

Jehovah's Witnesses

Does the SDA Church Borrow From The Watchtower?

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Seventh Day Adventists have been accused of borrowing their ideas about life after death from the Jehovah Witnesses and the Watchtower organization [www.jw.org]. It is claimed that the view that the dead sleep in the grave is borrowed from JW theology. What do Jehovah Witnesses teach on life after death?

Endorsement Of The Occult

Did the Watchtower ever endorse the occult? Does the Watchtower endorse the occult now? Judge Rutherford wrote an article titled "Talking With the Dead(?)" which appeared in the first *Golden Age* magazine in 1919. He said:

Sir Authur Conan Doyle, a positive witness that the living communicate with the dead (?), has written much on the subject. It will be noticed that the messages which purport to come from the dead come through a medium. [*The Golden Age*, October 1, 1919 page 23]

Judge Rutherford believed that communication with the dead was false then comments that:

These Scriptures, then, prove conclusively (and there is none to contradict them) that man has not an immortal soul; that man is not a spirit being but a human; that man when he dies is dead and is not conscious; therefore could not possibly communicate with any who are living. [*The Golden Age*, October 1, 1919, page 26]

His conclusion was:

"Instead of this being the work or voices of departed men, we answer that the voices and works are those of demons who never were men." [*The Golden Age*, October 1, 1919, page 28]

On October 31 1916 Charles T. Russell the "faithful and wise servant," as he was called died. The Watchtower magazine stated that he had gone straight to heaven in spirit form:

The three days of terrible darkness over the land of Egypt may represent three years of the Great War [1914-1918], and indicate its close shortly after the publication of this final witness of the church. Pastor Russell passed forever out of reach of the antitypical Pharaoh, Satan, in the fall of 1916. We hold that he supervises, by the Lord's arrangement, the work yet to be done. [*The Finished Mystery*, Page 256]

The Watchtower started the teaching that in 1878 people started going to heaven as invisible spirits:

"In the spring of 1878 all the holy Apostles and other 'overcomers' of the Gospel Age who slept in Jesus were raised spirit beings." [*The Finished Mystery*, page 182]

When Russell died in 1916, he was immediately resurrected as a "spirit Guide" who was communicating with people here on Earth:

"Though Pastor Russell has passed beyond the veil, he is managing every feature of the harvest work." [*The Finished Mystery*, page 144]

This work is conducted by the WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY, a corporation organized for that purpose by Pastor Russell years ago, and which, without doubt, was organized under the Lord's direction, and which was managed and directed by Pastor Russell until his death. Hence our dear Pastor, now in glory, is without doubt, manifesting a keen interest in the Harvest work, and is permitted by the Lord to exercise some strong influence thereupon. (Revelation 14:17) It is not unreasonable to conclude that he has been privileged to do, in connection with the Harvest work, things which he could not do while with us. Although we recognize that the Lord is the great Master and Director of the Harvest, yet we recognize that He would privilege the saints beyond the veil to have a part in the work on this side; and thus all the saints, both in Heaven and upon earth, are now given the honor of concluding the work on this side, preparatory to the full establishment of the Kingdom of Glory. [*The Watch Tower*, November 1, 1917, page 325.]

"In Volume VII, STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, page 161, Revelation 9:13, referring to the Adventists, in connection with other Protestant churches, the statement is made, 'The common ground on which they stand is this, their affirmation of spiritualism in some form.' The writer is not an Adventist, nor affiliated with any church; but he believes in fairness. It seems to him that Adventism, which maintains that all the dead are still unconscious in the grave, leaves the field less open to spiritualist delusions than does your doctrine, which declares that, since 1878, the righteous dead are conscious spirits; for in another place you disclose with great particularity [in "Spiritualism" and "Talking With the Dead"] how the fallen angels have almost unlimited powers to impersonate even the righteous dead. It occurs to this writer that this doctrine also exposes the believer to lying telepathic communications from the living. It resembles strikingly the Roman Catholic belief that only a few of the dead, the saints, etc., have any communication with the living." [The Golden Age, February 13, 1924, page 312]

The ground for including the Adventists in those tainted with spiritualism has reference to their acceptance some years ago of the delusions of "Mother Ellen White," and not to their sound theology on the question that the dead are dead. However, the doctrine that the dead do really die does not in any way interfere with the doctrine of the resurrection. This is the case with all the saints who fell asleep in death prior to 1878. Since then we understand that we are living in a special season when the overcomers are, at death, "changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye" (1 Corinthians 15:52) and do not need to remain asleep in death. But our doctrine would forbid any intercourse with any of these; indeed, none of the Lord's people would undertake it. [The Golden Age, February 13, 1924, page 312]

He imagines that he is receiving spirit messages from Charles Taze Russell, first president of the International Bible Students Association; as a matter of fact he is taking messages from a fallen angel that for centuries has been getting his principal enjoyment in making fools out of humans. [The Golden Age, January 31, 1934 page 273.]

Later in 1934, perhaps as a result of this, Rutherford wrote the following clear-cut denunciation of trying to communicate with Russell or any other dead "saint." He denounced the belief that the dead were directing the Society's work. This appeared in the May 1 Watchtower and in his book *Jehovah*. There he said:

All at the temple will realize that their spiritual food comes to them from their Teachers, Jehovah and Christ Jesus, and not from any man. No one will be so foolish as to conclude that some brother (or brethren) at one time amongst them, and who has died and gone to heaven, is now instructing the saints on earth and directing them as to their work. [The Watchtower, May 1, 1934, page 131; Joseph F. Rutherford, *Jehovah*, (Brooklyn, New York: Watchtower, Bible & Tract Society) 1934, page 191.]

The Occult Resurrected?

A recent Watchtower publication suggests that those in heaven [The 144,000] are in communication with those on the Earth. They have gone to heaven in spirit form from 1914 onwards:

"This suggests that the resurrected ones of the 24 elders group may be involved in the communicating of divine truths today." [Revelation; Its Grand Climax at Hand!, 1988, page 125]

Pastor Russell's Gravesite

Pastor Charles Russell [1852-1916] is buried under a Masonic pyramid in Rosemont Cemetery, Pittsburg.

Russell's Instructions for his funeral

I desire to be buried in the plot of ground owned by our Society, in the Rosemont United Cemetery, and all the details of arrangements respecting the funeral service I leave in the care of my sister, Mrs. M. M. Land, and her daughters, Alice and May, or such of them as may survive me, with the assistance and advice and cooperation of the brethren, as they may request the same. Instead of an ordinary funeral discourse, I request that they arrange to have a number of the brethren, accustomed to public speaking, make a few remarks each, that the service be very simple and inexpensive and that it be conducted in the Bible House Chapel or any other place that may be considered equally appropriate or more so. (from *Watchtower Reprints*, 12/1/16)

For those wishing to visit the gravesite:

The area is the North Hills area of Pittsburgh. It is in the "Rosemont United Cemeteries at Allegheny, in the Bethel Family plot, according to his request." (*Jehovah's Witnesses In The Divine Purpose*, 1959, page 62) The street is named Cemetery Lane. It is where Babcock Boulevard and McKnight Road intersect. McKnight Road is a large freeway. There is a Babcock Blvd exit off of McKnight Road. Go West on Babcock Boulevard. Cemetery Lane will be a left turn off of Babcock. The pyramid is BEFORE you get to the top of the hill on the right side. You can see it from the road. It is maybe 30 to 40 feet into the cemetery. Or, simpler directions for others: Take Interstate 179 to Exit 12, which is Cemetery Lane. Follow Cemetery Lane to the gravesite.



Above is the headstone above Russell's grave. Note that he was viewed as the seventh, or "Laodician Messenger" to the Churches (Revelation 3:14) The first six are listed as: St. Paul, St. John, Arius, Waldo, Wycliffe, Luther. (*The Finished Mystery*, Karatol edition, 1918, page 64)



Watchtower's pyramid memorial, with cross and crown emblem and capstone. Note Russell's headstone in background.

The Masonic Pyramid that pastor Russell is buried under has the same Masonic logo carved on it as does the logo of the Church of Christian Science founded by Mary Baker Eddy. This logo has a crown with a cross going through its centre surrounded by a floral wreath. Both Pastor Charles Russell and Phineas Quimby the co-founder of Christian Science were Freemasons.



Close-up of pyramid with cross and crown emblem, and "Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society" carved in stone.



"Risen with Christ" carved in stone on another side of the pyramid. Cross and crown emblem is on all four sides.

www.freeminds.org

Comparison Of SDA and JW Teachings

| Subject | SDA View | JW View |
|------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Enoch | In Heaven now | Not in heaven |
| Elijah | In Heaven now | Not in heaven |
| Moses | In Heaven now | Not in heaven |
| Jesus | Bodily resurrection | Spiritual resurrection |
| Matthew 17 | Literal event | Vision only of Moses and Elijah |
| | Moses and Elijah now in heaven | Not in heaven |
| New Jerusalem | Literal building | Allegory of the church |
| | Home of the redeemed | Nobody's home |
| | Lands on the Earth | Lands nowhere |
| | Now in heaven | Not anywhere |
| The 144000 | Not in heaven | In heaven now |
| | Part of those in heaven | Only people to go to heaven |
| | Bodily resurrection | Spiritual resurrection |
| | Ascend at future Second Coming | Ascended to heaven in 1914 AD |
| Heaven | Literal place - real buildings | Invisible spirit realm |
| | Descends to Earth after millennium | Eternally separated from the Earth |
| | 144,000 and Great Multitude | 144,000 only in heaven |
| | Worshipping the Trinity | Worshipping Father only |
| Other Worlds | Billions of inhabited planets | None mentioned of |
| | Redeemed visit other planets | Nobody visits other worlds |
| | Redeemed explore the Universe | Redeemed confined to planet Earth |
| Great Multitude | Ascend to heaven | Never go to heaven |
| | Live in the New Jerusalem | Live outside the 'New Jerusalem' |
| 24 Elders | Ascended in 31 AD | Ascended in 1914 AD |
| | Bodily resurrection | Spiritual resurrection |
| Second Coming | Future visible event | Happened Invisibly in 1914 |
| | Visible to all | Invisible spiritual return |
| | Righteous living and dead translated | Only dead translated |
| | Wicked destroyed | Nobody destroyed |
| | Begins Millennium | Begins the 'Last Days' |
| Millennium | 144,000 and Great Multitude in heaven | 144,000 only in heaven |
| | Earth desolate and lifeless | Great multitude on earth |
| | Begins at the Second Coming | Over 90 years after the Second Coming |
| | Probation ends | Probation continues for wicked |
| | Earth desolate and lifeless | Paradise restored |
| Hell | Surface of the Earth | Grave only |
| | Future visible event | Happens at death only |
| | Wicked burned to ashes | Grave only |
| | End of the Millennium | At death |
| Death | End of probation | Future probation during 1000 years |
| | Sleep only | 144,000 go straight to heaven |

Jehovah's Witnesses And Theistic Evolution

Jehovah Witnesses currently believe that the Earth and the creation account of Genesis chapters 1 and 2 began about 4,500 million years ago. Previously they held that the creation week began about 49,000 years ago and each day of the creation week was 7,000 years. They now seem to hold the same views as progressive creationists like Dr. Hugh Ross [www.Reasons.org] that the days of creation were hundreds of millions of years each, except that man was created 6,000 years ago. The new Watchtower view holds that God began creating life on Earth about 500 million years ago. Each day of creation is about 700 million years. Man was created 6,000 years ago and Noah's flood took place 4,300 years ago.

If Jehovah's Witnesses accept radiometric dating as accurate then were the fossils buried during a world wide flood 4,300 years ago or over a 1,000 million years period?

If radiometric dating is accurate did dry land [Genesis 1:9, 10] appear 30,000 years ago or millions of years ago?

If the mountains formed millions of years ago does this mean that Noah's flood was just a local and not a world wide flood?

If radio-metric dating is accurate then not only were dinosaurs living on Earth millions of years ago but man also. You cannot accept radio-metric dating and still hold that man has been here only 6,000 years. There is a large amount of research verifying that radiometric dating is seriously in error and that the Earth was created only 6,000 years ago.

I would recommend the following creationist websites for further research:

www.ChristianAnswers.net

www.ICR.org

www.AnswersInGenesis.org

www.Creation.com

Early Watchtower Teaching

In recent years the Watchtower has promoted the writings of two prominent theistic evolutionists and one literal six day creationist in its books and on its official website www.jw.org. Why the Watchtower uses quotations from a literal six day creationist to promote the idea that the days of creation are thousands or million of years is hard to understand.

Pastor Charles Taze Russell [1879-1916] founded the Watchtower Society and was a theistic evolutionist himself. Here are some quotes from early Watchtower publications:

Examining the Genesis expressions critically, we discern that a distinction is made between the creation of the heaven and the earth (verse 1) and the subsequent regulations, or the ordering of these, and the further creations of vegetable and animal life. Verse 2 tells us that in the very beginning of the first day of the creative week the earth was--though without form (order), and void (empty)--waste, empty and dark. This important item should be distinctly noted. If recognized, it at once corroborates the testimony of geology thus far." (The New Creation, 1904, Pastor Charles Russell, page 18)

The Bible does not say how long a period elapsed between the beginning when God created the heaven and the earth, and the beginning of the creative week used in perfecting it for man: nor do geologists agree amongst themselves as to the period of this interval--a few extremists indulge in wild speculations of millions of years. (The New Creation, 1904, Pastor Charles Russell, pages 18, 19)

Let us not contend for more than the Scripture record demands. The Bible does not assert that God created separately and individually the myriad kinds of fish and reptiles; but merely that divine influence, or spirit, brooded, and by divine purpose the sea brought forth its creatures of various kinds. The processes are not declared--one species may, under different conditions, have developed into another; or from the same original protoplasm different orders of creatures may have developed under differing conditions. No man knows, and it is unwise to be dogmatic. It is not for us to dispute that even the protoplasm of the Palaeozoic slime may not have come into existence through chemical action of the highly mineralized waters of the seas. What we do claim is, that all came about as results of divine intention and arrangement, and hence, were divine creations, whatever were the channels or agencies. (The New Creation, 1904, Pastor Charles Russell, pages 35, 36)

Here, again, we need not quarrel needlessly with Evolutionists. We will concede that, if God chose, he could have brought all the different species of animal life into being by a development of one from the other, or he could have developed each species separately from the original protozoan slime. We know not what method he adopted, whatever way God chose to accomplish it, he has fixed animal species, each "after its own kind" in such a manner that they do not change." (The New Creation, 1904, Pastor Charles Russell, pages 36, 37)

In view of our remarks, foregoing, that the Scripture language does not forbid the possibility of the plants, water-creatures and land-creatures being more or less developed or evolved, in their various kinds, it may be well for us to note the wide difference in the language used when referring to man's creation. The later is a specific declaration of the direct exercise of the divine creative power, while the others are not, but rather imply a development:-

"And the earth brought forth the grass," etc.

"Let the waters bring forth the creeping creature," etc.

"Let the earth bring forth living creature after its kind, cattle," etc....

It is not said of man as of the sea creatures, "Let the seas swarm," nor as with the lower earthly animals, "Let the earth bring forth;" but it is recorded, on the contrary, that he was a special creation of his Maker, "made in his own image." Here is the battlefield between God's Word and the so-called Modern Science, to which the whole world, especially the learned - including the leaders of thought in all theological seminaries, and the ministers in all the prominent pulpits, are bowing down - worshipping the scientific God called "Evolution." The two theories are squarely at issue: if the Evolution theory is true, the Bible is false from Genesis to Revelation. If the Bible is true, as we hold, the Evolution theory is utterly false in all its deductions as respects man. (The New Creation, 1904, Pastor Charles Russell, pages 37, 38)

As for the lower animals we will not on their behalf quarrel with the deductions of the evolutionists. If an evolutionary process did take place in the past we hold that it was so under divine supervision and guidance--that the different species of plants and animals were brought to perfection, so that no further evolutionary processes in them is possible. On the other hand be it noted that the Scriptural account might be understood to rather favor the Evolution Theory in respect to the lower creatures. For instance the statement, "God said, let the earth bring forth grass..." But when we come to the creation of man there is no suggestion that this was a bringing forth or a development. Whoever believes Adam was developed from a monkey is in violent conflict with the faith once delivered." [*The Watch Tower*, January 1, 1907, pages 12, 13.]

In the Third Day, or Epoch, under divine direction vegetation sprang up--grass, bushes, trees, with their seeds and fruits. The account does not say that God made so many different kinds of grasses and fruit, trees, etc. It declares that under Divine command the Earth brought forth these various kinds. Nothing in the Genesis account would interfere with an Evolutionary Theory with regards to vegetation.

On the Fifth Day the waters began to swarm with living, moving creatures. Next came fowl and great sea monsters. Here again a measure of Evolution is Suggested by the statement that "the waters brought forth abundantly" the various kinds, under divine supervision. Only in the case of man does the Bible distinctly declare a personal creation.

The creation of land animals marks the Sixth Epoch-Day. Fish and fowl took precedence, as scientists agree. Again we read that: "the earth brought forth," but we also read that the Lord directed the matter in the development of the various kinds or varieties.

It was at the very end of the Sixth Day when God created man. The earth did not bring him forth....

HOW DIFFERENT the statement respecting man's creation from that describing the creation of plants and the lower animals which the seas and the earth brought forth! Man's creation was premeditated. [*The Watch Tower*, December 1, 1912, pages 372, 373.]

"One theory regarding the creation (excepting man) by a process of evolution, to which we see no serious objection, we briefly state as follows: It assumes that the various species of the present are fixed and unchangeable as far as nature or kind is concerned. This theory further assumes that none of these fixed species were originally created so, but that in the remote past they were developed from the earth, and by gradual processes of evolution from one form to another. These Evolutions, under divinely established laws may have continued until the fixed species, at the present time seen, were established, beyond which change is impossible." [Woodworth, C. J., "Evolutionist Guessing," *The Golden Age*, November 12, 1919, page 103.]

Only in respect to man does the Bible declare a special, direct creation of God. The statements of Genesis in respect to lower creatures rather favor something along the lines of Specialized Evolution, the beginning of life came from the waters, and later extended to the birds, and still later to the land animals under divine supervision various orders of creation were brought to a state of development and fixity of species." [Woodworth, C. J., "Life of the Saurians," *The Golden Age*, February 18, 1920, page 341.]

Jesus expected anointed Christians collectively to be acting as a faithful steward, giving his body of attendants "their measure of food supplies at the proper time." (Luke 12:42) According to Luke 12:43, Christ said: "Happy is that slave, if his master on arriving finds him doing so!" This indicates that for some time before Christ arrived to settle accounts with his spirit-anointed slaves, they would have been dispensing spiritual food to members of the Christian congregation, God's household. Whom did

Christ find doing so when he returned with kingly power in 1914 and proceeded to inspect the house of God in 1918?. Do you think it was Christendom's churches? Certainly not, for they were deeply involved in politics. Spiritually, their faith had been weakened by Modernism. A spiritual crisis was brought about because many of their clergy became easy prey to higher criticism and evolution. No spiritual nourishment could be expected from Christendom's clergy! On arriving to inspect his slaves in 1918, therefore, whom did the Master, Jesus Christ, find giving to his body of attendants their measure of food supplies at the proper time? Well, by then, who had given truth seekers the correct understanding of the ransom sacrifice, the divine name, the invisibility of Christ's presence, and the significance of 1914?. Who had warned of the dangers of evolution and spiritualism? The facts show that it was a group of anointed Christians associated with the publishers of *Zion's Watch Tower*." [The Watchtower, March 15, 1990, pages 13, 14.]

Watchtower Books

The first part of Genesis indicates that the earth I could have existed for billions of years before the first Genesis "day," though it does not say for how long. However, it does describe what earth's condition was just before that first "day" began: "Now the earth proved to be formless and waste and there was darkness upon the surface of the watery deep; and God's active force was moving to and fro over the surface of the waters."-Genesis 1:2. [Evolution Or By Creation?, Chapter 3, 1985 Edition]

The first part of Genesis indicates that the earth could have existed for billions of years before the first Genesis "day," though it does not say for how long. However, it does describe what earth's condition was just before that first May" began: "Now the earth proved to be formless and waste and there was darkness upon the surface of the watery deep; and God's active force was moving to and fro over the surface of the waters."-Genesis 1:2. [Evolution Or Creation, Watchtower Society, 1985, Page 26]

A well-known geologist said this about the Genesis creation account: "If I as a geologist were called upon to explain briefly our modern ideas of the origin of the earth and the development of life on it to a simple, pastoral people, such as the tribes to whom the Book of Genesis was addressed, I could hardly do better than follow rather closely much of the language of the first chapter of Genesis." This geologist, Wallace Pratt, [Six Day Creationist] also noted that the order of events-from the origin of the oceans, to the emergence of land, to the appearance of marine life, and then to birds and mammals-is essentially the sequence of the principal divisions of geologic time. [Evolution Or Creation, Watchtower Society, 1985, Page 36]

Creation of the heavens and the earth, and the preparation of the earth for human habitation (Genesis 1:1-2 to 2:5). Reaching back evidently through billions of years of time, Genesis opens with impressive simplicity: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." Significantly, this opening sentence identifies God as the Creator and his material creation as the heavens and the earth. In majestic, well-chosen words, the first chapter continues on to give a general account of the creative work relative to the earth. This is accomplished in six time periods called days, each beginning with an evening, when the creative work for that period is undefined, and ending in the brightness of a morning, as the glory of the creative work becomes clearly manifest. [All Scripture Inspired, Watchtower Society, 1990, Page 14]

The planet's coming into existence is recounted In the Bible with the simple statement: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the Earth." (Genesis 1:1) Just how long ago the starry heavens and the earth were created is not stated In the Bible. Therefore, there Is no basis for Bible scholars to take issue with scientific calculations of the age of earth's rock-mass. Scientists variously estimate the age of the rocks as three and a half to four thousand million or more years. [Aid To Bible Understanding, Watchtower Society, Page 476]

Was all physical creation accomplished in just six days sometime within the past 6,000 to 10,000 years? The facts disagree with such a conclusion: (1) Light from the Andromeda nebula can be seen on a clear night in the northern hemisphere. It takes about 2,000,000 years for that light to reach the earth, indicating that the universe must be at least millions of years old. (2) End products of radioactive decay in rocks in the earth testify that some rock formations have been undisturbed for billions of years. [Reasoning From The Scriptures, Watchtower Society, 1989, Page 88]

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