

RAIDING CHRISTENDOM'S PANTRY

From whom do Jehovah's Witnesses get their "food"?



DEMONS SERVING AT TABLE FOR JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES?

"THE MASK IS DOWN" claimed the 1944 Watchtower publication *Religion Reaps the Whirlwind*, "... "organized religion" stands exposed as being not of the Lord God and Christ, but of their enemy, Satan the Devil. It stands stripped of its Christian professions, and stands naked as being demonism!" (pp.58,59) On the last page of the booklet Jehovah's Witnesses and all other readers are warned to read only the Bible and "all the pure and clean helps that Jehovah God provides" (p.63). Modern JW's may therefore be alarmed to know that the MASKS ARE BACK ON -- *The Watchtower* having decided that its sources are only credible when NOT identified as clergy of Christendom -- "demonism"! They haven't changed their tune: **"The clergy are part of Satan's world"**. (*Watchtower*, Feb. I, 1990, p.25)

Who really is the faithful and discreet slave who his master appointed over his domestics, to give them their food at the proper time?

Matthew 24:45 (NWT)

IN RECENT years The Watchtower has not published books with the frequency of past decades. But in 1988 The Watchtower served up the most substantial "feast" Jehovah's Witnesses have ever enjoyed, *Insight on the Scriptures*. In 2 volumes totalling 2554 pages, *Insight* is a substantial meal indeed, and seems to make Jehovah's Witnesses proud of their organization's resources and research capabilities.

But where do Watchtower chefs get the ingredients for their culinary concoctions? Watchtower writers, hidden behind anonymity, display impressive knowledge of history, archaeology, and Bible languages. For example the *Insight* volumes impress with their exact erudition regarding the Greek and Hebrew languages. Indeed, such expertise **is essential** when one claims to be the **ONLY** approved interpreter of God's Word. But since The Watchtower has **NO** recognized Greek or Hebrew scholars, historians, archaeologists, etc., who is stocking its pantry? Who are *ultimately* responsible for Jehovah's Witnesses Bible knowledge?

Make no mistake, The Watchtower **does** acknowledge many of its sources. Search the *Insight* volumes and you will find frequent references to authorities described only as "scholar", "Greek scholar", "Hebrew scholar", "historian", "archaeologist", "commentator", "lexicographer", "Bible scholar" and other impressive titles. Since The Watchtower seems to lean heavily on these men's credentials, Jehovah's Witnesses should know to whom they owe much of their Bible knowledge.

Here are a few of the most frequently cited sources, with significant *Insight* reference pages:

Albert Barnes (1798-1870) This "Bible scholar" (vol.2, p.1164) was a Presbyterian preacher and pastor of Philadelphia's first Presbyterian Church from 1830 to 1867. An anti-slavery activist, he wrote *Notes on the Old and New Testament*, frequently cited in Watchtower publications.

Alfred Edersheim (1825-1889) Ordained by both the Presbyterian church and the Church of England, "Dr" Edersheim (vol.2 pp.130,386) was converted from Judaism. This great Hebrew scholar wrote *The Temple; Bible History* (7 volumes) and the monumental *Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*.

Eusebius (ca.263-ca.339) The "Father of Church history" was Bishop of Caesarea in Palestine. He became an advisor of Constantine and a framer of the Nicene formula (the first explicitly Trinitarian creed). The Watchtower depends much upon him for its history of the early church (for the facts of which he is often the **ONLY** source).

Johann Karl Friedrich Keil (1807-1888) and **Franz J. Delitzsch** (1813-1890) These “Professors” (vol.2, pp.581,897) were Lutheran Hebrew Old Testament scholars, staunch defenders of conservative orthodoxy against the liberal tide of the 19th century. Their great *Old Testament Commentary* is still reprinted (contrast the works of C.T. Russell, their younger contemporary).

Johann Peter Lange (1802-1884) German Reformed theologian, “one of the most original and fertile authors of the 19th century” (Moyer). Editor of and contributor to the 25-volume commentary called by his name and later edited (in English) by Philip Schaff. It too is still in print.

John McClintock (1814-1870) and **James Strong** (1822-1894) Methodist scholars and educators, both university or seminary presidents. Jointly edited the *Cyclopaedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature* (12 volumes), from which The Watchtower has always borrowed liberally. Strong also produced the *Exhaustive Concordance*, a work still in demand.

James Orr (1844-1913) The great Scottish Free Church theologian, pastor and apologist edited the conservative *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia* in 5 volumes, used by The Watchtower for the last 80 years. He fought hard in defense of the Bible’s authority in such works as *The Problem of the Old Testament*; *The Bible Under Trial*; *The Virgin Birth* and *The Resurrection of Jesus*. A contributor to *The Fundamentals*.

A.T. Robertson (1863-1934) The Watchtower owes a heavy debt to this American Baptist preacher, cited as a “Greek scholar” (vol.2, p.1127). His work *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament* (1454 pages, 26 years in preparation) is still the most comprehensive work of its kind. His *Word Pictures in the New Testament* is also much referred to in Watchtower literature.

Joseph H. Thayer (1828-1901) This Greek Lexicographer was a Congregational minister and a Civil War chaplain. An outstanding NT textual critic, Thayer was instrumental in the preparation of the American Standard Version (1901), the JW favourite (before the New World Translation) because of its use of “Jehovah” (also later published by The Watchtower).

Richard C. Trench (1807-1866) “Scholar” (vol.2, p.155) and “lexicographer” (vol.2,p.422), this Church of Ireland priest became Archbishop of Dublin. A devout conservative High Churchman, his *Synonyms of the New Testament* is a Watchtower favourite. Also famous for *Notes on the Parables and Miracles of Our Lord* and contributions to the Revised Version (1881).

William E. Vine (1873-1949) One of the world’s foremost Greek scholars, his *Expository Dictionary* is still the most popular work of its kind. Active in the Brethren movement, he also published several Bible commentaries.

Brooke F. Westcott (1825-1901) and **Fenton J.A. Hort** (1828-1892) The Watchtower doesn’t hide its debt to these great Cambridge scholars. The Foreword to the *New World Translation* acknowledges their Greek text is the basis of its New Testament. What JW’s DON’T know, however, is that Westcott and Hort were Church of England clergymen, Westcott becoming Bishop of Durham, where he busied himself in the community work as well as foreign missions. Hort took the greater part of the load in producing their monumental Greek New Testament, which became the basis of the 1881 Revised Version. As Elgin Moyer sadly records, Hort died “worn out by intense mental labor”.

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These are but a handful of the dozens of Christian scholars used by The Watchtower to buttress its Biblical authority. We applaud The Watchtower for mentioning their names and acknowledging their scholarly authority. But why doesn’t The Watchtower tell Jehovah’s Witnesses what MOTIVATED such men to devote themselves to Bible study, even while, in many cases, carrying heavy pastoral responsibilities? (“Reverend” is one title The Watchtower never places before their names). What would Jehovah’s Witnesses think if they knew these scholars are Christendom’s cooks? Can Jehovah’s Witnesses eat from TWO tables?

... you cannot be partaking of “the table of Jehovah” and the table of demons.

I Corinthians 10:21, NWT