

THE WATCHTOWER HERESY VERSUS THE BIBLE

by

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CHAPTER ONE

THE HOLY SPIRIT—HE OR IT?

JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES are led to believe that the Holy Spirit is merely a force in action, not the third Person of the Trinity. Who leads them to think thus? Their organizational mind, the Watchtower Society, which is their world headquarters of located in New York City. Let us read some of the statements made in their publications. These statements are parroted earth-wide by the Witnesses, for they witness to what THE WATCHTOWER SOCIETY says and does, thus making them in reality WATCHTOWER WITNESSES!

Quoting from the magazine *Consolation* (now called *Awake!*) of January 7, 1942, we read the following from the pen of "Judge" Rutherford, who was then president of the Watchtower Society: "The religious clergy teach that the so-called 'holy ghost' is the third person of what they call 'the triune god.' . . . The holy spirit (mistranslated holy ghost) is not a person or being, and no scripture authorizes such a conclusion."

Needless to say, he quotes no Scripture to support this, his own conclusions but makes statements which the Witnesses accept without question.

"Judge" Rutherford was only repeating what the founder of the Society, Charles Taze Russell taught regarding the Holy Spirit. Mere statements from the Society satisfy the Witnesses; they do not require that the Bible confirm them. Without Biblical authority for their beliefs, they live in hope that someday the Society will provide a basis for them. "Judge" Rutherford was notorious for his negative attitude toward all clergymen and all government. It was this man who helped form the Society into what it is today!

Quoting now from *The Watchtower* magazine (the *logos* of the Watchtower Society) of August 15, 1944, we read under the caption Comforter, Paraclete: "The spirit or helper is not a spirit person or personage, but is the ACTIVE FORCE of God . . ." (emphasis mine). The strange part of this article is that further on it quotes Acts 5:3 which reads: "***Satan has filled thy heart to deceive the Holy Spirit.***" It is strange, because YOU CANNOT DECEIVE A MERE FORCE! Of course, the Society hopes that under the weight of Watchtower writings this problem will be overlooked. They try to "drown" the Scriptures in Watchtower material.

If it were otherwise, the Witnesses would soon begin to realize that the Watchtower and the Bible are at odds. Then there would be some embarrassing problems for the Watchtower Society to face.

The book *New Heavens and a New Earth* in discussing the operation of the Spirit in creation, as recorded in Genesis 1:2 (page 38) states: “It was not the supposed third person of an imaginary, unscriptural ‘trinity.’” But, in *The Watchtower* magazine of April 15, 1958, page 236, there is a picture that supposedly shows the Son of God pouring out the Holy Spirit upon the disciples at Pentecost!

In this article the Spirit is depicted by lines representing energy, coming from Christ to the disciples. Thus they show what they believe the Holy Spirit to be. It also confuses the issue as to their belief regarding Jesus Christ. They believe that He was resurrected as a spirit, not in the physical body. Yet they picture Him in Heaven with a physical body! We shall deal with this subject at length in the next chapter.

Actually, the Watchtower denies the EXISTENCE of the Holy Spirit, i.e., conscious, personal existence. Therefore, He “exists” only in the sense that an object without life “exists.” We do not believe that a chair, for example, possesses equal existence with us. We quote the *Funk and Wagnalls Standard Home Reference Dictionary* on the word exist: “Have actual being . . . to continue animate or in the exercise of vital functions; live; as animal life cannot exist without oxygen. Being, or the state or fact of being or continuing to be, whether as substance, essence, personality or consciousness . . . Possession or continuance of animate or vital being; life; as, a fight for *existence*.”

The Watchtower denies a high level of existence for the Holy Spirit. We humans need oxygen in order to exist. Does the oxygen also exist? If so, what does it need in order to exist? Actually, oxygen does not exist as we do. Does God exist? Not as we do! He is above our form of existence. *The Watchtower*, in putting the Holy Spirit on a level with energy, *denies* His existence even on our own level, putting Him below the level of humanity!

The Watchtower insists that their idea of the Holy Spirit is the only one a Witness may accept. *The Watchtower* magazine of November 1, 1954 states: “The holy spirit **MUST** be recognized as **THE ACTIVE FORCE** of Jehovah . . .” (Emphasis mine). They have stated their position clearly and cannot deny it now. It falls upon us, therefore, to expose their heresy thoroughly and completely. To that end we will examine the Greek text of which the English New Testament is a translation, in order to demonstrate the errors of the Watchtower Society.

We now go to their favorite book, called *Let God Be True*. Under the caption, The Holy Spirit, it is argued that the Holy Spirit is not a person: “A little searching of any Greek-English dictionary will reveal that the Greek word *pneuma* translated ‘spirit’ is the same word translated also in the Bible as ‘wind.’” This is a deceptive kind of reasoning. Although the Greek dictionary does give the above definition, of the 385 times the Greek word *pneuma* occurs in *The Watchtower* translation, only once is it translated “wind” (John 3:8). In other passages it would not make sense to translate *pneuma* as “wind.”

For example: **“And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the ‘wind’ of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.”** (John 14:16-17).

It is not reasonable to draw a conclusion from one difficult passage when 384 other passages using the same Greek word indicate a different translation.

Well, if PNEUMA does not mean *wind*, what word does? The Greek word ANEMOS. It occurs 31 times and is rendered 31 times as wind, and it never means Spirit! Now if God, who inspired the Scriptures to be written (II Timothy 3:16) wanted the word PNEUMA to mean wind, He would NOT have had the writers use the word ANEMOS. Or did God make a mistake? If the word PNEUMA means wind, then ANEMOS must (to the same extent) mean Spirit! If so, then the words would be interchangeable. No, ANEMOS does not mean Spirit, and PNEUMA does not mean wind. Therefore the statement in the *Let God Be True* book is a LIE!

In the New Testament the Holy Spirit carries the masculine gender He. Does this denote that the Holy Spirit is mere energy or force? Or, is the Holy Spirit a person? The Greek word EKEINOS gives the Holy Spirit masculine gender at John 14:26; 15:26; 16:8, 13-15; etc. The inspired writer had THREE WORDS that he could have used: EKEINE, feminine gender; EKEINO, neuter gender, and EKEINOS, masculine gender. God chose for the writer to use the MASCULINE GENDER EKEINOS. Did God make a mistake in referring to the Holy Spirit as a person?

At John 14:26 we read: **“He shall TEACH YOU ALL THINGS.”** A force could not teach anything, much less ALL things! This suggests conscious personality. At John 14:16 the Holy Spirit is called COMFORTER. This suggests His comforting us with His person, hence, personal comfort. See also John 16:13, where the Greek expression EKEINOS TO PNEUMA TES ALETHEIA, **HE THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH** occurs, again showing the Holy Spirit to be a person. Verse 14 also uses EKEINOS—**“He shall glorify me.”**

The fact that a person is glorifying suggests a personal glory; a force could not glorify of its own initiative. In Matthew 12:32-33 we read: **“All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the HOLY GHOST shall not be forgiven . . . whosoever speaketh against the HOLY GHOST, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come.”**

Does it seem reasonable that one should be condemned for speaking against a mere force or an energy? No wonder the Watchtower remains silent on this subject. In order to blaspheme a personality there must of necessity be a person. And it follows that in order to blaspheme the Holy Spirit personally, the Holy Spirit must be a person. You cannot blaspheme a person unless that person exists.

There are two significant points we might well consider now. This involves the Trinity as a whole. One is the baptism of Jesus, when the Holy Spirit descended as a dove. You might compare this with Genesis 1:2 where the Spirit was **“brooding upon the face of the waters”** (as a bird broods over her young). This indicates conscious, personal life.

Also, we are to be baptized in the name (singular) of **“the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.”** Thus each has a personal name. The Holy Spirit is not classified separately as a thing.

After Ananias had lied to the Holy Spirit as recorded at Acts 5:3, he was told that he had lied to God (Acts 5:4). If God is a person then so is the Holy Spirit. Acts 28:25 reads: **“Well SPAKE the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers.”** Then follows a quote from Isaiah 6:9, 10. The verse preceding this quote reads: **“Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?”** (Isaiah 6:8). How could He speak if He were not a person? Once again we see the deity and personality of the Holy Spirit in the teaching of the Trinity in the Scriptures.

At Psalm 139:7 the Spirit is OMNIPRESENT, and at I Corinthians 2:10 He is OMNISCIENT, both indicating personality. At Romans 8:27 we read of the **“MIND of the Spirit.”** How could a force or an energy have a mind of its own?

The Watchtower has found that these embarrassing texts are better ignored! Having no answer they remain silent. The Witnesses, left on their own, will make a feeble effort by saying that there is no neuter gender in the Greek; but in saying this they show ignorance of the language concerning which they represent themselves as students and scholars. They are neither. They have been grossly deceived, and in turn are deceiving others.

Regarding the baptism of the Holy Spirit, the book *New Heavens and a New Earth*, page 306, reads: “Peter told the listening multitude that if they believed the message, repented and were baptized in water and in the name of Jesus Christ, they too would be baptized with the holy spirit, receiving it as a free gift.”

Now here is what the Bible says: **“While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter, Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord”** (Taken from Acts 10:44-48.)

In the above account we find the opposite to what the Watchtower says. They received the baptism of the Holy Spirit first, then the water baptism. In Acts 11:5-17 Peter relates the account of how he was led to bring about the conversion of certain Gentiles, who received the baptism of the Holy Spirit at their conversion, not after a water baptism.

The book *New Heavens and a New Earth* continues, page 306: “A believer may be baptized in water in symbol of his unconditional dedication to Jehovah God, yet if he does not get the baptism with the holy spirit from God through Christ, he will never enter the kingdom of the heavens to reign with Christ.”

Only the 144,000 are supposed to enter the heavens according to the Witnesses. All Jehovah's Witnesses who believe themselves to be outside this number will freely admit they are strangers to the indwelling, baptizing Holy Spirit. Romans 8:9 clearly tells us: "**But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.**"

Note carefully the following quoted, from *The Holy Spirit* by John Owen:

He who knows no more of the ministry of the gospel than what consists in an attention to the letter of institutions, and the manner of their performance, knows nothing of it. Not that there is any extraordinary inspiration now pretended to by us, as some slanderously report, but there is that presence of the Spirit of God with the ministry of the gospel, in his authority, assistance, communication of gifts and abilities, guidance and direction, without which it is useless and unprofitable . . .

There is a spiritual leprosy spread over our nature, which renders us loathsome to God, and puts us in a state of separation from him, as those of old, who were legally unclean, were separated from the congregation, and from all the pledges of God's gracious presence—Numbers 5:2. Whatever men do of themselves, to be rid of this defilement, only hides but cannot remove it. Adam cured neither his nakedness nor the shame of it, by his fig leaves . . . Whatever we do of ourselves is a covering, not a cleansing.

And if we die in this condition, unwashed, uncleaned, unpurified, it is impossible that ever we should be admitted into the blessed presence of the holy God—Revelation 21:27. Let no man deceive you with vain words. It is not doing a few good works, it is not an outward profession of religion, that will give you "**access with boldness**" to God.

Shame will cover you when it will be too late. Unless you are washed by the Spirit of God, and in the blood of Christ, you shall not inherit the kingdom of God . . . If therefore you would not perish as base defiled creatures, when your pride . . . and your duties will stand you in no stead—look out betimes for that only way of purification which God has ordained. But if you love your defilements, if you are proud of your pollutions, if you satisfy yourselves with your outward ornaments—there is no remedy, you must perish forever.

Further on in his book John Owen remarks:

If the Holy Ghost were only a power or force, then sin against God would automatically be sin against the Holy Spirit also. But—the Spirit can be sinned against separate from the Father—apart from the Father! The Holy Ghost may be distinctly blasphemed, or be the immediate object of that sin, which is inexpressible. To suppose, therefore, that this Holy Ghost is not a Divine Person is for men to dream while they seem to be awake.

The Witnesses would probably believe what the Bible teaches if it were not for the WATCHTOWER PUBLICATIONS which keep them from it!

Under the guise of Biblical instruction these publications lead the reader AWAY FROM THE BIBLE, gradually, until the Bible is used only, in its misinterpretation, to support the Watchtower publications!

Jehovah's Witnesses (misnamed people who are really WATCHTOWER WITNESSES) study in neighborhood groups as BOOK STUDIES. They have neither BIBLE studies nor prayer meetings. They have neither worship services nor devotions. They sing neither hymns nor praise to God or Christ—only to the organization.

In their lives there is neither grace nor salvation. No joy in the Lord, no comfort of the Spirit; no freedom of the sons of God! Only there is a constant drudgery of arguing and debating from door-to-door, making out reports to headquarters on what they have or have not done for the organization. Such is the sad, pitiful state of those who have denied the personality of Holy Spirit.

How far, yes, how very far they have strayed from the Christian faith! Yet they claim that theirs is the only true faith, and all others are of the Devil! To them every denomination, except their own, is of the Devil. All their friends and relatives, if they are not Jehovah's Witnesses, are the Devil's people. They believe that the church was in darkness from the times of the apostles until 1872, when Charles Taze Russell came upon the scene.

All the great men of God from the first century to the twentieth century are scorned by the Witnesses. In John Owens' book mention is made of those church fathers "that those who scorn these things may reflect on whose ashes they trample."

But our subject is far from complete. The Witness will now demand further proof on the subject of the Trinity. "Was not Jesus only a man?" he will ask. "Do we not ignore many Scriptures in our efforts to create a Trinity? How could there be a Trinity seeing that Jesus was inferior to His Father? Was He not created by this very Father?"

These questions we leave for the following two chapters to answer. For we will now begin a study of the deity of the Lord Jesus Christ, which will then lead us on into bringing the three persons together, concluding with the chapter on the Trinity.

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