

On behalf of the Defendants

P. Ghent

2nd Witness Statement

This 29th day of November 2014

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE

HQ13X01985

QUEEN'S BENCH DIVISION

BETWEEN:

MRS [REDACTED]

Claimant

v

(1) THE TRUSTEES OF THE INTERNATIONAL BIBLE STUDENTS ASSOCIATION

(2) THE TRUSTEES OF WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF BRITAIN

(3) THE TRUSTEES OF THE LOUGHBOROUGH BLACKBROOK CONGREGATION OF
JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES

(4) THE TRUSTEES OF THE LOUGHBOROUGH SOUTHWOOD CONGREGATION OF
JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES

Defendants

SECOND WITNESS STATEMENT OF PAUL GHENT

I, PAUL GHENT, whose address for the purpose of these proceedings is c/o Watch Tower, The Ridgeway, London, NW7 1RN, will say as follows:

than at a public library, public swimming pool, or supermarket. In all such public places, parents would be responsible to supervise their children. The same is true with our congregation meetings.

- 16 In reality, most of the events described in the Amended Particulars of Claim appear to have taken place at the Claimant's home or Peter Stewart's home, not at congregation meetings.

Parental Responsibility

- 17 A fundamental tenet of our religious faith is that parents are primarily responsible for teaching and raising their children. This would include teaching them the Bible at home and watching over them in congregation activities, such as meetings, large conventions, and while in the field service. Parents cannot relinquish this responsibility to other members of the congregation.
- 18 Personal and family Bible study is something congregation members do in their own time – outside of congregation meetings. Neither the congregation nor its elders supervises family and personal Bible study. Such personal and family Bible study might include preparation for weekly congregation meetings at the Kingdom Hall, such as the Watchtower Study. Whereas the Watchtower Study at the Kingdom Hall is a meeting organized by the congregation, any preparation for such meetings at one's home is entirely private. The elders do not arrange for congregation members to get together in study groups to prepare for the meetings together. Any such arrangements would be personal. Neither would a ministerial servant have any authority to conduct a family Bible study in place of a parent.

Response to the Claimant's Second Witness Statement

- 19 In paragraphs 50 and 51 of her second witness statement, the Claimant alleges I reprimanded her for wearing 'provocative' clothing. I completely deny this and have no recollection whatsoever of doing this. In any event, any such counsel would normally have been conveyed to a minor's parents, not to the minor directly. I also deny that I asked the Claimant to study the Biblical account of

'Dinah' or that I in anyway suggested that her clothing was provocative when she was four or five years old.

20 The Claimant also alleges that I reprimanded her on another occasion because her clothing was not considerate of young men in the congregation, including my 23-year-old son. Again I deny this took place. When my son was 23 years old, he was living in London and was not a member of any congregation in Loughborough. What is alleged therefore cannot be true.

Statement of Truth

I believe that the facts stated in this witness statement are true.

Signed ...

DPA

PAUL GHENT

This 29th day of November 2014