

YHWH and the Sacred Secret

Monte Perepelkin

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YHWH and the Sacred Secret is a contemplative, impassioned work that argues for the importance of God and the Bible.

Monte Perepelkin's *YHWH and the Sacred Secret* says that people should practice their Christian faith in a more stringent way.

The text begins as a spiritual memoir, describing a motorcycle accident that left Perepelkin paralyzed and searching for meaning. He engaged in extensive Bible study as a Jehovah's Witness. The text includes many of the faith's central tenants, including naming God as "Jehovah," viewing God's kingdom in governmental terms, and seeing the Bible as the inspired word of God.

The text takes a strong stance against most other organized religions, arguing that seeking to accommodate "every religion under the sun" leads to the world being torn apart. It regards religious diversity as representative of a general failure to read the Bible critically and understand its promises. Such understandings, it claims, would give people less to fight about and cause to be happier.

Biblical verses are used to support each of the book's points, though this method leads to repetitive reading. Christian tradition beyond the Bible is dismissed; considerations of other religions, particularly Islam, about which it says that "Muhammad's teaching most certainly produced some rotten fruit," tread dangerous ground.

Organized thematically, the book moves from big picture considerations of creation and creationism toward more personal concepts of free will. It frames its theological and biblical studies around how its topics impact individuals, and how people can best connect to and understand God's sacred secret. It suggests that people follow God's laws, including avoiding "pagan" holidays like Christmas.

The book's mix of practical suggestions with the theological notions is useful when it comes to topics like understanding God's teachings in the New Testament, though its conclusions read like faith statements, reflective of traditional answers to the same problems. Still, it has a heartfelt personal element; its arguments are further contextualized in terms of Perepelkin's own struggles.

In approaching its frequent biblical citations by considering the underlying Greek language, the book also has a scholarly quality, even if its conclusions are common sense in tone. The book's aims and perspective are clarified late in the book, at which point it becomes clear that it's less intended as a work of exploration than it is directed at proselytization.

YHWH and the Sacred Secret is a contemplative, impassioned work about the importance of God and the Bible.

JEREMIAH ROOD (May 26, 2020)

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