

# The Discerner

the voice of... **Religion Analysis Service**

A QUARTERLY EXPOSING  
UNBIBLICAL TEACHING & MOVEMENTS

Volume 36, Number 3

July • August • September 2016

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"Hereby know we the spirit of truth  
and the spirit of error" 1 John 4:6

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## WITH THIS ISSUE

We want to thank-you for your condolences concerning the passing away of our long-time *Discerner* Editor Larry Sutherland. He leaves big shoes to fill and was certainly an inspiration to so many by his consistent example of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

During this time of change and transition at Religion Analysis Service, and especially for *The Discerner*, we welcome any suggestions you may have concerning this ministry. Are there some subjects that you would like us to address? By all means let us know your thoughts by letter, e-mail, or phone.

In this issue, we have several articles that we trust will be helpful and informative. We will begin with some news briefings.

Our feature article is by Eric Pement who actively serves for several Christian apologetics ministries. His article is on the Hebrew Israelite movement that is especially active among African-Americans. This small article is highly informative about a movement most of us are simply unaware of.

Next, we have another shorter article by Don and Joy Veinot of Midwest Christian Challenge ministry reporting on the activities of prominent Emergent church pastor Brian McLaren and his

relationship to the collection of apostates that gather at the *Wild Goose Festival*.

Also, we have the third installment of my article on the *Jehovah's Witnesses, Neutrality, and War* which should be a real eye-opener to anyone affiliated with the Watchtower.

And as always, we continue the tradition began by Larry Sutherland, of a fun but informative quiz to close out each issue of the Discerner. This issue's quiz topic is on the four New Testament gospels.

We love to hear from you. We hope that you find this issue a blessing to your faith.

*Steve Lagoon*

President, Religion Analysis Service

## IN THE NEWS

### **Dad, Mom, and . . .**

In a culture with so many broken families (divorced parents, step-parents, and even same-sex parents), do we need to do anything to add to the confusion? Unfortunately, some scientists want to do just that by experimenting with new reproductive procedures that will result in children with three (yes three), genetic parents.

Reporting for National Public Radio, Rob Stein provided the details of this proposal (*Babies With Genes From 3 People Could Be Ethical, Panel Says*, <http://krwg.org/post/babies-genes-three-people-could-be-ethical-panel-says>).

Stein's report included:

Scientists want to create eggs free of mitochondrial defects by removing the defective mitochondrial DNA. It would be replaced with healthy mitochondrial DNA from eggs donated by other women. The British government recently approved such experiments in that country. But this remains controversial, *not only due to the fact that the resulting children would have DNA from three people*. Because the transplanted DNA could be passed down for generations, critics fear it could accidentally

introduce errors into the human gene pool that could create new diseases. They also worry it would set a precedent that could open the door to creating designer babies, in which parents can pick and chose the traits of their children.

Alongside of these concerns, Stein also notes the psychological or emotional effects such procedures might have upon the children so conceived:

The committee report acknowledged that making babies with DNA from three different people could have "psychological and social effects" on the offspring, including issues about their "conception of identity."

We need to remember that just because we can do something doesn't mean we *should*. This line of scientific research may well be a Pandora's Box of unintended consequences wreaking untold damage to future families.

### **Islamic Honor Killings**

The late radio host Paul Harvey used to use a phrase to introduce unusual news accounts from around the world that seemed so strange to American ears. Surely, such an introduction would be fitting for the recent tragic death of a 17 year old girl in Pakistan. What makes her death so tragic is the fact that it was her own family that killed her.

The June 9, 2016 San Francisco Chronicle reported of the killing of Zeenat Rafiq (*San Francisco Chronicle, News of the Day From Around the World, Honor Killing, 6/9/2016, A-2*).

The report included the following:

A woman in Pakistan burned her 17 year-old daughter alive . . . to punish her for marrying against the family's wishes, the latest in a series of so-called 'honor killings' that claim the lives of nearly 1,000 women every year in the conservative Muslim country.

You might wish to be seated before reading what comes next:

Police say Zeenat Rafiq's mother, Parveen, tied her to a cot and drenched her with kerosene before lighting her on fire. Neighbors in the working-class neighborhood . . . came running when they heard the screams, but family members kept them from entering the house.

It is impossible to understand how someone can be so deceived as to believe such an act is a service to God. We are reminded that Satan is a thief that cometh to steal, kill, and destroy (John 10:10). Further, we recall that Jesus said that we shall know false prophets by their fruit (Matthew 7:15-16).

## THE CULTIC HEBREW ISRAELITE MOVEMENT

By Eric Pement

Those groups which identify themselves as “Hebrew Israelites” represent two Hebrew-oriented movements with distinct racial composition and beliefs. *What unites them is their conviction that people of color are the “true Israelites” or true Jews, that modern Judaism is a corrupt religion, that Jews in the State of Israel today are false Jews (or false Israelites), and that God’s followers must diligently use his proper Name and follow the commandments given to Israel through Moses, including circumcision, Sabbath observance, and regulations on clean and unclean foods.* Virtually all Hebrew Israelites condemn the celebration of Christmas, Easter, and Halloween/All Saints Day.

### **Emphasis on the Sacred or Divine Name**

Both kinds of “Hebrew Israelites” are expressions of the Sacred Name movement, a broader movement which holds that the common names for God or Jesus are ungodly substitutes for the True Names, which ought to be restored to Bible translations and religious speech. The English restorations are often Yah, Yahweh, Yahvah, YHVH, YHWH, Jehovah, or another rendering of the Tetragrammaton.

The name Jesus is usually replaced by Yahshua, Yeshuah, YAHuShuah, etc. A similar Hebraicizing occurs to other biblical names, including Satan. The Sacred Name movement promotes seventh-day Sabbath worship and was one of the key influences on Seventh-day Adventism, Jehovah’s Witnesses, and Armstrongism [Worldwide Church of God under Herbert Armstrong] and Black Hebrew Israelites.

The larger, better-known “Hebrew Israelites” are more commonly known as the Black Hebrew Israelites. This is itself a movement of different groups, leaders, and certain core doctrines. It is not related

to, nor does it include, the people group known as Ethiopian Jews, *Falasha* (now considered a derogatory term), or Beta Israel.

### **Distinctives of the Black Hebrews Israelites Movement**

The Black Hebrew Israelites is a U.S.-originated religious movement united on the following assertions:

(1) The Bible's patriarchs and prophets were all black-skinned (Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, David, Solomon, Jesus, etc.).

(2) People of color in North and South America are lineally descended from the 12 tribes of Israel. A schema popular to most Black Hebrews assigns the tribe of Judah to African Americans, Benjamin to the people of Jamaica and the West Indies, Gad to the aboriginal inhabitants of North America, Levi to Haitians, Ephraim to Puerto Ricans, Manasseh to Cubans, Issachar to Mexicans, etc. People of color are, whether they know it or not, Israelites.

(3) The black experience of the Middle Passage, slavery, lynching, and current high rate of imprisonment in the United States is seen as God's judgment, fulfilling the curses for disobedience set forth in Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28 in the Bible. This not only explains the disproportionate suffering that black people have experienced, but is used as a proof that they—and not the Jews—are the true covenant people of Israel.

(4) The “devil” who cast them into prison (see Rev 2:10) are the dominant Caucasian and Jewish people today. Some hold that the white races began as children of the Nephilim (Gen 6:3) or as a curse upon the seed of Gehazi (2Ki 5:27). Others hold that the white races are Edomites.

(5) With the soon-coming apocalypse (Armageddon), the tables will be turned on the Jewish and Euro-Caucasian-Gentile world, who shall be punished with eternal slavery to the people they had formerly brutalized.

### **Other Distinctives of the Movement**

Some early writings which influenced the first point (above), and aspects of the second and third points, appear in the books *From Babylon to Timbuktu* (1969) and *The Truth About Black Biblical Hebrew-Israelites* (1985).

*Conversion to a Black Israelite identity usually involves a rejection of the term “Christian,” the adoption of a new clothing (with fringe or*

*tassels for the men, a prominent cloth Star of David, headcoverings for the women), and exchanging one's former name for a new Hebrew name.*

For example, Hulon Mitchell Jr. became Yahweh Ben Yahweh (founder of the *Nation of Yahweh*); Ben Carter became Ben Ammi Ben-Israel (founder of the *African Hebrew Israelites of Jerusalem*); Mark Copeland became Yahya Bandele (founder of the *C.O.F.A.H. Network*); John Lightborne became General Yahanna (leader of the *Israelite School of Universal Practical Knowledge*); and Jermaine Grant became Apostle and Chief High Priest Tazadaqyah (*Israelite Church of God in Jesus Christ*). Taking on a new Israelite name marks all converts, male and female; it is not restricted to particular founders or leaders.

### **Movement's Heretical Teachings concerning the Trinity and Jesus Christ**

Nearly all Hebrew Israelite groups agree that the Trinity is false, that God's name must be spoken in Hebrew (or in a circumlocution, as "the Most High"), and that followers should learn the Hebrew alphabet and rudimentary Hebrew.

However, there is wide disagreement about the person and mission of Jesus. Moses Farrar, author of *40 Most Frequently Asked Questions to Hebrew Israelites*, argues that Jesus was not virgin-born, nor the Son of God, nor the Messiah; he believes Jesus was deceived—he thought he was the Messiah, but he was wrong.

Sh'ma Yisrael, a Hebrew Israelite congregation in Brooklyn, believes Jesus didn't even exist. Ben Ammi Ben-Israel, leader of the African Hebrew Israelites, believes that "Yeshua" came to reinforce the laws of Moses, but the doctrine of salvation from sin was an invention of the Hellenic writers of the New Testament.

The *Israelite School of Universal and Practical Knowledge* denies the virgin birth, claiming that Jesus was conceived through natural relations between Joseph and Mary. They also deny the deity of Christ.

Some Hebrew Israelites are more accepting of Jesus. *Malakiyah Ministries* calls themselves "covenant believers in Yahshuwah" and seem to accept the incarnation. The *Hebrew Israelite Nation* believes in "one God, eternally existent in three persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit," although God should be called AhaYah and Jesus called YeshaYah.

The *Gathering of Christ Church* accepts the name “Jesus Christ,” describing him as “the only begotten Son” of Ahaya Ashar Ahaya (God), describes the “Godhead” as “Father, Son, Holy Spirit,” but rejects the doctrine of the Trinity. Israel United in Christ has no problem with the name “Jesus Christ,” but believes “Christ was born thru sex between his mother Mary and his father Joseph” and “Christ only died to save his people and deliver them, the lost sheep of the house of Israel” (i.e., black people). The *Israelite Nation Worldwide Ministries* accepts the deity and atonement of Jesus Christ, baptizing converts in the formula of Matt 28:19, but also holds that “God has given the Comforter (Spirit of Truth) exclusively to the Israelite Nation” (New Dawn, 1:1, 6).

*The Israelite Church of God* in Jesus Christ believes Jesus was born of a virgin, died for sin, and is now “King of kings and Lord of lords.” However, *they believe he died for Israelites only*, not all nations; that the Bible does not in any way teach the unity of the races; and that their “Apostle and Chief High Priest Tazadaqya” is the “God-Sent Comforter” foretold by Jesus in John 14:26 to “teach you all things”!

### **Sacred Texts of the Movement**

Hebrew Israelites with a favorable view of Jesus/Yahshuah all endorse the King James Version of the Bible and (almost always) the Apocrypha, and typically recommend the Book of Enoch and the Book of Jasher. They seem unaware that there have been 5 different forgeries of the Book of Jasher; the one they promote was issued by newspaper owner Mordecai Noah in 1840 and published by the Mormons.

### **Anti-Semitism**

Black Hebrew Israelites are often accused of anti-Semitism due to their rejection of Judaism, which they counter by claiming that they are Semites, descended from Shem (who was black), but the majority “Jews” today are Ashkenazi, imposters of the original, black Jewish people.

### **Legalism and Exclusivism of the Movement**

They are often charged with legalism, having an inadequate understanding of how the Gospel changed the believer’s relationship to biblical law, and how the law relates to Gentile believers. The view that Jesus came to save Israelites only is a severe weakness.



## **The Syncretistic Nature of the Movement**

There are many Black Israelite groups, who regularly borrow each other's artwork, belief statements, customs, and sources, while adding their own modifications or unique doctrines. There are hundreds of such organizations worldwide, with the total number of followers ranging between 40,000 and 200,000.

### **Other Hebrew Israelites.**

The second type of "Hebrew Israelites" are smaller and lesser known than the former movement. They are distinguished by not claiming that American blacks are genetically descended from the 12 tribes of Israel; by not claiming that the curses of Deuteronomy 28 were fulfilled in the 18th and 19th century, rather than 6th century BC; and not having an ethnocentric view of the sacrifice of Christ or of the end of the world.

*As a result, they have a higher proportion of white adherents.*

However, these self-described Hebrew Israelites still maintain that they are the true Israel, not the Jews; they reject Talmudic Judaism as legitimate; they focus on one or more versions of the Divine Name as essential for true worship; they take a very strong stance on Torah observance; and disavow "Christianity" and "grace" preachers who say we are "free from the law" or "not under the law."

Representatives of this stream include Pastor Joe Fox of *Shofar Mountain, Straitway Truth*, led by Pastor Charles Dowell, and a small handful of other groups which would self-identify as "Hebrew Israelites."

In some respects, Straitway Truth bridges both the Black Hebrew Israelites and the other side. On one hand, they argue that true Israelites must possess a "genetic link to the ancient Hebrew Israelites" as "bloodline descendants" who will teach the nations (Straitway Newsletter, Jan 2012, 3). Modern Jews are Khazari impersonators who accept the Talmud, and are therefore false Jews. On the other hand, they (like oneness Pentecostals) maintain that "Jesus is the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost," and that believers must be baptized in the Name of Jesus Christ and seek "the Baptism of the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking in tongues" ("Baptism in Jesus Name"). Their practice of deliverance from demons, denying eternal security, and breaking "soul ties" all indicate a strong Pentecostal influence on their theology.

## **The Twelve Tribes**

It is tempting to include the *Twelve Tribes* (also known as *Messianic Communities*, led by Yoneq) as Hebrew Israelites, since they share common features: a focus on Sacred Names, Torah observance, including Sabbath and holy days, rejection of popular holidays, adoption of a new Hebraic name, and especially identification with the 12 Tribes of Israel. However, the Twelve Tribes do not identify themselves as Hebrew Israelites, and they believe the 12 tribes are geographic, not genetic.

## **Conclusion**

Many belief systems are related to the Hebrew Israelites, such as the *Sacred Name* movement, the *Hebrew Roots movement*, the *messianic Jewish movement*, and even *Mormonism and the Nation of Islam*, but it is important to understand the *Hebrew Israelites* on their own terms, not simply as a manifestation of Judaizing or racial bias. Finally, while some communication of Hebrew Israelite views occurs through books, pamphlets and web documents, most communication today occurs via audio and video webcasts and social media networks.

## **About the Author**

Eric Pement is engaged in ministry work for the following Christian apologetic ministries: Evangelical Ministries to New Religions, The Institute for Christian Apologetics, and The Centers for Apologetics Research.

You can visit Eric's personal website at: <http://www.pement.org/writings.htm>

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## **THE GOOSE CHASE BRIAN MCLAREN FINDS HIMSELF IN**

by Don and Joy Veinot

I had a call last week from one of our supporters, wondering if I knew that Brian McLaren, Emerging Church leader and writer, is involved with the Wild Goose Festival. For these who do not know, the *Wild Goose Festival* is a gathering of the fallen away, eager to share and celebrate their apostasy with others eager to applaud them for having the courage to slap the face of God. I don't follow the festival circuit very closely, so I was unaware of McLaren's participation. When I asked the caller why this seemed so important to him, I was told that McLaren was teaching a pro-gay message. That is not really surprising to me. In 2012, McLaren officiated at his son Trevor's same gender marriage ceremony. How could McLaren, ordained as a pastor in an Evangelical denomination, justify this level of support? Very easily. He places experience above Scripture as authoritative. As the *Christian Post* noted:

It had just been a couple of years when McLaren shifted his thinking and abandoned the traditional view of homosexuality being a sin that he grew up with.

“I had gone through my change in this view before I ever guessed that any of my kids might be gay,” he said on the radio program.

“I was a good kid, I believed what I’d been told. And as a pastor, I started having gay people come out to me and what became clearer and clearer to me is that their experience was not explained by the theology I inherited,” he explained. “And that it would be unjust to continue to uphold what I’d been taught. Maybe I could say it like this: My call to love God and love my neighbor was in conflict with what I’d been taught the Bible required me to say and do.”

We posed the question in 2008, “*Is Brian McLaren a Christian?*” In this article we demonstrated that McLaren had pretty much abandoned the historical-grammatical understanding of Scripture in favor of the Social Gospel of the late 19th and early 20th century liberal, *Walter Rauschenbusch*, Jesus Seminar co-founder, John Dominic Crossan (see our *Hysterical Search for the Historical Jesus*), Socialist and Black Liberation Theologian Cornell West, and Karl Marx, among others.

Since then, he has further “evolved” to practice and endorse pagan rituals and practices, tossing out even more of what, to use his words, “the Bible required me to say and do.” He is a man in pursuit of “spirituality,” but he judges the validity of spiritual claims and practices on experience and not on God’s revelation in Scripture. At a number of conferences over the past several years, he facilitates pagan rituals to help attendees become more “spiritually aware” and “attuned.” So, McLaren’s Wild Goose Chase to the Wild Goose Festival makes perfect sense. Participant Frank Schaffer (New Age son of the Late Francis Schaffer) says in the promotion:

One of the reasons I love Wild Goose Festival is we don’t come here labeled atheist, agnostic, Hindu, Buddhist, whatever. We come here as human beings on a journey. A lot of us alienated from our religious path on a journey somewhere else. Wild Goose Festival is the one place I go every year where I know I am not alone.

The speaker lineup is a veritable who’s who of false teachers – Jim and Joy Wallis of Sojourners magazine, LGBTQ activist and workshop leader from Willow Creek Chicago, Darren Calhoun, Emergent leader Doug Pagitt, defrocked Roman Catholic priest turned earth worshipper Matthew Fox, and others.

The sessions include:

- Yoga for Social Change
- Do Progressive Christians Need Satan?

- Brian McLaren and Social Intelligence
- The Cosmic Christ and the Struggle for Eco-Justice – Matthew Fox
- Can We Talk? An LGBTQ+ Sharing Circle

Brian McLaren's Wild Goose Chase to the Wild Goose Festival makes perfect sense. It is a modern day "Corinth in the woods" where any and all religious expression and belief is embraced and lauded, provided no allegiance to the one true God is required or holy living as He prescribed is expected.

To paraphrase 1 John 2:19:

They emerged from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us. But they emerged, that it might become plain that they all are not of us.

Don and Joy Veinot are the directors of Midwest Christian Outreach.

You can visit their website at: <http://midwestoutreach.org>

## JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES, WAR, AND NEUTRALITY, PART 3

by Steve Lagoon

### Watchtower Efforts to Appease Hitler

But what needs to be stated to provide a more balanced record of the events is that the Watchtower itself was guilty of the same kind of appeasement to Hitler for which they criticize the Roman Catholics and Pope Pius XII. The fullest account of this subject is available in the book *Jehovah's Witnesses and the Third Reich: Sectarian Politics Under Persecution* by M. James Penton.<sup>1</sup> We hope to provide a less detailed, but thorough account here.

In a letter to the Watchtower President Milton G. Henschel dated August 11, 1995, James Penton, a former Jehovah's Witness, author, and university professor, briefly outlined the evidence of the Watchtower compromise with the Nazi's and Hitler. The letter states in part:

Dear Mr. Henschel: Yesterday I obtained a copy of the August 22 Awake! Magazine with its articles on "The Holocaust: Who Spoke Out?" On reading the articles in that issue of Awake!, I was thoroughly shocked and disgusted.

The Watch Tower Society has long attempted a cover-up of the most dishonest sort. While your organization properly censures other religious communities for their compromises with and support of Nazism, it tries to claim that Jehovah's Witnesses, and Jehovah's Witnesses alone, never were guilty of such compromise. Yet history tells a different story. The "Erklärung" or "Declaration" published by the Watch Tower Society at the Berlin Convention of Jehovah's Witnesses in June 1933 is, in itself, clear evidence that the Society's president, Judge J. F. Rutherford, as accompanied by N. H. Knorr, manifested anti-Semitism, hostility to Great Britain and the United States, and to the League of Nations. Furthermore, the "Erklärung" clearly states that Jehovah's Witnesses supported the aims of the Third Reich. In addition to the "Erklärung", there is the evidence of the Society's letter to Hitler sent on or immediately following June 25, 1933, and the public statements made about the Berlin convention by Konrad Franke in lectures throughout Germany some years ago. All of this I have made public in my book *Apocalypse Delayed* (1985)-which I know has been read

<sup>1</sup> Penton, *Jehovah's Witnesses and the Third Reich*, (2004).

at Watch Tower headquarters both from court documents and inside reports—and in the spring 1990 issue of *The Christian Quest*. So it is impossible for responsible members of your organization not to know the facts. Thus the August 22 *Awake!* is nothing short of an historical abomination.<sup>2</sup>

In his earlier book on the history of the Jehovah's witnesses, Penton offered a more thorough overview of the issue:

As has been noted frequently, Jehovah's Witnesses have a fine, even outstanding record for their defiance of Nazism and their willingness to accept martyrdom in the Third Reich's concentration camps rather than renounce their faith. But what is not generally known by historians or most Witnesses themselves is that, in the spring of 1933, Watch Tower leaders tried to placate the Nazi's by enunciating their loyalty to the principles of Hitler's National Socialist government and by engaging in clearly anti-Jewish statements . . . Judge Rutherford and Nathan Knorr flew to Berlin and prepared a 'Declaration of Facts' which was to be presented a few days later to a hastily called Berlin convention of some 7000 German Witnesses after Rutherford and Knorr returned to New York. After the convention, the German Witnesses—loyal to instructions from Brooklyn—distributed 2.1 million copies of the 'Declaration' throughout Germany while Watch Tower branch officials sent copies of it to important government officials.<sup>3</sup>

At this point we will quote from the 'Declaration of Facts' as it was reproduced in the Watchtower's 1934 Yearbook. Keep in mind the Watchtower's supposed neutrality to the affairs of the world as it attacks the United Kingdom, the United States, the Jews, and 'big business, 'while heaping praise on Hitler's government:

It is falsely charged by our enemies that we have received financial support for our work from the Jews. Nothing is father from the truth . . . The greatest and the most *oppressive empire on earth is the Anglo-American empire*. By that is meant the British Empire, of which the United States of America forms a part. It has been the commercial Jews of the British-American empire that have built up and carried on Big Business as a means of exploiting and oppressing the peoples of many nations.<sup>4</sup>

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2 M. James Penton, *An Open Letter From M. James Penton, PhD to Milton G. Henschel*, available online at: <http://governingbodyletters.blogspot.com/2008/08/open-letter-from-m-james-penton-phd-to.html>

3 M. James Penton, *Apocalypse Delayed: The Story of Jehovah's Witnesses*, Second Edition, Toronto (University of Toronto Press Incorporated, 1997) 147-148.

4 *1934 Yearbook*, 134. (Italics not in Original).

It is interesting to compare this condemnatory statement about America, calling it, “the most oppressive empire on earth” with the earlier Watchtower statement in praise of America, “The Government of the United States has been the special refuge of Christian people from intolerable persecution; that it was founded as an asylum of religious liberty and freedom of speech,”<sup>5</sup> neither seeming to reflect a position of neutrality.

A little further on, the ‘Declaration’ continues:

Instead of being against the principles advocated by the government of Germany, we stand squarely for such principles, and point out that Jehovah God through Christ Jesus will bring about the full realization of these principles.<sup>6</sup>

And again, the appeasing language of the ‘Declaration’ continues:

A careful examination of our books and literature will disclose the fact that the very high ideals held and promulgated by the present national [Hitler’s Nazi] government are set forth in and endorsed and strongly emphasized in our publications, and show that Jehovah God will see to it that these high ideals in due time will be attained by all persons who love righteousness and who obey the Most High. Instead, therefore, of our literature and our work’s being a menace to the principles of the present government, we are the strongest supporters of such high ideals.<sup>7</sup>

And finally, the ‘Declaration’ declares: We therefore appeal to the high sense of justice of the government.<sup>8</sup> Sadly, the “full realization” of these “high ideals” being praised by the Watchtower is perhaps the darkest chapter in human history; Hitler’s Holocaust.

## **The Watchtower’s Letter to Hitler**

MacGregor Ministries adds more about the direct letter to Adolf Hitler:

The most recent ‘history’ book *Jehovah’s Witnesses: Proclaimers of God’s Kingdom* published by the Society, has this favorable report on this time period on page 693,

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5 The *Watch Tower*, May 15, 1917, 150-151, reprints 6086

6 *1934 Yearbook*, 136.

7 *1934 Yearbook*, 137-138.

8 *1934 Year Book*, 143.



‘By the summer of 1933, their work had been banned in the majority of German States. Therefore, on June 25<sup>th</sup>, 1933, a declaration regarding their ministry and its objectives was adopted by Jehovah’s Witnesses at an assembly in Berlin. Copies were sent to all the high government officials and millions more were distributed to the public. Nevertheless, in July 1933 the courts refused to grant a hearing for relief. Early the following year, a personal letter regarding the situation was written by J.F. Rutherford to Adolf Hitler and delivered to him by special messenger.’

Did you notice what is missing from this superficial account of history? The contents of the ‘declaration’ and the ‘personal letter’ to Hitler . . . Rutherford’s letter to Hitler. This letter gets very little mention in Watchtower publications . . . Here is a partial listing: “The Brooklyn headquarters of the Watchtower Society is pro German in an exemplary way and has been for many years.”<sup>9</sup>

The Macgregor’s note the misleading way the *Proclaimer’s* book reports about these events, largely by omitting mention of the appeasing nature of the contents both in the 1933 Declaration, and in the personal letter to Hitler.

### **Hitler’s Reaction to Watchtower Appeasement Efforts**

Penton relates the ineffectiveness of the Watchtower attempts to appease the Nazis:

As Jehovah’s Witnesses were soon to discover, the Nazis were not impressed by their declaration, nor by a fawning letter sent to Adolf Hitler. In fact, German authorities unleashed a wave of persecution against them almost immediately . . . Ever since 1939, the Watch Tower Society has done its best to keep the real nature of the *Declaration of Facts* and the Hitler letter hidden from loyal Jehovah’s Witnesses and the general public.<sup>10</sup>

Again, it is interesting that the Watchtower’s presentation of these events in *Jehovah’s Witnesses: Proclaimers of God’s Kingdom*<sup>11</sup> mentions the June 25, 1933 declaration, but is silent concerning the overtly compromising language contained within it, yet prominently features the full text of a very different declaration dated October 7, 1934 after the Watchtower had given up trying to appease Hitler.

9 MacGregor Ministries, *The Watchtower Society and the Nazis*, Nelson B.C. Canada, 1, 3.

10 Penton, *Jehovah’s Witnesses and the Third Reich*, 14

11 *Jehovah’s Witnesses: Proclaimers*, 693-694.

This kind of unethical scholarship is certainly unbecoming of an organization that claims to represent Jehovah God.

Indeed, the October 7, 1934 *Declaration* was as defiant as the June 25, 1933 *Declaration* had been fawning, and included this warning to Hitler and the Nazis:

Your ill-treatment of Jehovah's Witnesses shocks all good people of earth and dishonors God's name. Refrain from further persecuting Jehovah's Witnesses; otherwise God will destroy you and your national party.<sup>12</sup>

Matthew Alfs records Hitler's reaction to this later declaration:

According to a sworn statement by Karl R.A. Wittig, a plenipotentiary of Nazi General Ludendorff and one who was present when the messages were conveyed to Hitler, the Nazi dictator 'jumped to his feet and with clenched fists hysterically screamed; 'This brood will be exterminated in Germany! . . . [Wittig] further explained that Hitler's outburst was accompanied by the violent hurling of several ink wells against the wall, and was such a scene overall that 'those present were terrified.'<sup>13</sup>

## **In the Aftermath of World War II**

As with the compromise of the Watchtower's Neutrality position that occurred with the display of American patriotism during World War I, so with the compromise with Hitler's government, though the compromise was made by the leaders of the Watchtower (Presidents Rutherford and Knorr etc) it was the faithful Jehovah's Witnesses that had to bear the consequences. Without any biblical basis, Watchtower leadership demanded that Witnesses refuse alternative or non-combatant military service and hence hundreds and even thousands of Witnesses suffered during the holocaust and the World War II period.

Former Governing Body member of the Jehovah's Witnesses, Raymond Franz shed further light on this sad situation:

'Alternative service' describes civil service offered by a government as an alternative for those who have conscientious objections to participation in military service . . . The official position of the Watch Tower Society, developed during the Second World War, is that if one of Jehovah's Witnesses accepts

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<sup>12</sup> Alfs, *The Evocative Religion of the Jehovah's Witnesses*, 94.

<sup>13</sup> Alfs, *The Evocative Religion of the Jehovah's Witnesses*, 94-95

such alternative service he has ‘compromised,’ has broken integrity with God . . . In obedience to this policy, over the years literally thousands of Jehovah’s Witnesses in different countries around the world have gone to prison rather than accept provisions for alternative service. In November 1977, a letter from a Witness in Belgium questioned the reasoning on which this policy was based. This led to the matter’s being dealt with by the Governing Body . . . At the October 11, 1978, meeting, of thirteen members present, nine voted in favor of changing the traditional policy so that the decision to accept or reject alternative service would be left to the conscience of the individual . . . Since nine was not two-thirds of sixteen, no change was made. On November 15, all sixteen members were present and eleven voted for changing the policy so that the Witness who conscientiously felt he could accept such service would not be automatically categorized as unfaithful to God and disassociated from the congregation. This was a two-thirds majority. Was the change made? No, for after a brief intermission, one of the Governing Body members announced that he had changed his mind . . . Even though in all of these votes a clear majority of the Governing Body favored removing the existing policy, that policy remained in force and as a result Witness men were still expected to risk imprisonment rather than to accept alternative service.<sup>14</sup>

It would seem that if the biblical evidence in support of the Watchtower neutrality stance were so strong and convincing, the very idea of taking it up for discussion, let alone actually voting to change the policy would have been inconceivable.

### **Compulsory Non-military Government Service**

The Watchtower ban on alternative service is all the more incomprehensible for another reason. Let us begin by considering Jesus’ teaching on compulsory service to the Roman military: “If someone forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles.” Commenting on this passage, Michael Wilkins stated:

Roman military personnel could organize bands of unpaid laborers from the common people to construct roads, fortifications, and public buildings. The most familiar New Testament scene is when Simon of Cyrene was forced into service by the Roman guards to carry Jesus’ cross (27:32; Mark 15:21).<sup>15</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Raymond Franz, *Crisis of Conscience*, 101-102.

<sup>15</sup> Michael J. Wilkins, *Matthew in The Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary*, Volume 1, Clinton E. Arnold,

## E. B. Price notes:

The Romans were empowered to make a Jew carry his equipment for a mile. This would be obviously helping the Roman Army, but what did Jesus say? He told His followers to carry it two miles! In the light of the Watchtower Society's arguments, this would have to be considered 'compromise' to have anything to do with the army.<sup>16</sup>

### **Matthew 5:41**

So in this passage, the issue is not regarding voluntary service to the military, but rather involuntary. Further, the person compelled into service by the Roman Army was not involved in military activities, but rather in alternative non-military service. So individual Jehovah's Witnesses face an unnecessary dilemma; follow the Watchtower's ban on alternative service (and face prison sentences) or follow the teachings of Jesus who explicitly allowed for non-combatant military service in Matthew 5:41.

But let us take this idea one step further. The Watchtower stated:

It seems that compulsory service was practiced in Bible times . . . The New Testament, too, cites examples of corvee in Judea, showing how widespread it was. In accordance with this custom, the soldiers pressed Simon of Cyrene into carrying Jesus' cross (torture stake) (Matthew 5:41). Similarly, citizens in some countries today are required by the state or local authorities to participate in various forms of community service . . . Similarly, citizens in some countries today are required by the State or by local authorities to participate in various forms of community service. Sometimes this is for a specific task, such as digging wells or building roads; sometimes it is on a regular basis, such as weekly participation in cleaning up roads, schools, or hospitals. Where such civilian service is for the good of the community and is not connected with false religion or is not in some other way objectionable to the consciences of Jehovah's Witnesses, they have often complied.<sup>17</sup>

With this background in mind, the Watchtower answers the obvious question:

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General Editor, Grand Rapids MI (Zondervan, 2002) 42.

16 E. B. Price, *Our Friends: The Jehovah's Witnesses*, Revised and Enlarged Edition, Strathfield, Sydney, N.S.W. Australia (Offices of the Greater Sydney Conference of Seventh-day Adventist, 1986) 48.

17 *Watchtower*, May 1, 1996, 19-20

What, though, if the State requires a Christian for a period of time to perform civilian service that is a part of national service under a civilian administration? Here again, Christians must make their own decision based on an informed conscience . . .  
What, though, if the State requires a Christian for a period of time to perform civilian service that is a part of national service under a civilian administration? Here again, Christians must make their own decision based on an informed conscience . . .  
What if the Christian's honest answers to such questions lead him to conclude that the national civilian service is a "good work" that he can perform in obedience to the authorities? That is his decision before Jehovah. Appointed elders and others should fully respect the conscience of the brother and continue to regard him as a Christian in good standing.<sup>18</sup>

It seems amazing that the Watchtower condemns non-combatant or alternative service to the government even though Jesus allowed such in Matthew 5:41, while at the same time allowing service to the government in a 'civilian' capacity, and appealing to Matthew 5:41 for support of the policy, the passage which clearly allows for direct service to the military. What really is the difference between serving a government in a non-combatant role or serving the same government in so-called civilian service? In either case, you are providing your energy in support of the overall work of the secular government.

### **Watchtower Double-Standard**

What is even more amazing is how blind the Watchtower has been to its own hypocrisy in that while they have been so critical of the agreement worked out between the Roman Catholics (lead by Pacelli i.e. Pope Pius XII) and Hitler and the Nazis, the facts show that Judge Rutherford, the President of the Watchtower (and his successor Nathan Knorr) also tried to appease Hitler and the Nazis with the hope of finding a working arrangement during his rule. The only difference is that the Rutherford failed where the Pope succeeded.

Others have written pointing out many other areas of Watchtower hypocrisy concerning their neutrality policy which space does not allow us to cover here including the Watchtower's official relationship with the United Nations as NGO (Non-governmental organization) despite its strong condemnation of that organization throughout its own history, and the persecution of Jehovah's Witnesses in various countries for contradictory Watchtower policies.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> The *Watchtower*, May 1, 1996, 20.

<sup>19</sup> See Franz, *Crisis of Conscience*, See Chapter 6 Double Standards 110-135. For the Watchtower's Brief relationship with

## **Biblical Examination of the Watchtower's Arguments on Neutrality**

At this point, we will examine the scriptural basis of the Watchtower's position concerning their rejection of military service and other governmental or political activity.

### **Just War Theory**

It should be noted that the present article assumes and defends the just war theory which essentially approves of Christian involvement in the military (and even to kill) so long as it is in behalf of a just cause. Kerby Anderson provided background about the theory:

The just war theory, is a 1600-year-old Christian doctrine that attempts to answer two questions: When is it permissible to wage war? And what are the limitations on the ways we wage war? This theory was initially articulated by Augustine (354-430) . . . Augustine argued that not all wars are morally justified . . . A just war will include the following conditions: just cause, just intention, last resort, formal declaration, limited objectives, proportionate means, and noncombatant immunity.<sup>20</sup>

Roger Crook added further details about the just war theory:

Out of that debate emerged the theory of a 'just war,' developed by Augustine (354-430) and refined by Thomas Aquinas (1224-1274). According to this theory, to be just a war must meet [these] conditions: (1) It must be conducted by a legitimate authority which explicitly serves notice that it intends to use military power to attain its objectives. (2) It must be intended for the advancement of good or for the avoidance of evil. (3) It must be undertaken only as a last resort. (4) The good anticipated from the war must outweigh the evil done in pursuit of the war. (5) There must be a reasonable expectation of success in the effort. (6) It must be conducted according to internationally accepted rules of warfare, never going beyond certain agreed-upon moral constraints. By this last requirement such actions as attacks on nonmilitary targets, unnecessary destruction, looting, and massacres are prohibited.<sup>21</sup>

### **Conscientious Objection/Civil Disobedience**

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the United Nations, see among other places, Watchtower's United Nations Association at JWFACTS website: <http://www.jwfacts.com/watchtower/united-nations-association.php>.

20 Kerby Anderson, 210-211.

21 Roger H. Crook, *An Introduction to Christian Ethics*, Second Edition, Englewood Cliffs, NJ (Prentice Hall, 1995) 215.

An essential idea of the just war concept is the right of civil disobedience in the face of an unjust war. That is, when a person has weighed all the arguments in favor of a particular war, and has determined that the planned military actions do **not** meet the criteria for a just war, he can reject participation as a conscientious objector, an idea deeply rooted in the Bible:

The Bible provides a number of prominent examples of civil disobedience. When Pharaoh commanded the Hebrew midwives to kill all male Hebrew babies, they lied to Pharaoh and did not carry out his command (Exodus 1-2). The Book of Daniel contains a number of instructive examples. For example, when Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego refused to bow down to Nebuchadnezzar's golden image, they were cast into a fiery-furnace (Daniel 3). The commissioners and satraps persuaded King Darius to decree that no one could petition any god or man for thirty days. Daniel nevertheless continued to pray to God three times a day and was cast into the lion's den (Daniel 6). The most dramatic example of civil disobedience in the New Testament is recorded in Acts 4-5. When Peter and John were commanded not to preach the gospel, their response was, 'We must obey God rather than men' (5:29). These examples each included at least two common elements. First, a direct specific conflict arose between God's law and man's law . . . Second, in choosing to obey God's higher law, believers paid the normal consequence for disobedience . . . The apostle Paul called for believers to 'be subject' to government, but he did not instruct them to 'obey' every command of government. When government commands an unjust or unbiblical injunction, Christians have a higher authority. One can be 'subject' to the authority of the state but still refuse to 'obey' a specific law which is contrary to biblical standards.<sup>22</sup>

Arthur Holmes sheds further light on this issue:

The Sixteenth-century Spanish theologian Francisco de Vitoria develops the theory further. Examining King Philip's wars against the American Indians, he condemns their lack of just cause. War, he insists, is not justified for religious reasons (to convert the heathen) or for economic reasons (to gain their gold) or for political reasons (to extend the empire) . . . Vitoria also asks whether the soldier who doubts the justice of a cause should fight. Ordinarily, one should trust the lawful government . . . but if justice is seriously in doubt, and if careful inquiry does not allay those doubts, then the soldier should refuse to fight.

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22 Anderson, *Christian Ethics*, 206-207.

Selective conscientious objection is the corollary of a just war ethic.<sup>23</sup>

This concept of governments granting conscientious status to those who feel a war is unjust provides an important response to one of the Jehovah's Witnesses perennial arguments against military service, which we have alluded to earlier:

The Christian congregation, on the other hand, has no borders, and its members can be found in all lands. So if Christ's followers in one country were to join in warfare against another country, they would be fighting against fellow believers—their spiritual brothers and sisters—whom they are commanded to love and even die for.—Matthew 5:44; John 15:12.<sup>24</sup>

This argument by the Watchtower is simply without foundation in light of the Scriptures and the just war theory since sincere Christians would not be willing to fight for the aggressor or guilty nation in time of war, and therefore they will not in fact have to face their brothers on the battlefield.

Let us remember, as we have shown above, that the original position of the Watchtower was that a Jehovah Witnesses' stand on neutrality was not compromised by accepting some sort of alternative service or served in a non-combatant role. In that case, no Jehovah's Witnesses would ever have to face a brother Jehovah's Witness on the battlefield. Further, such a stance would have saved thousands of Jehovah's Witnesses in the 20<sup>th</sup> century from prison sentences and intense suffering. In the light of the foregoing, it is all the more ironic that the Watchtower does allow Witnesses to accept compulsory service so long as it is deemed civilian service.

But it may be objected that even with the choice to conscientiously object, some sincere Christians may end up facing each other on the battlefield having both been convinced of the just causes of their respective nations. This may happen because the stated reasons for the war may be difficult to understand, or even that the nation's leadership on one or both sides has lied to its own citizens about the purposes of the war (the first casualty of war is the truth).

In such a case, those leaders responsible for the deception will bear the moral blame, and not those they deceived. As an analogy, in the line of duty, police officers may accidentally imprison the wrong person. But this is not grounds for eliminating police forces.

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23 Arthur F. Holmes, in *War: Four Christian Views*, Robert G. Clouse Editor, Downers Grove IL (InterVarsity Press, 1991) 128-129.

24 *Awake*, August 2011, p. 22.



Again, parents may accidentally punish the wrong child because one of the children lied to evade punishment. Though the mistake is unfortunate, it does not follow that parents should cease to punish their children.

In the same way, when a Christian fights in a war because his nation's leaders have lied to justify a war, it is the leaders who will face the consequences before God rather than the sincere Christian.

### **The Example of Daniel and His Hebrew Friends**

On the first question regarding a believer's service to a secular government, let us note the response of Raymond Franz:

This is difficult to harmonize with the attitude of Daniel and his three companions during the political rule of the Babylonian and Medo-Persian empires. Not only did Daniel accept appointment to a high position in the Babylonian political structure, he actually requested administrative positions for his three friends [Daniel 2:48, 49; 5:29]. This was not some display of a lack of integrity, for they proved themselves willing to face death rather than to be disloyal to God. (Daniel 3:8-18).<sup>25</sup>

The Watchtower's response to these biblical facts amounts to a verbal sleight of hand trick, in which it acknowledges the facts, but diverts attention to a secondary and irrelevant point, leaving the main point simply ignored:

During the Babylonian exile, Daniel and three other faithful Jews who were captives in slavery to Babylon submitted to State training and became high-ranking civil servants in Babylonia (Daniel 1:3-7, 2:48-49). However, even during the training, they took a firm position on dietary matters that could have led them to break the law that their God, Jehovah, had provided through Moses. For this they were blessed. (Daniel 1:8-17). When King Nebuchadnezzar set up a State image, Daniel's three Hebrew companions apparently were compelled to attend the ceremony with their fellow State administrators. Nevertheless, they refused to 'fall down and worship the State idol. Again, Jehovah rewarded their integrity. (Daniel 3:1-6, 13-28).

Similarly today, Jehovah's Witnesses respect the flag of the nation in which they live, but they will not perform an act of worship toward it. After the fall of the Neo-Babylonian dynasty, Daniel was given a high-ranking governmental post under the

<sup>25</sup> Franz, *In Search of Christian Freedom*, 272-273.

new Medo-Persian regime that replaced it in Babylon (Daniel 5:30, 31; 6:1-3). But he did not allow his high position to lead him into compromising his integrity. When a State law required that he worship King Darius rather than Jehovah, he refused. For this he was thrown to the lions, but Jehovah delivered him. (Daniel 6:4-24).<sup>26</sup>

The Watchtower concedes here that Daniel and his Hebrew friends held high ranking governmental positions in a secular government, but then diverts attention to other irrelevant issues like their refusal to eat the Babylonian diet, or praising them for not compromising. And yet, the very act of serving in a governmental position itself would be just such a compromise if the Watchtower view were the correct one.

The article then offers what can only be considered a weak argument in attempt to avoid the serious biblical evidence against their neutrality position:

Of course, this was in pre-Christian times. Once the Christian congregation was established, God's servants came 'under the law toward Christ. Many things that were permitted under the Jewish system were to be viewed differently, based on the way in which Jehovah was now dealing with his people.<sup>27</sup>

There are serious problems with this explanation. First, it would suggest that God approved of His people compromising during Old Testament times. After all, Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were all in the service of the very government that had destroyed the Jewish theocratic nation and taken all the Jews into captivity.

Nor can the irony be missed that Jehovah's Witnesses are expected to go to prison or die rather than compromise on the Watchtower neutrality stand, yet Daniel and his friends are essentially working for the enemy of Jehovah's people, and yet they are praised?

Further, we should remember the Watchtower claim that the New Testament Church under the apostles held to a complete position of neutrality. It is difficult to accept the Watchtower premise, therefore, that God accepted government service for Daniel and his friends in the Old Testament, but changed His expectation for the apostolic church period by requiring strict neutrality. But then from the founding of the Watchtower in 1879 until 1915, Christians

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<sup>26</sup> *The Watchtower*, May 1, 1996, p. 11.

<sup>27</sup> *The Watchtower*, May 1, 1996, p. 11-12.

were allowed to serve in non-combatant roles or alternative service. Finally, in 1915, Jehovah returned to His former expectation for his people requiring total neutrality.

Either Jehovah's new light is blinking or this is a clear indication that the Watchtower is led by fallible men and not by Jehovah God.

### **Did Jesus and the Apostles Teach Neutrality?**

Since the Watchtower argues that with the coming of Christ and His church, God now calls for complete neutrality, let us examine the New Testament Scriptures to see if that is really the case.

John the Baptist was preaching a message of repentance and a turning back to the Lord in preparation for His coming. People were responding and asking what they should do:

Even tax collectors came to be baptized. 'Teacher,' they asked, 'what should we do?' 'Don't collect any more than you are required to,' he told them. Then some soldiers asked him, 'And what should we do?' He replied, 'Don't extort money and don't accuse people falsely—be content with your pay' (Luke 3:12-14).

Now if the Watchtower's view of neutrality was biblical, John the Baptist would have called for the tax collectors to immediately quit their jobs since they were engaged in work for the Roman government. Likewise, he would have compelled the soldiers to resign from the military since that also was working for the government and a violation of neutrality.

The fact that both the tax collectors and the soldiers were advised to continue their jobs, but no longer extort the people and to be content with their pay respectively suggests that there was nothing intrinsically unethical about their government positions, at least, in the view of John the Baptist.

Other Roman soldiers came to Jesus and while commending them for their faith and righteousness, He never commanded them to leave their occupations, nor even hint that they should (Matthew 8:5-13).

### **Soldiers in the Church Age**

This positive characterization of soldiers continues into the apostolic or Church age. Consider several examples in the Book of Acts:

At Caesarea there was a man named Cornelius, a centurion in what was known as the Italian Regiment. He and all his family

were devout and God-fearing; he gave generously to those in need and prayed to God regularly (Acts 10:1-2).

Rather than punishing Cornelius for violating a supposed neutrality, God is so pleased with this soldier that He sends an angel to him in answer to his prayers, and reveals to him that he must meet the apostle Peter. If that were not enough, along for the meeting with Peter, Cornelius was accompanied by another ‘devout soldier’ (Acts 10:7). And it is this group on which the Holy Spirit falls and who are baptized into the Christian Church (Acts 10:44-48).

Later in Acts, we arrive at the wonderful account of the conversion of the Philippian jailer. The jailer, of course working for the government, asked Paul specifically what he must do to be saved. There is no suggestion that he must leave his profession. Rather he is to believe in the Lord Jesus and be saved (Acts 16:24-34). Again, there is no suggestion of divine displeasure regarding his occupation nor any hint that he planned to leave his job. Indeed, it is most likely that this Jailer was part of the core group that made up the Philippian Church that Paul wrote to in his Epistle to the Philippians.

### **Romans 13 and the Sword**

Romans 13:1-7 represents the apostle Paul’s teachings on the relationship of Christians to their government. Paul uses the imagery of the sword to represent the authority of government (verse 4). Governments are instituted by God to provide stability to society, punishing wrong doers and protecting law-abiding citizens.

Because governmental officials are acting in behalf of God, Paul actually calls them “God’s servants” (verse 4). It is difficult to understand how Jehovah’s Witnesses can condemn service to one’s government when God explicitly calls such ones His servants.

Further, the Watchtower teachings on Romans 13 are inconsistent since they obey one aspect of supporting the government by the paying of taxes (verses 6-7), while at the same time denigrating the service to the government that Paul so clearly and positively portrays.

### **Other Swords**

While on the subject of swords, it is a good time to comment on a biblical passage that many who are opposed to war erroneously quote to condemn military action.

Following the last supper, at the time Judas was betraying Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane, Peter drew his sword to defend Jesus:

“Put your sword back in its place,’ Jesus said to him, ‘for all who draw the sword will die by the sword’”(Matthew 26:52). The Watchtower comment on this passage is:

Obedience to Jesus. The apostle Peter was told by Jesus: ‘Return your sword to its place, for all those who take the sword will perish by the sword.’ (Matthew 26:52) Jesus thus showed that his followers would not take up weapons of warfare.<sup>28</sup>

The Watchtower comment is clearly wrong. That this was not meant as a blanket condemnation of the use of the sword, either in self-defense or for military or police purposes is clear in that just a short time before this, Jesus actually instructed the disciples to keep a sword on hand: “He said to them, But now if you have a purse, take it, and also a bag; and if you don’t have a sword, sell your cloak and buy one . . . The disciples said, ‘See, Lord, here are two swords,’ ‘That is enough, he replied’”(Luke 22:36).

Lorraine Boettner commented on Matthew 26:52 are interesting:

Jesus’ rebuke to Peter was not a command to destroy the sword, nor to throw it away, but simply, ‘Put up the sword into the sheath’(John 18:11), implying that while this was not the proper time or place to use it since He proposes to make a voluntary surrender, there would, nevertheless, be appropriate occasions for its future use. And the further admonition, ‘All they that take the sword shall perish with the sword,’ expresses a truth which has been proved over and over again in everyday life, - -those who rely on the sword above everything else, those who put their *trust* in the sword instead of putting it in God, inevitably perish. The gangster who puts his trust in the pistol perishes by the pistol.<sup>29</sup>

It seems fair to say that included in Jesus’ comment was the idea that vigilante justice was not appropriate. That rather than to take matters into our own hands through the use of force, we should instead turn to those who have legitimate authority since they bear the sword at God’s command.

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<sup>28</sup> JW.org, About Us. <https://www.jw.org/en/jehovahs-witnesses/faq/why-dont-you-go-to-war/>, 2015.

<sup>29</sup> Lorraine Boettner, *The Christian Attitude Toward War*, Second Revised World War II Edition, Grand Rapids MI (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1942) 34.

## QUIZ: THE GOSPELS

1. Early Christian tradition suggests that this gospel was originally composed in Hebrew.  

<u>a.</u>	Matthew	<u>c.</u>	Luke
<u>b.</u>	Mark	<u>d.</u>	John
2. Which of the gospels is not considered one of the Synoptic gospels?:  

<u>a.</u>	Matthew	<u>c.</u>	Luke
<u>b.</u>	Mark	<u>d.</u>	John
3. Which gospel is believed to have been the last composed?  

<u>a.</u>	Matthew	<u>c.</u>	Mark
<u>b.</u>	Matthew and Luke	<u>d.</u>	Mark and John
4. Which gospel (s) records the genealogy of Jesus Christ?  

<u>a.</u>	Matthew	<u>c.</u>	Luke
<u>b.</u>	Mark	<u>d.</u>	John
5. Which gospel was written by a former tax collector?  

<u>a.</u>	Matthew	<u>c.</u>	Luke
<u>b.</u>	Mark	<u>d.</u>	John
6. Which gospel author(s) had been on a missionary journey with the apostle Paul?  

<u>a.</u>	Matthew	<u>c.</u>	Mark and Luke
<u>b.</u>	Mark	<u>d.</u>	Matthew and John
7. Which gospel (s) contains a preamble describing Jesus' pre-existence as the Word of God?  

<u>a.</u>	Matthew	<u>c.</u>	Matthew and John
<u>b.</u>	Mark and Luke	<u>d.</u>	John

8. Which gospel contains the account of the angel Gabriel's appearance to Mary and the announcement that she will bare the Son of God?

a. Matthew

c. Luke

b. Mark

d. John

9. Which gospel describes Jesus' miracle of turning the water into wine at the wedding in Cana?

a. Matthew

c. Luke

b. Mark

d. John

10. Which is the shortest gospel and has emphasis on moving quickly (immediately!) through the story Christ's life?

a. Matthew

c. Luke

b. Mark

d. John

### Answers:

1, a; 2, d; 3, d; 4, b; 5, a; 6, c; 7, d; 8, c; 9, c; 10, b

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