man. God is at work through those ALREADY SAVED. Christians perform works BECAUSE they are saved, NOT in order to BE saved. By good works man cannot possibly save himself. **“But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away”** (Isaiah 64:6).

In this regard please see Romans 4:1-16. Jehovah’s Witnesses can offer nothing, of course, to a dying man. If a dying man wanted to repent and be saved, the Jehovah’s Witness would stand by with helpless hands, with no hope to offer. His technique is a long drawn-out process of debating and distributing Watchtower literature. And so, no hope for a dying man! Only for those capable of PRODUCING for the Watchtower theocratic-machine are given any reason to hope that they will finally be saved. There is no way of salvation to offer to a dying man.

There is no grace, no free salvation for anybody who believes. The Jehovah’s Witness has a secret fear which he keeps hidden in his heart—the fear never expressed, the fear of the Watchtower authority. Rather he should have a greater fear of coming judgment by God. **“We shall all stand before the judgment seat of God”** (Romans 14:10).

II Corinthians 5:10 expresses the warning: **“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.”**

The Witness is taught that these doctrines are not true. *The Watchtower* tells him that we have no souls and that we will never have to face God’s final judgment.

The salvation that Jesus brought removes fear of judgment, for **“there is therefore now NO CONDEMNATION to them that are in Christ Jesus”** (Romans 8:1). Why not? Because **“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).

“He that hath the SON HATH [present possession] life; and he that hath NOT the Son of God hath NOT life” (I John 5:12).

Man cannot work for his salvation by going from door to door with the Watchtower message. Only **“the blood of Jesus . . . cleanseth us from all sin”** (I John 1:7). Jesus told Nicodemus that he must be **“born again”** (John 3:7). He said this new birth came by the Spirit (John 3:8). Without the new birth, there remains nought but the fear of judgment coming (Hebrews 10:27).

The elect of God (Romans 8:28-33) are, according to Paul:

- 1) Predestinated;
- 2) Called;
- 3) Justified;
- 4) Glorified.

It is therefore God who has chosen us. *The Watchtower* relegates all Jehovah’s Witnesses to the servant or slave “class” (thus making them Watch tower slaves.) They use Luke 17: 10 as a basis: **“So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do.”** However, this text according to the Weymouth translation reads: “So you also, when you have obeyed all the orders given you, must say, ‘There is no merit in our service: what we have done is only what we were in duty bound to do.’” This does not teach that we should be “Watchtower slaves,” for works do not count for salvation! We are told at John 15:15, 16: **“HENCEFORTH I CALL YOU NOT SERVANTS; for the servant knoweth not what his Lord doeth: but I HAVE CALLED YOU FRIENDS . . . YE HAVE NOT CHOSEN ME, BUT I HAVE CHOSEN YOU.”**

I Corinthians 6:20 and 7:23 tells us **“Ye were bought with a price.”** Since we are the purchase of someone else, we are not our own. The debt of sin has been cancelled on our behalf, and the redeemed are now free. The sinless Lord Jesus Christ paid it all for us. **“If therefore the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed”** (John 8:36). **“Stand fast therefore in the liberty [not slavery] wherewith Christ hath made us free: and BE NOT ENTANGLED again WITH THE YOKE OF BONDAGE”** (Galatians 5:1).

We are considered **“crucified with Christ”** (Romans 6:6) when we are redeemed, or born again.

Also, **“If we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him”** (Romans 6: 8).

Therefore **“being then made free from sin, ye became servants of righteousness”** (Romans 6:18). So, **“Now being made free from sin and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life”** (Romans 6:22).

Where shall we spend this eternity? Jesus said, **“I go and prepare a place for you, I WILL COME AGAIN, and receive you UNTO MYSELF; that WHERE I AM, THERE YE MAY BE ALSO”** (John 14:3). Where did He go? **“My Father’s house,”** he said (John 14:2).

This promise we can claim only by faith, not by works.

This is definitely told at Romans 4:2-8, 16, 23-25: **“If Abraham was justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; BUT NOT BEFORE GOD. For what saith the Scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. Now to him that WORKETH IS THE REWARD NOT RECKONED OF GRACE, BUT OF DEBT.”** In other words, if by works, salvation would be merely wages paid for the work performed. But it is a free gift by grace.

“But to him that WORKETH NOT, but BELIEVETH ON HIM that justifieth the ungodly, HIS FAITH is counted for RIGHTEOUSNESS. Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth RIGHTEOUSNESS WITHOUT WORKS, saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and WHOSE SINS ARE COVERED.” Why is it so?

“Therefore it is of faith, THAT IT MIGHT BE BY GRACE” (V. 16). Abraham looked FORWARD TO the redemption by Messiah; we look BACKWARD TO His death on the cross for us. **“Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; but FOR US ALSO, to whom it shall be imputed, IF WE BELIEVE on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was DELIVERED FOR OUR OFFENCES, and was RAISED AGAIN FOR OUR JUSTIFICATION”** (4:23-25). And so **“being now justified BY HIS BLOOD, we shall be SAVED FROM WRATH [OF GOD] THROUGH HIM”** (5:9).

Again we are reminded of the “church father” Arius of Jehovah’s Witnesses. Their view of Christ and salvation stems from this source, which is a perverted view of Christ which, in turn leads to a perverted view of salvation.

The Jehovah’s Witness position partakes of this perversion. The following quotation is taken from James Hastings’ *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, Volume I, page 781, under the subject Arianism:

Despite all the efforts of Arius to popularize his opinions, they never found favour with the people. The movement was clerical rather than lay; the difficulties it sought to overcome were those of Origenist theologians perplexed by philosophical doubts and seeking an explanation where none was possible. Nor did Arianism pure and simple ever fail to arouse a strong feeling of indignation; the creed of Arius and Eunomius Sirminian “blasphemy,” the opinions of Arius and Eunomius all caused a storm.

It was only by insinuating itself in the plausible guise of Scriptural phraseology that Arianism ever obtained a hearing. Nor could it be otherwise. An Arian Christ, a created Logos unable to reveal an unknown God, could never be the Christ acknowledged by Christians as the Incarnate Word, the sole Mediator between God and man, the supreme Sacrifice for the sin of the world . . . Arianism does not seem to have sprung from any strong ethical impulse. Its philosophy was pagan, and the object of its leaders was political rather than religious.

Quoting the same authority, page 786:

Arianism declared God to be unknowable, and the Son completely detached from Him. Humanity can therefore never be brought by Christ to the truly Divine, but only to a sort of pseudo-divinity created in the Son by the Father . . .

If Jesus Christ existed from eternity, and is Head of a kingdom which shall have no end, if He is indeed to be worshipped and received as God, then the Nicene doctrine is true, and He is of one substance with the Father. Otherwise, Christians have been mistaken from the first in their conception of Him, and He is not Divine, but a creature . . .

Such is the source of the present-day Jehovah's Witness teachings. Consider that when this "new truth" is presented to you, it is old heresy, not new truth!

It is with joy and thanksgiving that the redeemed receive the words, "**The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death**" (Romans 8:2). And so "**ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, IF SO BE THAT the Spirit of God dwelleth in you. Now if any man HAVE NOT the Spirit of Christ, HE IS NONE OF HIS**" (Romans 8:9).

We cannot overemphasize the danger of the Arian heresy. The Bible warns us to steer clear of such teaching. *The Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia*, Volume I, page 281, says:

REFUTATION OF ARIANISM: On the other hand, Arianism was refuted by Scriptural passages, which teach directly or indirectly the divinity of Christ, and his essential equality with the Father. The conception of a created Creator, who existed before the world, and yet himself began to exist, was shown to be self-contradictory and untenable.

There can be no middle between Creator and creature; no time before the world, as time is itself a part of the world, or the form under which it exists successively; nor can the unchangeableness of the Father, on which Arius laid great stress, be maintained, except on the ground of the eternity of his Fatherhood, which, of course, implies the eternity of the Sonship . . .

Athanasius charges Arianism with dualism, and even polytheism, and with destroying the whole doctrine of salvation. For if the Son is a creature, man still remains separated, as before, from God: no creature can redeem other creatures, and unite them with God.

We stress the above because of its relation to the doctrine of salvation. A creature-Christ cannot save. No matter how much Jehovah's Witnesses insist they believe on Jesus Christ, their faith is vain because no such creature-Christ exists.

Unless a person is willing to see Christ as Thomas did, as his Lord and God, he will seek Him in vain. You either come God's way for salvation or you do not arrive.

"For as many as are LED BY THE SPIRIT of God, THEY ARE the sons of God" (Romans 8:14). The sweet, mystical union of His Spirit with our spirit (neither of which exists, according to Jehovah's Witnesses!) tells us so. "**The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we ARE the children of God**" (Romans 8:16).

Answering *Make Sure Of All Things* on the subject of losing one's salvation, note that God destroyed ONLY those Israelites who REFUSED TO BELIEVE (Jude 5). Regarding Hebrews 3:17 which the Witnesses use in their attempt to "prove" one's salvation can be lost, note that those whose bodies fell in the wilderness were of the original generation which began the journey, who would not believe God despite all the signs He gave them (Numbers 14:11).

Recall the words of Paul regarding those saved. He said that absolutely nothing could cause the believer to fall away once he was truly saved (Romans 8:38, 39). **“Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath began a good work in you WILL perform it until the day of Jesus Christ”** (Philippians 1:6). Paul expressed no doubt about it at all!

Jesus Christ is the author of our eternal salvation (Hebrews 5:9). Therefore HE was the full PRICE ALREADY PAID for our salvation. If He paid only part of the price and we must pay the rest, then His was not a REDEMPTIVE sacrifice. However, the price He paid needs no adding to (by works or otherwise), **“Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you”** (I Peter 1:10). When Jesus said, **“It is finished”** (John 19:30), He was speaking of that redemption which He came to earth to provide (Luke 19:10). He FINISHED the work!

Again refer to the words of Paul, **“for the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men”** (Titus 2:11). How? **“According to his MERCY he saved us, BY THE WASHING OF REGENERATION AND RENEWING OF THE HOLY GHOST”** (Titus 3:5).

And so the redeemed can join Paul, **“Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, SHALL GIVE ME AT THAT DAY [positive words, these!]; and not to me only, BUT UNTO ALL THEM THAT LOVE HIS APPEARING”** (II Timothy 4:8).

As it is, not all love His appearing (at the second Coming). Jehovah’s Witnesses do not even look forward to it. They scoff at the very thought of it. What fate awaits persons who continue like this till death? Eternal punishment. And even at this fact the Jehovah’s Witness mocks and scoffs.

One thing is certain: When they awake in that place they refuse to believe in, it will suddenly be a matter of mockery no more! Then they will wish that they had believed God’s Word while they were yet in this present life! But then it will be too late!

Stop and think, Jehovah’s Witness: What if it is true, after all? What then?

~ end of chapter 4 ~

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