



# Apocalypse Delayed: The Story of Jehovah's Witnesses, Third Edition

By M. James Penton

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**Apocalypse Delayed: The Story of Jehovah's Witnesses, Third Edition** By M. James Penton

Since 1876, Jehovah's Witnesses have believed that they are living in the last days of the present world. Charles T. Russell, their founder, advised his followers that members of Christ's church would be raptured in 1878, and by 1914 Christ would destroy the nations and establish his kingdom on earth. The first prophecy was not fulfilled, but the outbreak of the First World War lent some credibility to the second. Ever since that time, Jehovah's Witnesses have been predicting that the world would end "shortly." Their numbers have grown to many millions in over two hundred countries. They distribute a billion pieces of literature annually, and continue to anticipate the end of the world.

For almost thirty years, M. James Penton's *Apocalypse Delayed* has been the definitive scholarly study of this religious movement. As a former member of the sect, Penton offers a comprehensive overview of the Jehovah's Witnesses. His book is divided into three parts, each presenting the Witnesses' story in a different context: historical, doctrinal, and sociological. Some of the issues he discusses are known to the general public, such as the sect's opposition to military service and blood transfusions. Others involve internal controversies, including political control of the organization and the handling of dissent within the ranks.

Thoroughly revised, the third edition of Penton's classic text includes substantial new information on the sources of Russell's theology and on the church's early leaders, as well as coverage of important developments within the sect since the second edition was published fifteen years ago.

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## **Apocalypse Delayed: The Story of Jehovah's Witnesses, Third Edition** By M. James Penton **Bibliography**

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**Editorial Review**

Review

'This is not a vindictive slamming of the Witness organization by a raving ex-member, but a carefully written, well-documented critical analysis by a scholar with the special insight that only a former insider could give.'

(Dwayne Janke *Lethbridge Herald*)

'M. James Penton offers us one of the few comprehensive accounts of a sectarian tradition that remains an enigma to scholars of modern religion.'

(Robert C. Fuller *The Journal of Religion*)

'Penton, a fourth generation Witness with an impeccable academic background, sets forth a detailed and damning outline of the movement and, in particular, those who run the world wide organization.'

(Grant MacGillivray *Halifax Daily News*)

'Highly recommended.'

(D.S. Azzolina *Choice Magazine - vol 53:01:2015*)

“Penton’s unique position – a well-travelled, fourth-generation member who served in various capacities – makes him a reliable informant. He aptly gives insight into major doctrines, past and recent prophetic speculation, the authority structure of the Witness organization, and the harshness of the total ban upon those who attempt open discussion of any differing exegetical view.”

(*Christianity Today*)

“A well-written, clear and fascinating study.”

(James A. Beverley *Toronto Journal of Theology*)

“All in all, this is an excellent book and required reading for those interested in Jehovah’s Witnesses. Penton’s special perspective provides a scholarly inside look at a fascinating and persistent example of modern millenarianism.”

(Timothy P. Weber *American Historical Review*)

Review

“*Apocalypse Delayed* is a major work of scholarship, well written and exhaustive. Few, if any, can match Professor Penton’s knowledge of the literature of, by, and about the movement.”

(M. Darrol Bryant, Director, Centre for Dialogue and Spirituality in the World’s Religions, Renison University College, University of Waterloo)

About the Author

**M. James Penton** is a professor emeritus of history and religious studies at the University of Lethbridge.

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