

More Thoughts on the Jehovah's Witnesses

By Norm R. Allen Jr.

In the Jehovah's Witnesses' pamphlet titled *Good News from God*, p. 10, the reader learns that the Earth used to be a paradise before Eve ate the forbidden fruit. The planet was then "given into the hand of the wicked one." Many Witnesses believe that natural disasters or "acts of God" and disease came into the world after Eve sinned.

There is a serious problem with this view. Why would a perfectly loving God inflict other animals with diseases and natural disasters simply because *human beings* allegedly sinned? If he insisted upon harming the children he professes to love, he could have afflicted only them with serious diseases and harmed them in numerous other ways without harming innocent animals. However, more importantly, why should a perfectly loving, all-merciful God inflict so much harm upon human beings? That certainly makes him an abusive heavenly Father.

On page 16 of the pamphlet, the reader learns that "All of God's works are perfect." However, there seems to be imperfection wherever we look. Life feeds upon itself. Birds eat worms. Cats eat birds. Humans eat cows, chickens, and so on. How could this possibly be considered to be a perfect plan from an omnibenevolent deity?

The human body is imperfect. As Neil deGrasse Tyson has noted, we have a sewer system *and* an entertainment center between our legs. From an engineering perspective, the human body is very sloppily built. On the other hand, what else would one expect if the human body is, after all, the result of evolution by natural selection?

Jehovah's Witnesses promote patriarchy. However, why must men always lead women? History has shown that great women such as Harriet Tubman, Sojourner Truth, the African Queen Nzinga and numerous others have been great leaders, and even warriors. Why should women such as these not be able to lead their husbands inside and outside the home? Or, at least why should they not be able to lead households as equal partners with their husbands?

Some Witnesses claim that during biblical times, men did not beat their wives, so there was no need for a prohibition against wife beating. This is a highly fantastic claim, to say the very least. In any case, Witnesses now say that *today* wives are allowed to divorce their husbands if they or their children are threatened with violence.

It is clear that women were regarded as the property of men. Indeed, Israelites were told not to covet their neighbor's wives, as though women are property, like donkeys. Worse still, Israelite soldiers were allowed to take female virgins from their enemies during war. No matter how one slices it, this amounts to kidnapping and rape, because slaves cannot give sexual consent, regardless of their age. How could a perfectly good God ever condone kidnapping and rape?

Witnesses claim that there is only one true religion, which coincidentally, just so happens to be theirs. However, what is so particularly special about any branch of Christianity that makes one believe it must be the one true religion? Christianity makes the same kinds of claims about supposed prophecies, miracles, and so forth that religions have always made. There is simply nothing special about Christianity that would make an open-minded person believe that it is the one true religion.

The pamphlet states that God chose Israel "So people from all nations could benefit from Israel." (Page 28) However, the notion of a Chosen people of a God that professes to love all people equally is absurd. Where there is a Chosen people, there must be other people that are not chosen, and therefore worthy of contempt and mistreatment. This is why, if the Bible is to be taken seriously, the Israelites slaughtered their enemies with no remorse. (Aaron, Joshua, Gideon, Samuel and others led their people on genocidal missions in the name of God.)

It would have made more sense to send a special leader and a truly holy book to every people and to command that they love and respect people from all countries and races. There should have been monuments featuring God's moral teachings placed in the most important museums of every nation. There should have been no need for fallible biblical translators.

Perhaps the worst aspect of the Witnesses' religion is that it is quietist. They sincerely believe that life is a dress rehearsal – for the afterlife. They do not

believe in political or social activism. Why fight for civil rights or human rights knowing that human civilization as we know it is going to end “soon” anyway? Why fight against Jim Crow or apartheid? Why fight for voting rights? After all, “man’s way of governing could never work.” Why waste time fighting for a pension, the 40-hour work week, medical care, dental care and other benefits? None of that is going to matter “soon.”

Humanism and progressive religion beat religious quietism any day of the week. All people genuinely concerned with improving life in the here and now should oppose quietism every step of the way.