

The Jehovah's Witnesses form one of today's most active cults. They were originally called *Russellites*, after their founder Charles Taze Russell (1852-1916), but later called themselves *Millennial Dawn*.

After that they took the name *International Bible Students Union*, and then changed to *Watchtower Bible and Tract Society*, which is still their official name.

As a young man, Charles Russell became intrigued by theories that related to the precise date of the end of the world and by pyramidology. He also became convinced that human beings had no soul and therefore faced no judgement after death.

Russell also taught that out of the whole human race only an elite group of 144,000, that included himself and his followers, would inherit eternal life. However, this idea had to be revised when the cult's membership went over that number.

Through a series of books and a weekly sermon, which was published in some 2,000 newspapers in North America and Europe, the movement grew very rapidly. But Russell's fame was eventually damaged by several charges and court cases which exposed his blatant dishonesty and corruption.

After his death, Russell's place was taken by his successor, Joseph Franklin Rutherford, who claimed divine revelation for the current name, *Jehovah's Witnesses*.

Rutherford quickly found ways of blurring the failed prophecies of Russell that the world would come to an end in 1874 and produced subsequent teaching on the issue.

The Jehovah's Witnesses claim to be Christian yet teach that Jesus Christ is a Person distinct from God the Father, and that before His earthly life He was a spirit creature, the Archangel Michael, who God created. According to the *New World Translation*, their mistranslation of the Holy Bible, *John 1:1* reads: "The word is a god," instead of "*the word was God.*"

Most people are aware that this teaching diminishes the status of our Lord Jesus to a created being, second in command to the Father, as opposed to Him being one with the Father.

But only few people are aware that such teaching is really nothing new. It is actually a recycling of the ancient Arian Heresy that had its roots in ancient Egypt!