

## Jehovah Witness Children Worldwide Live with Fear and Paranoia Will Michael Jackson's Kids *Now* Experience the Same?



*Michael Jackson's children hold Watchtower\* literature. Presumably this shot was taken before or after attending a religious service at the Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses.*

*\*Governing body of the Jehovah's Witnesses*

---

This information is being provided by Brenda Lee, author of *Out of the Cocoon: A Young Woman's Courageous Flight from the Grip of a Religious Cult,* [www.outofthecocoon.net](http://www.outofthecocoon.net) and is based upon conversations with literally *thousands* of former Jehovah's Witnesses over the last five years as well as her own personal experience after being raised a Jehovah's Witness for nine years (from ages 9-18).

Now that Michael Jackson's children are being raised by their grandmother, Katherine, a Jehovah's Witness, what do they have to look forward to? What do Jehovah Witness children fear/experience worldwide?

I fear being labeled "different" by non-Jehovah Witnesses

- ✓ I can't salute the flag or sing the national anthem anymore. When everyone else stands, I need to remain seated and stick out like a sore thumb.
- ✓ I must be removed from all holiday parties and social activities at school by my parent or go sit in the principal's office during the activity. Children won't be allowed to give me Valentine's Day cards, nor will I be allowed to make any for my classmates. Christmas will be like any other day of the year and I will receive no presents.
- ✓ I can't celebrate my (or anyone else's) birthday anymore and I will be reminded that I am worshipping myself if I do and God forbids that.
- ✓ I shouldn't talk to relatives anymore except to try to convert them to our religious beliefs and if I do speak to them about spiritual matters, I must record the time for the Elders.



- ✓ I can't participate in *any* school activities (band, football games, cheerleading, theater, etc.)
- ✓ I can't vote or join the military someday
- ✓ I can no longer play with relatives who aren't Jehovah Witnesses. Participation in family reunions must end.

#### I fear being labeled "different" by other Jehovah Witnesses

- ✓ Paranoia: Another Jehovah Witness (including my own family) might "turn me in" for doing or saying something inappropriate such as: looking at Christmas decorations at the mall, having my hair too long (note: Michael's two sons will need to cut their hair so that it doesn't extend past the top of their ears), talking to a "worldly" person, going into another church, criticizing someone in the religion, questioning sexual child abuse policies if/when I am abused, etc. (See [www.silentlambs.org](http://www.silentlambs.org))
- ✓ I might be reported if I don't record enough "hours" of door-to-door service for the month. ("But my feet are popsicles and turning blue from plowing through the 2-foot snow in subzero weather for the last 4 hours! Only 2 more hours to go? Oh, OK.")
- ✓ Being "critiqued" publically for the delivery of my assigned "talk" —which I didn't want to have to have to do in the first place—and being negatively compared to older, more "spiritual" Jehovah Witness children who do it better.
- ✓ If I ever leave this organization someday, my Jehovah Witness friends AND family will never speak to me again. This is a BIGGIE!

#### Being torn: "normal" social etiquette vs Jehovah Witness etiquette

- ✓ A non-Jehovah's Witness might try to befriend me and I might actually like that person but have to avoid them (because "bad associations spoil useful habits") and then they will think I'm rude.
- ✓ I might be offered a birthday or Christmas present and have to reject it while secretly wanting it (oh, the guilt and shame for feeling this way!)
- ✓ I may accidentally knock on the door of a "disfellowshipped" or excommunicated person (The Devil incarnate) and then be expected to treat them badly by not even saying hello to them. I must simply turn and walk away.
- ✓ I might be admonished for saying "good luck," "gesundheit," or "bless you" or not using the proper "language" of Jehovah Witnesses...I mean "Jehovah's Witnesses."
- ✓ I will have to sit through countless hours of a multi-day religious convention with very few breaks and while I want to scream, I know I can't. I also cannot color, eat something or do anything else to entertain myself. I must sit stoically and try to absorb everything the adults are saying, even if I am only two years old.
- ✓ If a family member (Jehovah Witness) ever leaves this organization someday, I will never be permitted to speak to them again. (Watch out Katherine! The Watchtower shunning edict goes both ways in that kids shun parents/grandparents and vice versa. Someday your devout Jehovah Witness grandchildren may shun you if you ever decide to leave the organization.)



### Health concerns (physical and emotional)

- ✓ I might need to have a life-saving blood transfusion someday and be coerced to refuse one when the Jehovah Witness hospital liaison committee shows up at the hospital. Worse yet, my Jehovah Witness parent will most likely agree with them and I could die.
- ✓ While ‘witnessing’ (knocking on people’s doors soliciting the organization’s religious magazines), I fear I could be shot by an angry ‘householder’ (homeowner) or be attacked by dogs.
- ✓ I might get beaten up or bullied at school because I’m so different.
- ✓ I have guilty feelings about sex (because oral and anal sex and masturbation are all forbidden) and petting and heavy kissing are considered “unclean” if you aren’t married. Any dating I do must involve a chaperone, another “spiritually strong” Jehovah’s Witness. I cannot even date until I am old enough to be married (18+) even though I really want to learn more about boys/girls. If I get married someday and my spouse wants oral sex, I must report him/her to the Elders.
- ✓ I risk being beaten for not sitting still enough during religious services (“spare the rod; spoil the child...”) or I may have to watch this abuse happen to other young children or siblings.

### Education and work

- ✓ Secondary education is considered “Satan’s crafty act” (per a 2009 Watchtower “assembly talk”) and is frowned upon by Watchtower leaders. How will I find a good job after high school with no secular training?
- ✓ How can I avoid being considered materialistic by the Elders if I try to have a house and car someday and if I want to be able to afford a vacation once in a while?
- ✓ I know I will be pressured to live at Bethel and/or pioneer upon graduation from high school (volunteering one’s life full-time to the Watchtower).
- ✓ Someday when I grow up I must avoid work as a nurse or doctor (no blood transfusions), employee of the American Red Cross, YMCA or Salvation Army, military defense contractor, tobacco company, church, talk show host, politician, etc.

### Day-to-day stuff to avoid and/or fear

- ✓ Smurfs, Casper the Friendly Ghost, and Scooby Doo (demonic)
- ✓ Bewitched and Ghostbusters (and any PG-13 or R-rated show)
- ✓ Heath candy (it contains what?)
- ✓ Crosses and wind chimes (demonic again)
- ✓ Churches (ditto)
- ✓ Garage sale items (might be demonic again)
- ✓ Eating meat that isn’t fully cooked (no blood)
- ✓ Chess
- ✓ Self-defense classes
- ✓ ‘Apostates’ (ex-members like me)  
....and so much more!!

# Out of the Cocoon

## Armageddon—THE END

Not surviving it

- ✓ Letting my mind wander during long, repetitive meetings (will God see through my boredom and strike me down?)
- ✓ Am I putting enough ‘preaching hours’ in to survive?

Surviving it and

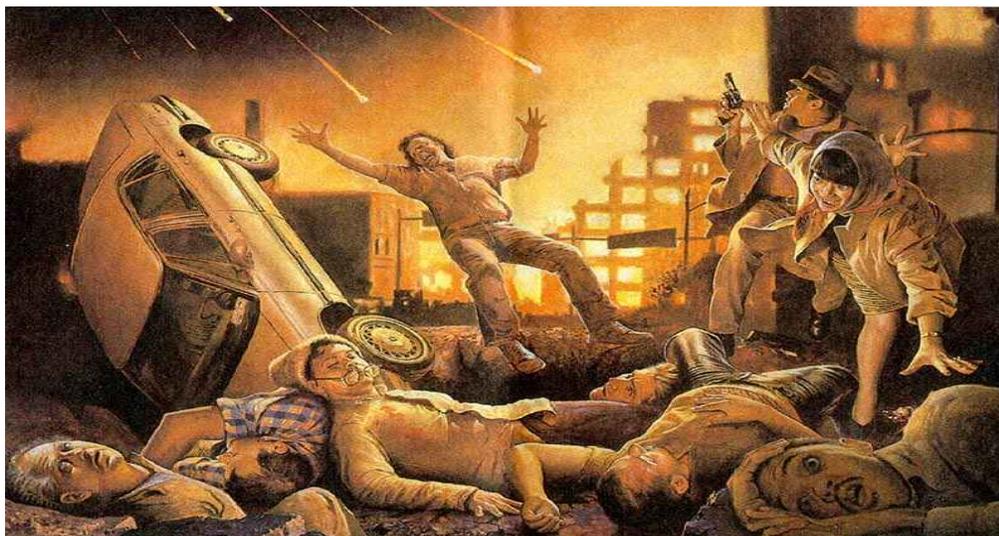
- ✓ Seeing “worldly people” (non-Jehovah Witnesses) torn limb from limb
- ✓ Having to “pick up the bones” of my relatives/neighbors/acquaintances who are non-Jehovah Witnesses
- ✓ Being forced to live as a Jehovah’s Witness the rest of my life (an infinite cycle of five weekly meetings, “Bible” studies and multi-day assemblies)

Here is how the Watchtower organization has described paradise in their literature over the years and what I and countless other children have been exposed to over the years:

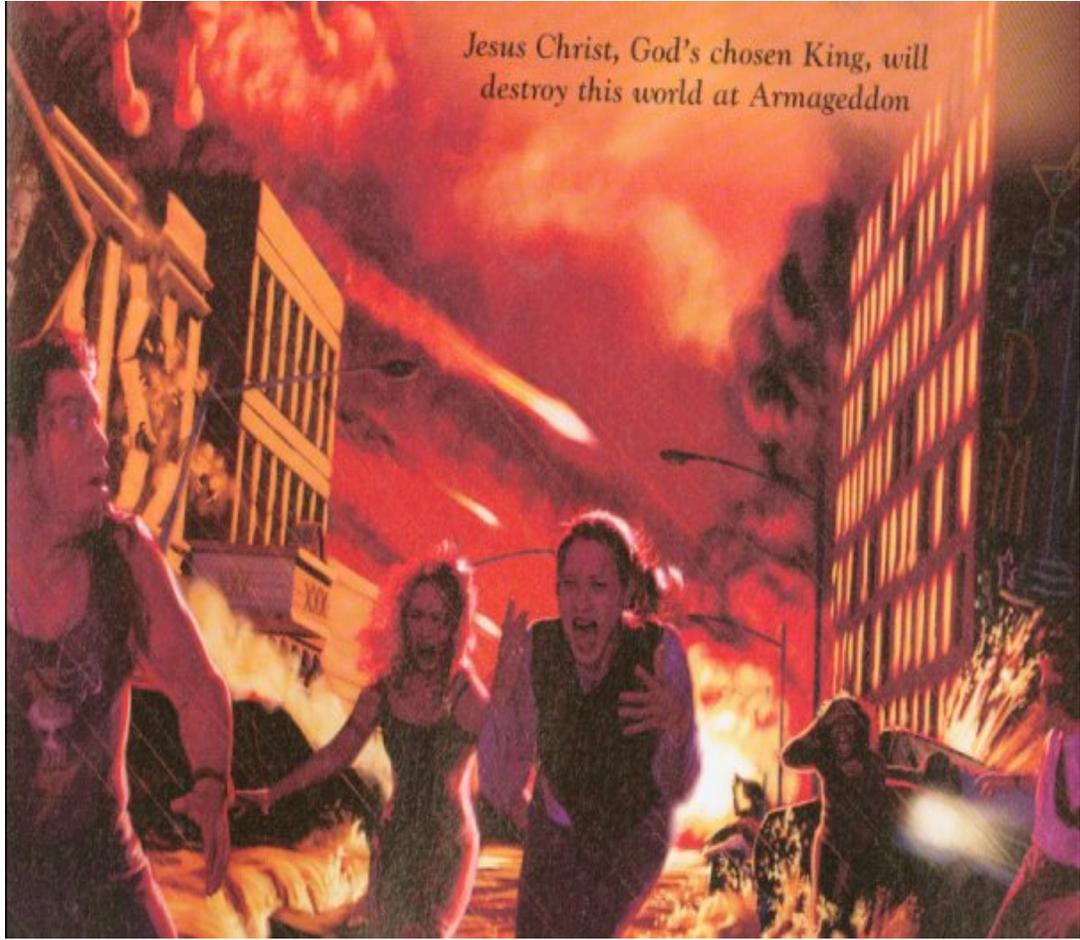
“From Paradise Lost to Paradise Regained,” 1958 (p. 208-209): “Soul-chilling terror will spread through the masses...so that they will lose control of themselves; **they will begin killing one another**...A flesh-eating plague will destroy many...Eaten up will be the tongues of those who scoffed and laughed at the warning of Armageddon! **Eaten up will be the eyes of those who refused to see the sign**...Eaten up will be the flesh of those...while they stand on their feet!”

“Survival Into a New Earth,” 1984: “True, as a result of the great destruction, the earth will be strewn with those slain by Jehovah...he will invite the birds of heaven and the beasts of the field to his 'great evening meal' and that **they will have their fill from the fleshy parts of those slain**. What they do not consume he can dispose of by other means.”

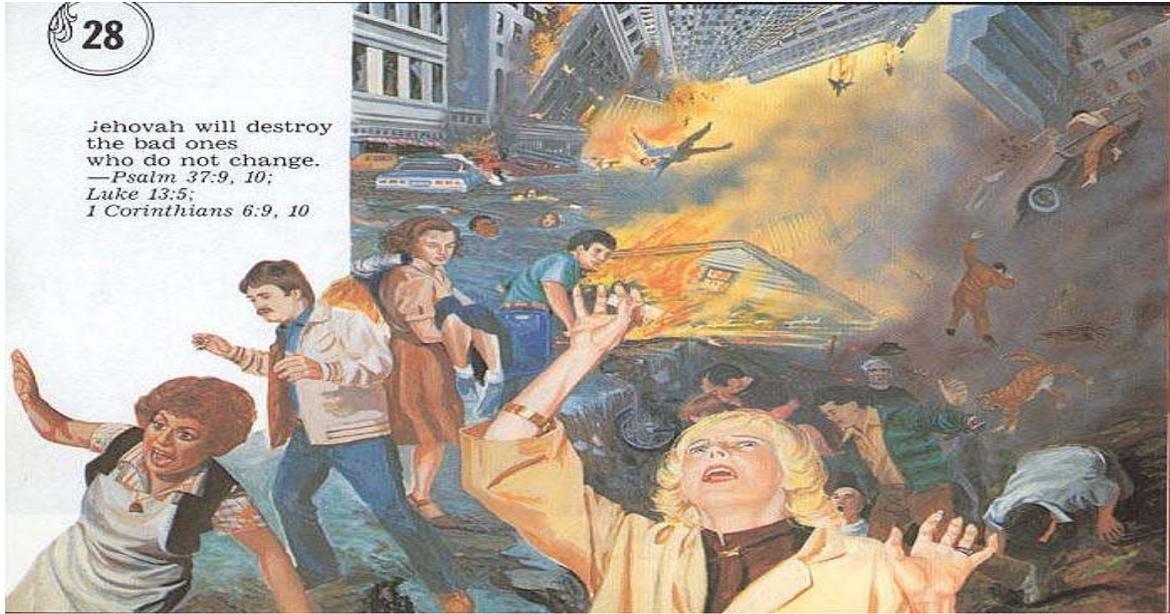
Imagine being only 5 years old and hearing/believing this is going to happen to people around you someday! Here are just a few of the images Jehovah’s Witness children are exposed to:



# Out of the Cocoon



Jesus Christ, God's chosen King, will  
destroy this world at Armageddon



28

Jehovah will destroy  
the bad ones  
who do not change.  
—Psalm 37:9, 10;  
Luke 13:5;  
1 Corinthians 6:9, 10

# Out of the Cocoon

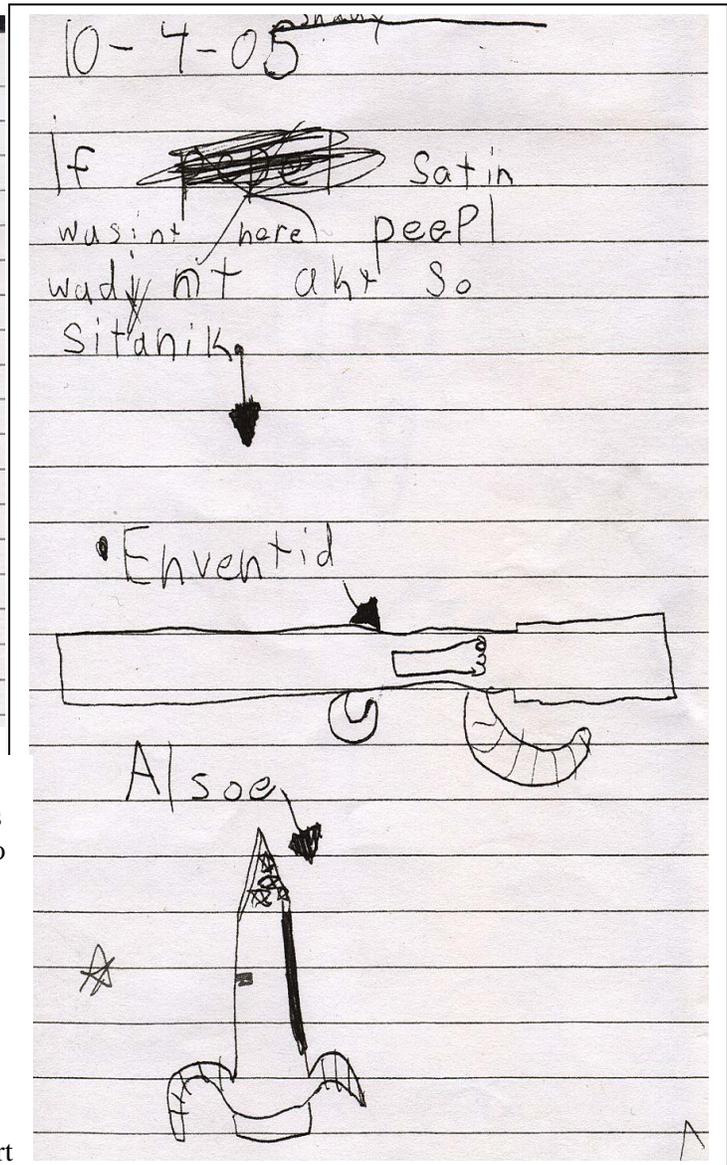
I remember the descriptions during religious services of torture and rape that some of us, Jehovah's chosen, might experience in his name. I describe these real accounts in my book, *Out of the Cocoon*.

Think I am exaggerating about how this religion affects children? Look at the following recent drawings from a Jehovah Witness child who I am guessing is about six or seven years old (this was given to a non-Jehovah Witness relative and was proudly touted as the child's "Book of Bible Stories"):



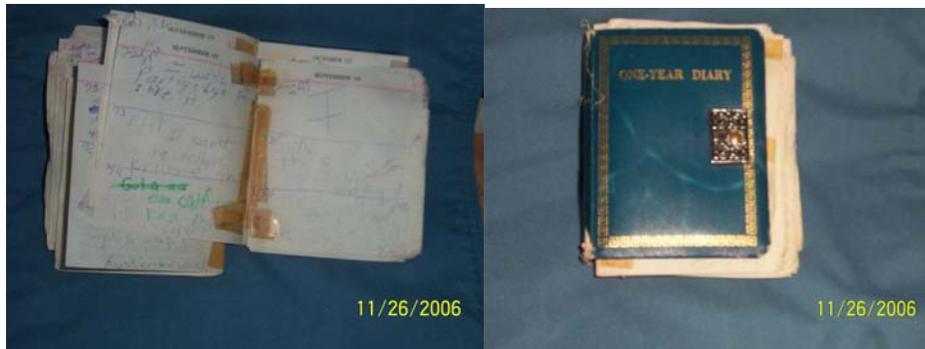
"We are in danger." Yes, this child is in danger, but not necessarily from the influences of the world but rather from indoctrination into an incredibly negative and oppressive organization.

Right: "If Satan wasn't here, people wouldn't act so Satanic." Notice the inventions drawn by the child. I believe the item above the rocket is a rifle. It's interesting that she is equating Satan with man's inventions. The Watchtower admonishes children to be "no part of the world."



In order to keep my sanity intact after being exposed to all of this, I journaled, but I soon learned that I couldn't keep my journal in the house because my mother found it and I had hell to pay, so I hid it in a log in the forest for approximately 4 years. I still have it and it has my baby teeth taped inside of it. This is it:

# Out of the Cocoon



I remember Jehovah Witnesses, including my mother, describing this life (i.e., today) as something we “just need to get through.” That’s how I felt precisely but not because the world was so bad and I was hoping for paradise but because living within the confines of this group was so unbearable to me.

As a child exposed to these images from nine until I left the group at age 18 all I remember about this experience is *fear* and *death*. Not just the fear and death portrayed in the images but the fear and death on the faces of my Jehovah Witness family, who are merely existing. They are locked into a perpetual spiritual lotto that may or may not come “any day now.”

Problem is, they didn’t buy just one ticket. They have purchased tickets for over 35 years and at this late date in their lives (my mother is 80 and my father is 82), their life has fallen into a sort of Utopian bankruptcy. And for that reason, I truly believe that they have created their own Armageddon--right here, right now.

For that, I am incredibly sad (for them). I don’t expect them to change their beliefs, but it would be nice to embrace my mother, brother or sister again. They haven’t spoken to me in almost 30 years—since 1981.

If they only knew what I knew and could only see what I’ve seen.

Living with this degree of paranoia and oppression as a child made me feel like life wasn’t worth living. At age 12 I fantasized about killing myself and included a short story I wrote in Chapter 1 of my book entitled, “All Alone in the World.” But now, realizing that there’s a whole other beautiful world out there, I know that life is PRICELESS. ☺ That’s the message I’m trying to convey to cult survivors. There is life after cult.

Brenda Lee, Public Speaker, Counter-Cult Educator and Author,  
*Out of the Cocoon: A Young Woman’s Courageous Flight from the Grip of a Religious Cult*  
[www.outofthecocoon.net](http://www.outofthecocoon.net)