

the Free Minds Journal

promoting awareness of the Watchtower and other authoritarian religions

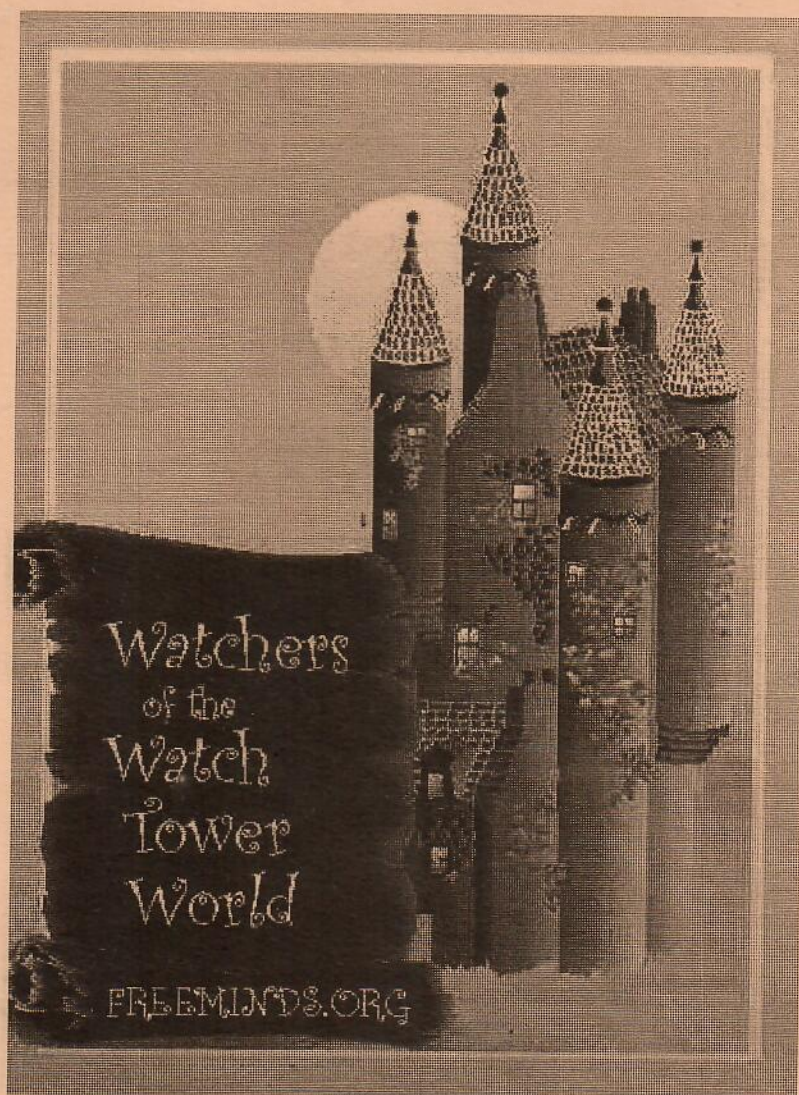
♠ Jehovahs Witnesses
respond to internet
site

♠ life and death at
Bethel

♠ bloodguilt spurs
appeal letter to
Watchtower Society

♠ Jehovahs Witnesses
and the millennium

Free Minds, Inc.



vol. 16, no. 6
Nov/Dec 1997

Randy sez...

This has been my year for getting old, I guess! I have been through one bout of cancer surgery this month (basal cell carcinoma on my neck) and getting ready to go under the knife again in one week (they didn't get it all), and I'm trying to get this November/December *Journal* out and keep up with my mail as best as I can. I have had a turban wrapped around my head for a week and have to go through that again in another week, I had part of my left ear cut off and re-formed through plastic surgery, and I'm frankly tired of this doctor/hospital business! Hopefully, and with the Lord's grace, all will be well with me in a couple of months, but this is a stressful time as you can imagine. Yet, as you can see below, I have FRIENDS. Thank God.

Journal to be Published Quarterly

Starting with the Winter 1998 issue, which will come out in January, the *Free Minds Journal* will be published quarterly, with Winter, Spring, Summer and Fall issues. Those who already have subscriptions will be upgraded so as to receive the same number of issues that they previously expected.

Publishing the *Journal* four times a year will grant me about six weeks of extra time that I can devote exclusively to this ministry, and you can expect better graphics, the latest news, exciting personal experiences and the same good service you have become accustomed to receiving from Free Minds, Inc.

With the Winter '98 issue we will begin a series on how Christian ministries measure up to the information age of the 90's and articles on how they must change or suffer criticism for using the same tactics as the cults. Stay tuned! **We will take you there.**



Free Minds Journal

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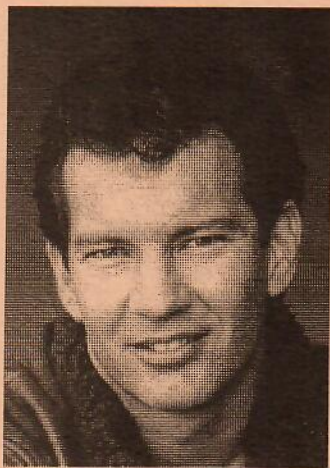
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Letters to the Editor

Dear Randy,

I have been baptized for 16 years, and haven't been to the Kingdom Hall for 3 years now. I just got tired of feeling guilty because I just never felt like I measured up to the standards of "the truth." I never liked going to the two evening meetings (they were boring), I never talked if I went out in service, and I never commented at the Watchtower study.

Anyway, after everything I've been learning about the politics of the organization, I doubt I'll ever go back. But I'm not sure how to deprogram my thoughts. I really feel brainwashed that God will surely reject me now since I've turned away from the organization that is supposed to be his. How do you change that frame of mind? It's crazy. I felt guilty as a Witness and now I feel guilty for not being one. Please give me some advice.

Thank you,
name withheld

(response)

Dear friend,

Thanks for your letter. "Deprogramming" yourself is a reverse process, one of cleaning up a lot of files in your mind that contain misinformation, either revising them or tossing out the files. It is also a process of re-examining hasty conclusions that were based on the so-

called "truthful" information stored in these files.

I will illustrate the process by which Jehovah's Witnesses indoctrinate their followers.

1) Major shift in perspective

The *Watchtower* magazine represents the "colored glasses" you put on when you associate with Jehovah's Witnesses. Suddenly the world becomes dark and foreboding, and the Witness lifestyle seems bright and attractive. How do they do it? The following scenario is proposed:

- **The Watchtower organization is a safe bet.** The devil is the ruler of the world, but he has no "hold" on the Watchtower as an organization, since Christ is supposedly leading it since 1914 (invisibly, of course).

- **You are absolved from responsibility if they are wrong.** As long as you are faithful to the organization, which is equated with being faithful to Jehovah, you will be forgiven for teaching/believing any doctrine which may later be discovered to be false, since the "light" is always getting "brighter and brighter," and Jehovah's Witnesses have become accustomed to vast doctrinal changes over the years anyway. Loyalty is really what matters, not so much "accurate knowledge," which is really only available in factoids whose context is continually changing. (Example: the 1995 shuffling of their understanding of the word "generation" that is mentioned in Matt. 24:34, which lifted the ceiling on the date for Armageddon.)

- **They alone can be trusted.** The devil supposedly misleads people through lies perpetuated in worldly society and the influence of Babylon the Great, the "world empire of false religion." The idea is that once the truth about certain subjects is discovered, you will find that Jehovah's Witnesses are really the only ones concerned with telling their people the "truth," and that consequently a person will eventually be led to the Watchtower who is diligently seeking the "truth" about life. While being careful not to say that they actually fear the devil, they are quite superstitious regarding anything remotely attributed to him. Most Christians are, by contrast, not afraid of the devil or the occult.

If the rest of the world is thereby discredited with such a sudden shift of perspective, then logically Jehovah's Witnesses are left as the only ones to trust with the right "interpretation" of things.

With what limited knowledge of the organization and its history you have, you are expected to put full faith in them. New converts are told that they can "check things out," meaning the past record of the Watchtower, but through the other side of the mouth they are told not to read anything by the opposers of the Watchtower! Such tactics are nowadays laughed at in a court of law, but not among Jehovah's Witnesses. Their sense of justice or fairness could be equated with Communist China at this place and time! Just another cheap trick in the toolbox of cults: keep them away from all contradictory evidence. (The assumption is that it is for their own good, as the "sheep" cannot be trusted to sift the evidence correctly.)

2) Listen to Them Alone

You are then expected to put faith in the Watchtower Society as a whole, accepting all their research and commentary as honest and truthful. If some things need later to be clarified or changed, it will not affect your standing with Jehovah, as you did/thought/believed what you thought was right at the time, and as long as you are in good standing with the organization, you will most likely survive Armageddon, the battle of God that will destroy all other religions and their adherents, as well as atheists and agnostics.

Outsiders who attempt to show that the Watchtower is in error or is in fact actually deceiving the Witnesses are immediately branded as "fighters against God" and accused of having a bad or evil heart condition, which instantly discounts these sources as being in any way helpful to the Witness. They are to be avoided like the devil, and the Witness or prospective Witness is not to even contact or talk to such a one, or to even visit their websites on the Internet. Nor are Witnesses to put up their own Internet sites to "help" other Witnesses find the truth. To seek any outside information relative to Bible truth or the Watchtower itself is a sign of "doubting" the organization (equated with doubting Jehovah himself, since he is supposedly leading the organization through his son, Jesus Christ). The Witness becomes, in effect, like the race horse with blinders, running fast on a track which appears to be going somewhere, but is actually leading him in a circle, and no thought of stepping outside the circle or even noticing what else is out there is tolerated even for a moment.

If the race horse notices some flowers or a rabbit or another horse while

engaged in this race, they are often chastised. If they pause or leave the track, they are ostracized and possibly even excommunicated, and are immediately disoriented and lost. In many cases they still trust the research of the Watchtower's Governing Body, perhaps not yet having discovered their incredible dishonesty and still holding onto various phobias which act as "land mines," fears that blow up in their face when the trigger is touched. The simplest and most effective triggers are words, such as:

- trinity
- worldly
- birthday
- Christmas
- Easter
- church

You know the effect these words have on a Witness. It would be good to actually write down some of your own triggers that set off a chain reaction of fear and guilt as well, whether they be words or circumstances. Once you identify this process and recognize the Watchtower's indoctrination of you as a form of mind control, you will be faced with the decision of either starting over with your research about the Bible, or ignoring the whole thing and going on with life. Some may even choose to remain within the organization due to the security it provides or due to being caught up in a complex social web of Witness friends and family.

If you really want to be free of the past and the hold the WT has on you, you need to do your research. Study every subject imaginable that they claim as their exclusive "truth," and you will find it to be either a half-truth or a downright lie. I am not exaggerating. It will probably make you angry as well, as the WT is well aware, and you thus may become an "angry apostate." In actuality, you have been victimized by them much as in the case of a very controlling mother or father. You have a right to be angry, so whether you act on this or not is perfectly normal. I chose to kick *myself* in the butt for trusting them for so many years. Life goes on. As you may have noticed, I do not carry much animosity against them, but still feel the facts need to be told to warn others. Ours is a public service, we are a non-profit organization, and we have chosen to make virtually all the information we have available for free on the internet.

yours,
Randy Watters (editor)

Life and Death at Bethel

Randy:

I just read your recent *Free Minds Journal*. I am sorry to read the experience of Sheryl K. Martinelli's mother. The Watchtower certainly is responsible for much heartache. The fact that no one attended or sent condolences at her mother's funeral is a testimony to how evil the Watchtower is. I am sure the shunning that she experienced is difficult. I am a former JW and when I tell people about their practice of shunning, they think it is barbaric, and it is!

When I hear of experiences such as these, it is hard to not feel angry at the Watchtower. I was raised as a JW and even though as a teenager I did not want to have anything to do with the Watchtower, the publications and the influence of older men in the congregation convinced me that it was the truth. I came from a single parent family and was unduly influenced by "father" figures within the congregation. In my senior year of high school, I became baptized. From the beginning, there were many things that I did not like about the organization, but like any good JW, I learned to bury those feelings.

Upon graduating from high school, my non-JW grandmother offered to put me through college. In the mid-eighties, going to college was not an option, to do so was following the ways of the world and putting stock in a dying system. A JW going to college was considered spiritually weak and one would be marked as such. I did what was admonished from the platform and strongly admonished from the publications. I turned down the opportunity and put "the Kingdom first." I pioneered for a couple of years and then went to Bethel.

For anyone who might think the Watchtower is run by mentally unbalanced lunatics, a short stay at Bethel will erase any doubts. I remember myself and some friends laughing to ourselves when walking out of 124 Columbia Heights hearing Mr. Coffee (a well known "apostate" who shouts insults at the Watchtower daily) yell "look at all the squirrels around the Watchtower, they came to the right place, they're looking for nuts." So true, we thought to ourselves.

I remember exactly where I was standing on the shipping floor of the 360 Furman building when the thought entered in my mind "this is a cult." I did not know anything about cults but I will never forget that day. I immediately dismissed the "negative thought" and went

about my day. I spent a little over two years at Bethel and left feeling very angry inside. Though still believing in the "truth" I just had to get out of that place for fear of becoming like some of the lunatics that have been there a while. I was a good little JW and did my duty and now it was time to pursue a more "normal" life. The Bethel elders tried to discourage me from leaving and said I could come back at any time, I just wanted out of there. I could talk for hours about Bethel and there were many things that I hated, but I made some great friends and had some good times, my friends were like me--they did not like Bethel, they were just playing the game, doing their duty and then getting the hell out!

I did not want to return home to pioneer, I just wanted to get a job do my duty as a good ministerial servant and get married. I thought that marriage would relieve some of the unhappiness that I had and would offer a good excuse to not become so involved. I worked for an elder doing automotive work and soon started courting his young daughter. We were both too young (and of course, being JWs, not very smart either) but as a JW there are not too many options when you are unhappy. She was a pioneer and I had already given my all to the Watchtower. We secretly were very unhappy, though you would not know it by the smiling faces we had at the Kingdom Hall. Since you can't date just to date and if you do date for any period of time it is assumed you will shortly get married, needless to say this created a lot of pressure. Fortunately, we never got married and after about nine months the relationship failed. She called it off and I was very disappointed.

Since this was my first long term dating experience, I let this depress me very much. I knew that it was for the best, but it still hurt and I concluded that it was because we must have behaved improperly. All it amounted to was just heavy petting. I confided in an elder friend and he determined that a committee meeting was in order. I got my first experience of the real ugly side of elders and their prurient interest in the personal affairs of others. She was removed as a pioneer and I was "relieved" of my ministerial "privileges" for a short time. Oddly, her father was one of the members of the elder body. One of the elders, who was shortly to move to another congregation and to this day I consider to be a kind and sympathetic person, explained to me, that to avoid any speculation on the part of the congrega-

tion, that on separate occasions, during the regular announcements at the service meetings it would be announced by a ministerial servant that she was no longer pioneering and I was no longer serving as a ministerial servant, a sort of private punishment as it were. The next meeting it was announced during the regular announcements that she was no longer pioneering. I expected to hear the announcement regarding myself the following meeting or sometime shortly thereafter. After about four weeks the elder that explained to me the announcement process moved, and at the end of the next service meeting the brother giving the talk said there "is a short announcement to be read." The Presiding Overseer went up to the stage and put on his bifocals (as if he didn't know what he was going to announce!) and announced that I had been removed as a Ministerial Servant. I thought it was a dirty trick, but I didn't complain. After all I was the ex-Bethelite and should have known better.

When I was dating this sister we often did things with a few young married couples in the congregation. Towards the end of the relationship the sister seemed to be giving too much attention to one of the married brothers. I did not think much of it and thought I was just having inappropriate jealousy. Within a few weeks of breaking up the two ran off together. This only added to my hurt. The two got married and were attending meetings in the attempt to become reinstated.

Shortly thereafter I decided I wanted to pursue a four-year degree at college. When I was at Bethel, I was assigned to a congregation in the South Bronx, which probably has the largest conglomeration of urban decay in America. I remember thinking to myself what little the Watchtower offered poor people. Better living conditions and higher education were more pragmatic solutions to a poor quality of life. In the congregation I attended there was a young man, from a poor single parent family, after high school enrolled in college. All his so-called privileges were taken away from him and he became marked as spiritually weak. Inwardly this

made me very angry, because I thought he was doing what was best for his life and I felt that I too would someday pursue some form of secular education. I knew of quite a few young JW's that pursued higher education, and the common denominator amongst them all was that their fathers were elders, this made them exempt from any punitive measures or spiritual marking and yet their fathers were the leaders of an organization that preached the end is at any moment. When I had left Bethel and moved back to the Kansas City area, there was a young sister that just finished going to school for dental hygiene and was currently working full time in this field, I told her that Bethel was in need of dental hygienists who could serve for just one two-week period out of the year. Her mother and father were standing right behind her when I told her this. Her father was the presiding overseer of the congregation, I will never forget the expression on their faces, it was as if their body language was reading "Oh no, our daughter is not going up there." Material prosperity was very important to them since the family lived in a very large home in a very affluent neighborhood. Sometime later I attended her wedding, which was an opulent display of her father's financial success. When attending a modest wedding between two pioneers, her father commented to me that the wedding was nothing compared to his daughter's wedding. It really hit home to me the hypocrisy and inconsistency in the religion.

Even though I was pursuing a B.S. in Business, I decided to pursue my B.S. at a technical school. I felt that I would have a little less pressure from the elders than if I attended a regular state school, because at the time the Watchtower was easing up on its "ban" on education by admitting that some technical education could be appropriate.

I harbored a lot of anger and resentment although I still believed I was in the "truth." When I started attending college full-time, I moved in with my mom and sister. During all this time my mom was having serious doubts about the religion. I knew that she was in contact with a former elder and his wife that were not disfellowshipped but were considered to be apostates. I was having lunch with an elder who was a longtime friend, and he told me to intercept any mail to my mother from the apostates and throw it away. I did not agree with this. I also felt it was illegal to trash someone's mail. However, my brother, also an active JW, and I felt that there

might come a time when we would have to shun my own mother and this would also limit my relationship with my then eight-year old sister. So emotionally I was in a tremendous amount of pain. Though I did not know it at the time, when my mom came to the realization that she was in a cult, she felt she would lose both of her sons to the cult and she had a nervous breakdown. I remember visiting my mom at the hospital, she looked as if she had aged 20 years overnight! When I visited her I had no ability to comfort her other than being there. I had to shut down my feelings for what might be the inevitable, cutting off spiritual ties with my own mom.

By this time I was smoldering in rage though I tried to cover it up and tried to be the happy Witness I was supposed to be. I had done everything I was supposed to do. When I was at Bethel I worked my ass off, but I felt used and manipulated. There were so many things that I was angry about, so many things I did not agree with but yet I was so trained to believe that any negative feelings toward the Society were a result of my own imperfect mind. I inwardly disliked myself, because I, too, was supporting the lie, the scam. When a young brother would approach me about Bethel, inwardly I felt I was lying when I told him it was a great thing to do. I had to dismiss my true feelings.

At this point it was all I could do to go the meetings and put in my minimum hours in the field service and my token comments at the meetings. Nevertheless I was still the good JW and on my way back to spiritual "advancement." To me my studies in college were the most important thing and the Watchtower crap was just a duty I was fulfilling.

I went to dinner one night with a sister and we became involved in some heavy petting. We both thought it was wrong and we talked to the elders. They met with the both of us at the same time, during this meeting the elders in their effort to determine the "nature of the sin," brought up everything that this sister had done wrong from the time she was 16 years old! There truly was no forgiveness in this religion. The elders wanted to know all the details, I could not help but think that these men were nothing more than perverts trying to recreate the scene of normal passion between two people who were attracted to each other. We were publicly reproved. I now started to see the true ugliness of the Watchtower. I was still brainwashed into believing in the cult but yet I hated it.

correction...

from page two of the Sep/Oct *Free Minds Journal*, page 2, under "JW Website Shut Down," the internet warning came out in the *Our Kingdom Ministry* of September 1995, in the insert, and not in the October 1995 issue as stated.

About a year later I became involved with a sister who had the same disillusionment with the congregation. The elders had inquired of my relationship with her and I told them that yes we had become intimate with each other. At this point I did not care. I felt that I still loved God, but I just couldn't measure up, I was burnt out. The elders had a meeting with me to get all the details. She had another meeting with another group of elders, since she was from another congregation. The details of the meeting and from what she told me about her meeting make me to angry to even think about. I was encouraged to quit college and become more active, I told them I could not. I will never forget that night, I felt that God loved me and he knew my circumstances and what I was going through. I told the elders I did not know what was wrong, but I was severely depressed. I will never forget walking back into that room and the elders telling me that I was disfellowshipped. To a person that has been raised as a JW that is the same as the death sentence.

The next day I went to classes and acted as if nothing had happened. I had a major exam in a difficult class that I was doing quite well in. All I could think about was the disfellowshipping and I did poorly on the test. The professor came up to me after class and said, "whatever it is that's bothering you, you better get over it." It made an impression on me that this near stranger who was not a JW had more concern for me and my welfare than those elders. Within a few weeks the friends of my mom that the JWs considered apostate came to visit. I knew they were good people and I could not ignore them. They played a video tape about JWs, I believe the tape was put out by Jeremiah Films, anyway I remember agreeing with everything it said, when I saw the aerial photographs of Bethel I felt nothing but anger. The couple had encouraged me to take a second look at the Watchtower and I agreed. The first book I read ironically had nothing to do with JWs. I read "Combatting Cult Mind Control" by Steven Hassan. Although this book was written about the Unification Church, a.k.a. Moonies, I felt that I was reading about the Watchtower. Within a couple of days it became immediately clear to me that the Watchtower was nothing but a cult and a great scam. I felt as if this great weight had been lifted off my shoulder.

I have had a difficult time with my anger towards the religion. As the few years have gone by, I have distanced

myself from my anger but sometimes I realize it is still there. A lot of needless suffering occurred because of the Watchtower. It bothers me that a tax exempt organization can continue to wreak havoc in so many lives and yet continue to grow. The most difficult thing for me to come to grips with is the wasted time and the wasted opportunities. I am shunned by my brother who was at the time my closest friend, not to mention the many many others that I have known since I was five years old. I have had numerous failed attempts to speak to him. I have difficulty with the concept of God. I border on being an atheist, but I want to believe there is a God. I envy people that say they believe in Jesus. My little sister believes in Jesus, and she is very happy. It is hard for me to believe in God or have a relationship with God since I have seen such a twisted and deceitful side of the pursuit of God. I was duped once; I never want to be duped again.

Ron Raymond
rkraymond@msn.com

Hi Randy:

Last time we talked was about 7 years ago. I was 18 and very confused. We lived near the Watchtower Farm and were having a very hard time making a decision to leave or not. We talked for quite a while and as a result my entire family left the Witnesses. We are all very happy now though we thought we never would have been! Just wanted to say thanks for all the work you do. You made a lasting impression and changed our lives forever !!!

J.S.

"In life you throw a ball. You hope it will reach a wall and bounce back so you can throw it again. You hope your friends will provide that wall."

--Pablo Picasso

Hi Randy,

I am very glad that you have your website. I am also a former JW. I was raised as a Jehovah's Witness and did not know anything else until I was in my 30's. I was completely devoted to the religion and I waited for 1975. My father died (1963) a faithful Witness (he was an elder at the time) and made me promise to remain faithful (I was 15 when he died) and so I lived all my youth waiting for his resurrection and the New System.

My life has been amazing, because in 1975 I was separated from my very abusive Witness husband, had just had my third child, and was disfellowshipped! I was traumatized that whole year. As I look back on that time, it's a wonder that I lived through that year. I just knew that I was going to be destroyed. I was so terrified that Jehovah was going to kill my sons and me because I had sinned. I truly entertained thoughts of suicide that year. I was amazed when 1975 came and went - I had struggled over a year to get back into the "truth." "They" did not let me back in the first time I asked - they said they thought that "I wasn't sorry enough." I could hardly see through the pain. I did not understand what they wanted from me. Finally "they" let me back into the organization - but I had changed. I just felt that the only way I had survived that year was through my prayers - and somehow in the pit of my soul I just knew that God heard me in spite of my being disfellowshipped! Amazing!!

Then 1976 came and went - then 1977 came and went, then, then, then. Now I was forced to begin the process of learning how to live a new life - a life in this system of things. Sometimes it still amazes me that all this time has passed, and at times - if I really think about it - I can hardly believe that I am not with my Dad in the new system. I really counted on him being resurrected. I believed in that religion so completely. Oh well!

I am thankful to say that I am recovered. Of course it took years, some therapy, and intense introspection to become the person I am today. I raised my four sons alone - thank God - and not as Jehovah's Witnesses. They are so blessed, and so am I, because I have my mind to think and I have prayer, and a spiritual connection with the Almighty - and not through an organization.

It is just wonderful to know that there are others, who like me, are striving to remain whole after the Witness experience. Through your website I was

blessed to speak with Kaynor Weishaupt this morning and she told me about a support group of ex-witnesses. I will be joining them next month.

Thank you for all your information. I also understand that you have a newsletter. Please e-mail me some info. I would like to receive it.

B. M. Calif.

Dear Randy,

My experience with the Witnesses started back in 1979 when I was 16 yrs old. My mother met a couple of JW's that were doing some wallpapering on our house and they started talking about religion. Within a week we were attending meetings at the local Kingdom Hall. My mother and I were baptized about one year later in July 1979. Everything went okay for about two years when my mom decided she did not want to be a JW any longer. Well, in order to be a good Witness I decided that it was best not to talk with my mother because Jehovah's organization said that is the way it was

supposed to be, needless to say that did not sit well with my mom or the rest of the family. So, for a period of about 4-5 years, my wife and I did not really have anything to do with my family.

Then my wife and I decided that it should be a personal choice who we associated with because it just did not feel right to alienate my family like that. We received a little resistance from others in the Kingdom Hall but not too much. We started to drift away from the organization over the next few years but always came back because of a guilty conscience or the fear that we would be annihilated at Armageddon because the Governing Body said it was going to be that way. It was in Oct/Nov. of 1995 that I really decided that the "truth" was not for me and maybe it just wasn't the "truth" after all. This decision came about because of the new light on the "1914 generation" issue and it just seemed too convenient to change a major belief like that when it was on everyone's mind that time was running out.

I received a lot of pressure to just trust in Jehovah and the Governing Body, but it was something that was nagging

at me and would not go away. It was around this same time that I purchased a computer system and hooked in with the Net and started seeing all the things that the Watchtower Society had been hiding from the others in the "truth." It was no wonder that they did not want anyone to get on the Net, because they knew what type of information was out there. Anyway, it has been an up-and-down two years but I have finally made the break along with my wife and our four children and since we do not have any friends in the organization it has not made it that difficult in leaving. My wife still has her family in the organization but they really don't talk with us much because they don't approve that we have not been to a meeting in almost 18 months.

If you need any help with getting the message out about the JW's, I would be glad to help just let me know if there is anything I can do. Thanks again and I hope to hear from you soon.

Todd Mitchell
tmitch@infowest.com

NO BLOOD TRANSFUSION

As a God-fearing Christian and a believer of Jehovah's word, the Bible, I hereby demand that blood, in any way, shape or form, is NOT to be fed into my body; however, blood substitutes may be used in case of extreme loss of blood.

YOU MUST NOT EAT THE BLOOD OF ANY SORT OF FLESH. LEVITICUS 17:14 NW

Signature _____

Witness _____ (Over)

Blood cards carried by Jehovah's Witnesses

The first example shown is one of the older versions of the blood card that Witnesses carried. You will note its clear and uncompromising statement about the use of blood. It says specifically "I demand that blood, in any way, shape or form, is NOT to be fed into my body..."

This card would clearly prohibit a Witness from taking any blood components such as those now on the Society's approved list. It accurately reflects the position taken by the Society in the following quote: "Whether whole or fractional, one's own or someone else's, transfused or injected, it is wrong." - *The Watchtower*, 09/15/1961 p. 559

The current blood card, or "Medical Directive" (shown on right) is no longer able to make the same uncompromising statement. Why? Because the Society has gradually modified its once firm position, and now allows many parts of the blood to be transfused or injected in various forms.

A doctrine that made little sense to begin with, now makes absolutely no sense whatsoever. Are you still carrying this document in your wallet? If so, why? It may well become a warrant for your untimely death.

-quote from website of Hospital Liaison Committee at <http://www.visiworld.com/starter/newlight/home1.htm>

ADVANCE MEDICAL DIRECTIVE/RELEASE

I, _____, make this advance directive as a formal statement of my wishes. These instructions reflect my resolute decision.

I direct that **no blood transfusions** (whole blood, red cells, white cells, platelets, or blood plasma) be given to me under any circumstances, even if physicians deem such necessary to preserve my life or health. I will accept nonblood volume expanders (such as dextran, saline or Ringer's solution, or hetastarch) and other nonblood management.

This legal directive is an exercise of my right to accept or to refuse medical treatment in accord with my deeply held values and convictions. I am one of Jehovah's Witnesses, and I make this directive out of obedience to commands in the Bible, such as: "Keep abstaining . . . from blood." (Acts 15:28, 29) This is, and has been, my unwavering religious stand for _____ years. I am _____ years old.

I also know that there are various dangers associated with blood transfusions. So I have decided to avoid such dangers and, instead, to accept whatever risks may seem to be involved in my choice of alternative nonblood management.

I release physicians, anesthesiologists, and hospitals and their personnel from liability for any damages that might be caused by my refusal of blood, despite their otherwise competent care.

I authorize the person(s) named on the reverse to see that my instructions set forth in this directive are upheld and to answer any questions about my absolute refusal of blood.

Bloodguilt Spurs Appeal Letter to Watchtower Society

As was mentioned in the Sep/Oct *Journal*, eight elders who are members of the Watchtower's Hospital Liaison Committees (set up to help Witnesses avoid blood transfusions) are planning a class-action suit against the Watchtower for "wrongful death" in the case of some Witnesses who should have had the option of taking a blood transfusion when no other options were available or helpful. One who calls himself the "Liberal Elder" has set up a website for JW's who have questions in this matter, currently residing at: <http://www.visiworld.com/starter/newlight/home1.htm>. For obvious reasons, these elders have requested full anonymity thus far.

As an intermediary step, they have composed an appeal letter. The following is the letter as posted on their website, and which they are requesting be copied and mailed to the Watchtower Society around Nov. 15th:

We are asking all Witnesses, or former Witnesses to send the following letter to their Witness friends, family members and all known congregation members. The letter has been drafted and approved by elders and hospital liaison committee officials in different countries. Please put a list of people you know together, and mail this letter to them. We are asking that all letters be mailed so that they arrive on or about Saturday November 15, 1997. Please make this a priority, and spread the word. The deaths must stop, and you can make a difference.

November 13, 1997

Jehovah's Witnesses Elders and Hospital Liaison Committee Members

Dear Br. or Sister _____:

We are a group of elders and Hospital Liaison Committee members in different places and countries. We have been able to talk and communicate about our assignment and also share different experiences about the work that has been done. We are very pleased that much good has been accomplished in behalf of our brothers. Many not professing to be Jehovah's Witnesses have also benefited from the arrangement.

It is widely acknowledged, even by doctors, that blood is a dangerous medical treatment. Many positive things can be said regarding alternative non-blood therapies, there is no denying that. At the same time the facts are, that our work would not be necessary if

medical science were to find a replacement for blood. However, at this time, blood is still a valuable product for saving lives and sometimes we overlook the benefit and the importance of using it.

Even among the HLC members who have many years of experience in their assignment, you can find a complete ignorance of why blood is used. Often times the only thing that many know about blood, is that it is a dangerous medical treatment and should be avoided. Not just because of Biblical reasons, but because they believe that it is bad medicine, and that there are good alternative products available.

A serious question that must be answered is: What is blood? This may seem like a simple question to answer, but it is not, for there are a number of blood components that the Society permits Witnesses to take. Are these components not also blood, and how is it decided which parts of the blood are acceptable, and which are not? Since it is acceptable to introduce these "allowed components" into our bodies, it is understandable that Witnesses and medical personnel are confused by our position? Although this question has been in the minds of many brothers, no one dares to deal with the question publicly. Why?

Albumin is another problem. We accept albumin as a matter of conscience, although the blood contains more albumin than white blood cells, which we must reject. Many doctors are also confused by this position, but they usually are so respectful, and most of them think that there are religious principles involved although a clear contradiction exists. What doctors don't know, and we are not permitted to explain to them, is that this position is clearly an organizational ruling for the members, and lacks any logical reason or scriptural support.

For those who have spent some time studying the Watchtower Society's position on the use of blood, one of the most troubling aspects is their allowance of all of the various components of fresh frozen plasma (F.F.P.) with the exception of water. Thus Witnesses may elect to accept the various immunoglobulins, the clotting factors, albumin and so forth. They may not, however take all of them at the same time.

The most depressing feature of being a member of a HLC is when our children are involved. Why has the Society completely failed to gain one legal case when it comes to minor children? It is obvious, there is nothing so effective as human blood to transport oxygen and today there is nothing to replace its use in the medical field. We must appreciate the fact that the legal system protects our children. Even for us, as members of HLCs, we realize that it is much easier to work with the doctors knowing the rules and laws about minor children. Every Jehovah's Witness

should know, although there have been cases where Witness parents have acted against it, that parental authority is not absolute and that there can be no guarantee of bloodless treatment for Witness minors in general. They should understand that the state, has the right to provide treatment believed to be necessary to safeguard a child's life or health.

When there are effective alternatives available, when there is a choice to be made, that choice should be made by the parent and not by some doctor, social worker, or judge. But here one needs to ask an important question: Who is qualified to make a decision about alternative nonblood management, and will that decision adequately meet or respond to the child's needs? As members of the HLCs we have been eye witnesses of cases where cooperative doctors have followed the parents wishes for alternative non-blood therapy, and the results have sometimes been tragic, with just one more unnecessary death being the result.

When we as Jehovah's Witnesses look back and remember the wounded and dead brothers who did not accept vaccinations, blood serums, organ transplants or hemophiliac treatments, we must acknowledge that they took their stand largely because of an organizational policy and prohibition forced upon them. These positions have now been abandoned by the leadership, and we rarely if ever see brothers refusing vaccinations, organ transplants, or any of the blood components on the Society's approved list. This fact alone should cause anyone involved in these situations to pause and reflect seriously about the real issues involved. Is the issue truly one of conscience, and if so, whose conscience?

Is the Society's blood doctrine actually correct? Why do so many brothers enter into an inner conflict about the issue when they consider the biblical facts? Has the Society really provided us with the truth, and all of the Biblical facts regarding blood? Do they realize that in accepting some minor blood components they have created a tremendous contradiction in their firm stand? Where are the serious and solid arguments against stored autologous blood transfusions? Do they appreciate that their position kills many precious minor children, unless the legal system steps in to provide protection for their life and health? Should our main concern as Jehovah's Witnesses be to look for medical alternatives, or to confront ourselves with the biblical facts about life and blood?

We are writing you out of a sense of obligation to Christian principles and conscience. We encourage you to visit the Internet Website entitled: NEW LIGHT ON BLOOD. This site has been carefully researched and will provide you with the Biblical, scientific and historical facts regarding blood transfusions.

(continued on page 9)

"Mother is watching you" quote from the November 1997 *Our Kingdom Ministry* (p. 3):

Good News on the Internet

"In our technological age, some people obtain information from electronic sources, including the Internet. So the Society has put on the Internet some accurate information about the beliefs and activities of Jehovah's Witnesses.

"Our Internet Web site has the address <http://www.watchtower.org> and contains a selection of tracts, brochures, and *Watchtower* and *Awake!* articles in English, Chinese (Simplified), German, Russian, and Spanish, as well as in other languages. The publications on this Web site are already available through the congregations and are in use in the ministry. The purpose of our Web site is not to release new publications, but to make information available to the public in electronic format.

"There is no need for any individual to prepare Internet pages about Jehovah's Witnesses, our activities, or our beliefs. Our official site presents accurate information for any who want it. Although our site has no provision for electronic messages (E-mail), it lists postal addresses of branches around the globe. Thus people can write to obtain more information or to receive personal assistance from Witnesses locally. Feel free to share the above Internet address with any who might be inclined to begin learning Bible truth from this format." (*gee, thanks, Mom!*)

Michael Jackson Reported Giving 1.5 Million to Watchtower in Russia

Nezavisimaia gazeta, 2 July 1997

JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES HAVE SETTLED IN THE
SUBURBS OF SAINT PETERSBURG

Michael Jackson donated 1.5 million dollars to his Russian brothers and sisters
by Oleg Silin

In the suburbs of St. Petersburg in Solnechny village Russia's first administrative center of the Christian religious organization "Jehovah's Witnesses" has opened. The vast scope of this action is demonstrated in the fact that more than 2,000 delegates and guests from 44 countries attended this event.

The Jehovah's Witnesses religious association arose in the second half of the nineteenth century in the USA. At present this organization number more than five million adherents. In our country is received official registration in 1991. Before that its activity was banned "because of its antisoviet tendencies." But as the members of the association emphasize, to this day the Jehovah's Witnesses do not know what the government actually accused them of.

Whatever may be the case, the most widely varying rumors circulated, even including the claim that "members of the sect brutally murder their children, sacrificing them, and they even commit suicide themselves." "In fact," the director of the Russian administrative center, Vasily Kalin, declared at a press conference, "Witnesses do not hold radical views and they do not advocate practices that are different from what society recognizes as normal conduct. This is what principally distinguishes us from cults and sects." In his words, the basic goal of the Jehovah's Witnesses is the study of the Bible. They give chief honor to God the Father, whom the Bible calls Jehovah, and they do not believe in the immortality of the soul.

More than 600 volunteers participated in the construction of the center in Solnechny village over the four and a half years it took. More than half of them were Russians and people from the republics of the former USSR. The rest came from Denmark, USA, Switzerland, Chile, Finland, Australia, and elsewhere. They deserve their due: they worked completely without pay and they center was built to European standards. In place of ruins of the remains of a Pioneer summer camp build in the 1960s they erected a four storey building complex equipped with state of the art technology, including a laundry and dry cleaners, a small furniture factory and clinic, cafeteria with its own bakery and kitchen, and seven residential blocks. At present about 300 Jehovah's Witnesses live and work in the administrative center.

As Vasily Kalin emphasizes, because the construction was done by their own efforts, including their own concrete factory, and much of the equipment and plumbing was a gift from the Scandinavian firm the construction cost extremely little.

However, justice requires that we note that evidently no small part was played by the contributions of well to do Jehovah's Witnesses. One of them alone, Michael Jackson, who came from a family of Witnesses, is said to have donated his Russian brothers and sisters one and a half million dollars.

(posted <http://www.stetson.edu/~psteeves/relnews/> 2 July 1997)

BLOODGUILT... (continued from p. 8)

Here you will find all of the facts, not simply those that support the Watchtower Society's current position. We would hope that your faith in Jehovah God is strong enough for you to examine both sides of this issue.

Here is the address: <http://www.visiworld.com/starter/newlight/home1.htm>.

We have addressed our concerns to branch representatives and members of the Governing Body. No responses have been forthcoming. If this matter were not so serious, if precious lives were not being lost nearly every day, surely we could wait on Jehovah to correct matters in his time. Sadly, we believe that change is being held up because the Society's legal department fears a backlash of litigation from Witnesses who have lost loved ones over this issue. Whether or not this would in fact be the case does not seem to be the proper basis in determining the right or moral course of action.

When all of the facts are known, it becomes quickly evident that our position on blood is in error. For some of us, a measure of bloodguilt may have been incurred in the discharging of our responsibilities as elders and H.L.C. members. If this is the case, we can hope that Jehovah will be willing to forgive our acts of ignorance. We urge you to get the facts, and prayerfully consider what course of action is appropriate. If you would like to contact us, there is a provision for you to do so by visiting the NEW LIGHT ON BLOOD site. Thank you for your kind attention.

Your fellow servants,
Elders & H.L.C. Members

P.S. Some of the questions the Society will not answer:

- Why is it that plasma is forbidden when all of its separate components, with the exception of water, are on the approved list for Witnesses to take in order to "sustain life?"

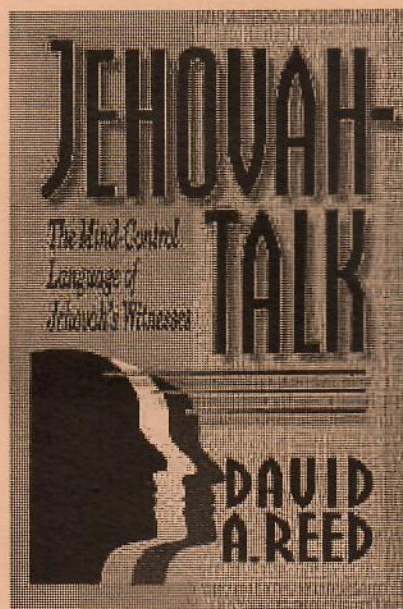
(continued on page 10)

NEW BOOK

Jehovah-Talk! The Mind-Control Language of Jehovah's Witnesses — \$12

by David A. Reed

Reed presents an in-depth vocabulary listing and explanation of distinctive terms used by Jehovah's Witnesses. "Jehovah-Talk" is no accident, but a deliberate choice by JWs, a so-called pure language. He shows how that language shares the same thought-control approach of George Orwell's "newspeak," locking people inside the cult and frustrating those who would speak to them. Brand new, 156 p. paperback.



DEFINITIONS OF JW WORDS AND EXPRESSIONS

years old and anointed with "holy spirit" at the time of his baptism by John. See AJWSBS.

Jonadab, a *obsolete* In JW terminology of the 1930s a Jonadab was a member of the great crowd—a Jehovah's Witness with the earthly hope—held to be prefigured by Jehonadab son of Rechab, who mounted Jehu's chariot to ride with him (2 Kings 10:15 NWT).

judicial action An official move to set up a judicial committee and summon before it an individual accused or suspected of wrongdoing. Example: "When the gossip in the congregation started to get out of hand, the brothers had to take judicial action."

judicial committee An officially appointed body of three (occasionally more) elders assigned to investigate and judge a JW suspected or accused of wrongdoing. Essentially a panel of judges in an ecclesiastical court, but with broad powers to investigate and interrogate an individual, call eyewitnesses, compel testimony, pass judgment, and execute punishment. A judicial committee is case-specific, so that in a congregation with elders A, B, C, D, and E, at a given moment in time A, B, and C may constitute a judicial committee investigating John Smith for adultery, B, C, and E may constitute a judicial committee investigating Jane Doe for cooking Thanksgiving dinner, and if Joe Witness is accused of smoking a new committee must be appointed.

judicial committee hearing A formal ecclesiastical court trial in which a JW accused or suspected of wrongdoing faces a panel of judges—elders who act together as investigator, prosecutor, judge, jury, and executioner.

judicial committee meeting A formal session held by the (usually) three elders forming a judicial committee. Besides actual hearings with others present, meetings may also be held by the committee members alone to plan strategy, arrive at a judgment, and so on.

judicial decisions Rulings made by a congregation judicial committee in regard to persons placed on trial as to their disfellowshipping, disciplining, reinstatement, and so on.

BLOODGUILT... (continued from p. 9)

- If a blood transfusion is essentially an organ transplant, how can it be viewed as "eating blood," since no digestion or nutritional benefit accrues? Can it be an organ transplant and a meal at the same time?

- If storing your own blood for an autologous transfusion is wrong, then why does the society permit the use of various blood components that must be donated and stored before being used by Jehovah's Witnesses?

- How does the society go about deciding which blood components are major and which are minor? For example, why are white blood cells forbidden, but albumin allowed, since albumin constitutes a larger percentage of blood volume, and milk and organ transplants are full of white blood cells?

- If we must abstain from blood completely, as the society says, then please explain why the society tells us that we may accept derivatives or components of human blood? Is this not contradictory?

- Why can Witnesses accept and benefit from the blood that others donate, but not donate blood themselves? Is this not selfish and hypocritical? Would not giving blood to help save others lives be the loving and Christian thing to do?

Duckspeak related to Jehovah-Talk?

"Relative to our own (vocabulary), the Newspeak vocabulary was tiny, and new ways of reducing it were constantly being devised. Newspeak, indeed, differed from almost all other languages in that its vocabulary grew smaller instead of larger every year. Each reduction was a gain, since the smaller the area of choice, the smaller the temptation to take thought. Ultimately it was hoped to make articulate speech issue from the larynx without involving the higher brain centers at all. This aim was frankly admitted in the Newspeak word Duckspeak, meaning "to quack like a duck." Like various other words in the B vocabulary, duckspeak was ambivalent in meaning. Provided that the opinions which were quacked out were orthodox ones, it implied nothing but praise, and when the Times referred to one of the orators of the Party as a 'doubleplusgood duckspeaker' it was paying a warm and valued compliment." (p. 254, 1981 ed.)

-1984, by George Orwell

sample page from
"Jehovah-Talk"

but Mother Sez...

not good to complain
or doubt mother?

"...But shun empty speeches that violate what is holy; for they will advance to more and more ungodliness, and their word will spread like gangrene." (2 Timothy 2:15-17) It is of interest that many who have become victims of apostasy got started in the wrong direction by first complaining about how they felt they were being treated in Jehovah's organization. (Jude 16) Finding fault with beliefs came later. Just as a surgeon acts quickly to cut out gangrene, act quickly to rout out of the mind any tendency to complain, to be dissatisfied with the way things are done in the Christian congregation. (Colossians 3:13, 14) Cut off anything that feeds such doubts. -Mark 9:43.

"Stick closely to Jehovah and his organization. Loyal imitate Peter, who resolutely stated: 'Lord, whom shall we go away to? You have sayings of everlasting life.' (John 6:52, 60, 66-68) Have a good program of study of Jehovah's Word so as to keep your faith strong, like a large shield, able 'to quench all the wicked one's burning missiles.' (Ephesians 6:16) Keep active in the Christian ministry, lovingly sharing the Kingdom message with others. Every day, meditate appreciatively on how Jehovah has blessed you. Be thankful that you have a knowledge of the truth. Doing all these things in a good Christian routine will help you to be happy, to endure, and to remain free of doubts.- Psalm 40:4; Philippians 3:15, 16; Hebrews 6:10-12."

(The Watchtower, Feb. 1, 1996, p. 24)

not good to worship
organizations?

"If one renders obedient service to someone or some organization, whether willingly or under compulsion, looking up to such as possessing a position of superior rulership and great authority, then that one can Scripturally be said to be a worshiper."

-Watchtower, 9/1/61, p. 525

Is the Watchtower a Bible Society
or mostly book publishing society?

Publication	# of languages published
Knowledge That Leads to Everlasting Life	119
Family Happiness	86
Enjoy Life on Earth Forever	237
What does God Require of Us?	113 (99 more soon)
Watchtower	113 (12 more soon)
Awake	55 (25 more soon)
New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures	27

The above is taken from the "1997 Yearbook of Jehovah's Witnesses," p. 4-7.

Just as a comparison, the Gideons, a prominent Bible Society, distribute their Bibles in 76 languages.

Excuse me?

"Fundamentalist religions often try to force from the Bible what it simply does not contain - the very day and hour of this world's demise. (See Matthew 24:36.) The publishers of this journal prefer to let the Bible explain itself."

-- Watchtower, April 1, 1997 p. 4

the year 2000

Jehovah's Witnesses and the Millennium

The chronology of Jehovah's Witnesses is based on a millennial framework. Nowhere is this better explained than in their 1969 booklet, The Approaching Peace of a Thousand Years, also an assembly talk that year at their "Peace On Earth" International convention, and which contained the following explanation:

"After this taking away of all human and demon obstructions of world peace there will come the reign of the Prince of Peace over all the earth. God's fixed time for this is approaching, and along with it the peace of a thousand years. A thousand years equals a millennium. This reminds us of something said in the aforementioned inaugural speech of the American president on January 20, 1969. He remarked upon the approach of things of interest to Americans and to all Christendom. In the eighth paragraph of his speech the newly sworn-in president said: "Eight years from now America will celebrate its 200th anniversary as a nation. And within the lifetime of most people now living, mankind will celebrate that great new year which comes only once in a thousand years—the beginning of the third millennium." The president was referring to A.D. 2001.

"The next remarks of the president showed that he expected there to be an America in the first year of that third millennium. But for God-fearing students of the Holy Bible containing both the ancient Hebrew Scriptures and the Christian Greek Scriptures, there is a more important millennium that compels their attention. That is the seventh millennium! No, not the seventh millennium measured from A.D. 1, but the seventh millennium of man's existence here on earth, the seventh millennium measured from God's creation of perfect man and woman in the garden of Eden. This is usually measured according to the Anno Mundi rule or "In the Year of the World" calendar, the world of mankind being here meant.

"Does this fact have any bearing on the approach of the peace of a thousand years or of a millennium? Very apparently Yes! According to the calendar of the Orthodox Jews, the new American president delivered his inaugural speech at the beginning of the fifth lunar month of the year 5729 A.M., this date being based on the ancient Hebrew Scriptures alone. But according to chronologers or time checkers who take into account also the inspired Christian Greek Scriptures, the Jewish calendar is more than two hundred years behind time. In certain editions of the Holy Bible, Catholic and Protestant, there have appeared dates according to the chronology of the noted Irish Anglican prelate, Archbishop James Ussher (1581-1656 C.E.). Ussher's date for man's creation is 4004 B.C.E. By this reckoning six thousand years or six millenniums of man's existence would end in the autumn of the coming year of 1996 C.E. after which the seventh millennium of man's existence would start.

"More recently earnest researchers of the Holy Bible have made a recheck of its chronology. According to their calculations the six millenniums of mankind's life on Earth would end in the mid-seventies. Thus the seventh millennium from man's creation by Jehovah God would begin within less than ten years.

"Apart from the global change that present-day world conditions indicate is fast getting near, the arrival of the seventh millennium of man's existence on earth suggests a gladsome change for war-stricken humankind. According to the first two chapters of the Holy Bible man and woman were created toward the close of the sixth creative day. We are now living in the seventh creative day, and on this seventh day Jehovah God has been resting from earthly creation. To run parallel with this resting of God on his seventh creative day, he gave the Ten Commandments to his prophet Moses, in the fourth one of which God commanded that his chosen people should rest on the seventh day of the week. (Exodus 20:8-11) That day was therefore the weekly sabbath day, the day of desistance from human toil.

"The Lord Jesus Christ, the prospective Prince of Peace, pointed forward to a greater Sabbath Day. Pointing forward to this, he said on a certain weekly sabbath day when he came under criticism: "Lord of the sabbath is what the Son of man is." (Matthew 12:1-8) He was referring to his peaceful reign of a thousand years. Jehovah God measures human affairs according to a thousand-year-length rule. He inspired the prophet Moses to write, in Psalm 90:4: "A thousand years are in your eyes but as yesterday when it is past." He also inspired the Christian apostle Peter to write: "One day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." (2 Peter 3:8, AV) In prophetic vision the apostle John saw Satan the Devil and his demons bound and abyssed for a thousand years, during which thousand years Jesus Christ reigned with his victorious disciples over all mankind. (Revelation 5:9, 10; 20:1-7) So, according to God's viewpoint of time, that thousand years of his Son Jesus Christ would correspond with merely "one day."

"In order for the Lord Jesus Christ to be "Lord even of the sabbath day," his thousand-year reign would have to be the seventh in a series of thousand-year periods or millenniums. (Matthew 12:8, AV) Thus it would be a sabbatic reign. Since early in the existence of mankind Satan the Devil has been on the loose, making the human family to toil in hard bondage, causing the earth to be filled with violence before the global flood of Noah's day and inducing the same old earth to be filled with even greater violence today. Soon now six millenniums of his wicked exploiting of mankind as his slaves will end, within the lifetime of the generation that has witnessed world events since the close of the Gentile Times in 1914 till now, according to the prophetic words of Jesus in Matthew 24:34. Would not, then, the end of six millenniums of mankind's laborious enslavement under Satan the Devil be the fitting time for Jehovah God to usher in a Sabbath millennium for all his human creatures? Yes, indeed! And his King Jesus Christ will be Lord of that Sabbath."

--pages 11.12