



# Apologetics against Jehovah's Witnesses

## 1. The Nature of God (Anti-Trinitarian Belief)

- **Argument:** Jehovah's Witnesses reject the doctrine of the Trinity. They believe that Jehovah is the one true God, and Jesus is His created Son, not co-equal or co-eternal with Him.
- **Scriptural Support:**
  - **John 14:28** – "The Father is greater than I." (They argue that if Jesus were truly God, He would not be lesser than the Father.)
  - **Colossians 1:15** – "He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation." (They interpret "firstborn" as meaning Jesus was the first created being.)

### Response from Trinitarians: ‘

- **John 14:28** does not deny Jesus' divinity but refers to His position in the incarnation. Jesus humbled Himself (Philippians 2:6-7) while still possessing divine nature.
- **Colossians 1:15** – The Greek *πρωτότοκος* (*prototokos*) does not mean "first created" (*protoktistos*), but rather "preeminent" or "having priority" (Psalm 89:27). The context (Colossians 1:16-17) shows Jesus as the Creator, not the created.
- **John 8:58** – Jesus uses *Ego Eimi* ("I AM"), directly claiming divine identity (Exodus 3:14).

Thus, Jesus is **co-eternal and co-equal** with the Father.

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## 2. Jesus is Michael the Archangel

- **Argument:** Jehovah's Witnesses teach that Jesus is actually Michael the Archangel, the highest created being.
- **Scriptural Support:**
  - **1 Thessalonians 4:16** – "The Lord himself will descend from heaven with a commanding call, with an archangel's voice..." (They argue that since Jesus descends with "an archangel's voice," He must be Michael.)
  - **Daniel 10:13** – "Michael, one of the foremost princes, came to help me."

### Response from Trinitarians:

- **1 Thessalonians 4:16** does not state that Jesus is the archangel, only that He comes "with an archangel's voice," emphasizing command, not identity.
- **Hebrews 1:5-6** explicitly states that **no angel** has ever been called the Son of God. Jesus is worshiped (Hebrews 1:6), whereas angels reject worship (Revelation 22:8-9).
- Michael is called "one of the foremost princes" (Daniel 10:13), but Jesus is **King of Kings** (Revelation 19:16).

Since Jesus **receives worship** and has divine attributes, He cannot be Michael.

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### 3. The Soul is Not Immortal

- **Argument:** Jehovah's Witnesses believe that when a person dies, they cease to exist; the soul does not live on after death.
- **Scriptural Support:**
  - **Ezekiel 18:4** – "The soul who sins will die." (They argue this means the soul is not inherently immortal.)
  - **Ecclesiastes 9:5** – "For the living know that they will die, but the dead know nothing at all."

### Response from Trinitarians:

- **Ezekiel 18:4** refers to physical death as judgment for sin, not soul annihilation.
- **Ecclesiastes 9:5** describes a human perspective on life's futility apart from God, not a doctrinal teaching on the afterlife.
- **Luke 16:19-31** (Rich man and Lazarus) describes conscious existence after death.
- **Philippians 1:23** – Paul desires to "depart and be with Christ," indicating an ongoing existence beyond physical death.

The Bible affirms **conscious existence after death**.

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### 4. Jesus Died on a Stake, Not a Cross

- **Argument:** Jehovah's Witnesses claim that Jesus was crucified on a simple upright stake (not a cross).
- **Scriptural Support:**
  - **Matthew 27:40 (NWT)** – "You who would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, save yourself! If you are a son of God, come down off the torture stake!" (Their *New World Translation* uses "stake" instead of "cross.")

### Response from Trinitarians:

- The Greek word *stauros* can mean either stake or cross, but historical evidence (Roman crucifixion practices, early Christian writings, archaeology) overwhelmingly supports a **cross**.
- **John 20:25** – Thomas refers to the "nail marks" (plural), indicating both hands were nailed separately.
- **Early Christian artwork** (2nd century onwards) depicts Jesus on a cross, not a stake.

The **traditional cross** is biblically and historically supported.

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## 5. No Hell, Only Annihilation

- **Argument:** Jehovah's Witnesses believe that Hell (as a place of eternal torment) does not exist. Instead, the wicked are simply annihilated.
- **Scriptural Support:**
  - **Romans 6:23** – "For the wages of sin is death." (They argue that death is the final punishment, not eternal torment.)
  - **Revelation 20:14** – "Death and Hades were hurled into the lake of fire. This means the second death, the lake of fire." (They argue that "second death" means total destruction, not eternal suffering.)

### Response from Trinitarians:

- **Matthew 25:46** – Jesus contrasts **eternal life** with **eternal punishment** (*kolasis aiōnios*), proving hell is unending.
- **Revelation 14:11** – The wicked experience **eternal torment** with "no rest day or night."
- **Luke 16:23-24** – The rich man is **consciously tormented** in Hades.

Eternal punishment is **clearly** taught in Scripture.

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## 6. The 144,000 and the Great Crowd

- **Argument:** Only 144,000 anointed Jehovah's Witnesses will go to heaven; the rest of the "great crowd" will live forever on a restored paradise earth.
- **Scriptural Support:**
  - **Revelation 7:4** – "I heard the number of those who were sealed, 144,000, from all the tribes of the sons of Israel."
  - **Psalms 37:29** – "The righteous will inherit the earth and dwell in it forever."

### Response from Trinitarians:

- The 144,000 are **symbolic** of Jewish believers (Revelation 7:5-8) and are distinct from the "great multitude" (Revelation 7:9) who worship before God's throne in heaven.
- **John 14:1-3** – Jesus promises a **heavenly** dwelling for all believers.

- *Matthew 5:5* (“inherit the earth”) refers to the new heavens and new earth (*Revelation 21:1*), not exclusive earthly existence.

All believers have access to heaven, not just 144,000.

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## 7. God's Name is Jehovah and Should Be Used Exclusively

- **Argument:** Jehovah’s Witnesses insist that God’s true name is "Jehovah" and that Christians must use this name in worship.
- **Scriptural Support:**
  - **Psalm 83:18** – "That people may know that you, whose name is Jehovah, you alone are the Most High over all the earth."

### Response from Trinitarians:

- The **New Testament never** insists on the exclusive use of "Jehovah" (*YHWH*). Instead, it emphasizes **Jesus** as the revelation of God (*John 1:1, 14:9*).
- The early church worshiped **Jesus as God** (*Philippians 2:9-11, Hebrews 1:6*).
- *Acts 4:12* – Salvation is found in **Jesus’ name**, not in the exclusive pronunciation of *YHWH*.

While God's name is significant, **Jesus is the fullest revelation of God** (*John 1:18*).

The name *Jehovah* is indeed a later development and a mispronunciation of the divine name *YHWH* (יהוה) (often referred to as the Tetragrammaton). The origin of *Jehovah* can be traced back to the early 16th century, when Christian scholars, particularly Catholic monks, attempted to vocalize the unpronounced Hebrew name of God using a hybrid method.

### 1. The Sacred Tetragrammaton (YHWH)

- The Hebrew name of God, יהוה (*YHWH*), appears throughout the Old Testament but was considered too sacred to be spoken aloud by the Jewish people.
- Instead of pronouncing *YHWH* (יהוה), Jewish readers would substitute it with *Adonai* (אֲדֹנָי), meaning "Lord."

### 2. The Masoretic Vowel Point System

- Around the 7th–10th centuries AD, Jewish scribes known as the *Masoretes* developed a system of vowel points to preserve pronunciation.
- To prevent readers from mistakenly saying *YHWH* (יהוה) aloud, they inserted the vowel points of *Adonai* into the consonants of *YHWH*, forming *Yehowah* (יהוה).<sup>1</sup>
- This was never meant to be read as an actual name but was a visual cue to say *Adonai* instead.

### 3. 16th-Century Latinization

- In the early 1500s, a Catholic priest or monk—widely believed to be *Petrus Galatinus*, a confessor to Pope Leo X—mistakenly combined the consonants of *YHWH* (יהוה) with the vowels of *Adonai* (אֲדֹנָי), creating the Latinized form *Jehovah*.
- This form spread through Christian circles, especially after it was used in translations such as William Tyndale's English Bible (1530).

#### 4. Linguistic Issues with Jehovah

- Hebrew has no "J" sound; the *Y* in *YHWH* (יהוה) was changed to a *J* due to German and Latin influences.
- The *W* in *YHWH* (יהוה) was changed to a *V* following Latin pronunciation patterns.
- *Jehovah* is a manufactured name that never existed in ancient Hebrew.

### Conclusion

While *Jehovah* became widely used in Christian traditions, it is a late medieval invention, not the authentic pronunciation of God's name. A more historically accurate rendering would be *Yahweh* (יהוה), though even that is based on scholarly reconstruction. The use of *Jehovah* persists, but its origin as a hybrid form from the 16th century is well-documented.

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