

ARTICLE 1

Give me that Old Time Religion: 1914

As discussed elsewhere, 1914 is based on incorrect evidence and assumptions. Even if the assumptions Russell made about the year/day hypothesis were correct the date could not be correct because its starting point was in error. However, this is not even the worst of it. Simply put, the Watchtower (Russell) made a number of very clear predictions about what was going to happen in 1914. The predictions were not vague and were central to the claims of the Watchtower. However, when 1914 had come and gone none of the predictions came to pass. Rather than admit error, the Watchtower immediately massaged the predictions and made them say something very different. Because the year 1914 is pivotal to who they are, Jehovah's Witnesses are unable to drop the date like a hot potato. Instead, they are forced to work with it or risk destroying the confidence of the members. Witnesses are sometime unaware of their history and even when informed they are oblivious to the real impact of the facts.

Using their own resources, and with minimal commentary we want to see what predictions had been made prior to 1914. There is one reference per item. Many are available.

- The Last Days began 1799 “The Lord showed Daniel that from the time of this union or formation of the ‘dreadful and terrible beast’ to the ‘time of the end’ would be 1260 years; thereby marking 1799 again as the date of the ‘time of the end.’” (Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, “Who Is Wise,” Watchtower, March 1, 1922, 71, accessed August 5, 2018, <http://www.watchtowerwayback.org/jw-wb/English/Magazines/The%20Watchtower/1922%20The%20Watchtower.pdf>.)
- Jesus Parousia started 1874 “Wendell's presentation focused on the accuracy of Old Testament prophecy while pinpointing specific dates given in the Bible for events of historical importance to God's faithful followers all down through the Jewish and Christian ages. After establishing his premise, Wendell went on to show that the scriptures also clearly indicated that Christ would return to earth in 1873/1874.” (“Early Life,” Pastor Russell.com, accessed June 18, 2018, <http://pastor-russell.com/misc/bio.html>.)
- Jesus started ruling in heaven in 1878 “Based on the premise that events of the first century might find parallels in related events later, they also concluded that if Jesus' baptism and anointing in the autumn of 29 C.E. paralleled the beginning of an invisible presence in 1874, then his ride into Jerusalem as King in the spring of 33 C.E. would point to the spring of 1878 as the time when he would assume his power as heavenly King.” (Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, Jehovah's Witnesses—Proclaimers of God's Kingdom, 632.)
- The Gentile Times would end in 1914, resulting in the:
 - o end of Armageddon: "... the battle of the great day of God Almighty ... The date of the close of that "battle" is definitely marked in Scripture as October, 1914. It is already in progress, its beginning dating from October, 1874. ... The Scriptures show also that the battle of the great day will begin with the church of God, and that the overthrow of the great nominal church systems will precede the overthrow of the present civil powers; for the Lord is about to shake,

not only the earth (the civil organization for society), but heaven (the ecclesiastical powers) also (Heb. 12:26), to the end that great "Babylon," falsely called Christendom -Christ's kingdom- may be completely destroyed." (Zion's Watch Tower 1892 Jan 15 pp.21-23)

- o fall of false religion: "The seventh trumpet sounds from Aug. 1840, until 'the time of trouble,' or day of wrath is ended. Hence, it doubtless ends with the times of the Gentiles, and this forty years of conquest; and therefore, sounds until A. D. 1914; at the end of which, Babylon the great, will have fallen, and the 'dragon' be bound: that is, the nations will be subdued, and 'the prince of this world cast out.'" (Three Worlds and The Harvest of This World (1877) p.143)

- o end of all earthly governments: "True, it is expecting great things to claim, as we do, that within the coming twenty-six years all present governments will be overthrown and dissolved; but we are living in a special and peculiar time, the 'Day of Jehovah,' ...In view of this strong Bible evidence concerning the Times of the Gentiles, we consider it an established truth that the final end of the kingdoms of this world, and the full establishment of the Kingdom of God, will be accomplished at the end of A. D. 1914.", (Studies In the Scriptures - The Time Is At Hand (1889) pp.98-99)

- o heavenly and earthly resurrections: The 144,000, also known as the 'body of Christ' or 'the saints', were to all be in heaven by 1914, prior to the completion of Armageddon. "That the deliverance of the saints must take place sometime before 1914 is manifest, since the deliverance of fleshly Israel, as we shall see, is appointed to take place at that time... Just how long before 1914 the last living members of the body of Christ will be glorified, we are not directly informed..." (Studies In the Scriptures - Thy Kingdom Come (1908 ed.) p.228)

- o paradise on earth: The end of the harvest was to be followed by both the heavenly and earthly paradise. "When this is fully accomplished, as it must be within this harvest period, then will follow the resurrection of the ancient worthies, then the kingdom of God, in both its heavenly and earthly phases, will be established and manifested to the world, - an event due at the close of this harvest period and time of trouble." (Watchtower 1895 May 15 p.123-124 reprints 1816)

To be clear, Watchtower literature prior to 1914 claimed clearly that the following things would occur before October of 1914. The end of the preaching work, the end of all religion, the wholesale destruction of all government, the end of the Great Tribulation, the end of Armageddon, Russell and his followers to be raised to heaven, Jesus' Kingdom established as paradise on earth and the commencement of the earthly resurrection. None of these things occurred and the Watchtower rebranded 1914 as the BEGINNING of prophetic claims not the date they were to have occurred by as seen in these quotes from after 1914. "The Watchtower has consistently presented evidence to honest hearted students of Bible prophecy that Jesus' presence in heavenly Kingdom power began in 1914." (Watchtower 1993 Jan 15 p.5) and "Jehovah's witnesses pointed to the year 1914, decades in advance, as marking the start of "the conclusion of the system of things." (Awake! 1973 Jan 22 p.8)

In summary, the most critical date in Watchtower theology was incorrectly calculated. In addition, all of the claims about the coming date proved to be wrong and the dates had to be massaged to reflect a future emphasis. The Watchtower has no real foundation at all.

ARTICLE 2

The recruit will soon realize that the Watchtower Society is God's organization on earth; no other group speaks authoritatively for God.

The recruit will learn that the Watchtower Society was assigned this privilege in 1918. In 1914, both Jesus and Jehovah had come to earth to inspect all the churches of the world. After the inspection it was determined that, only the Watchtower Society was faithful to God. Therefore, Jehovah appointed the Watchtower Society to be God's sole representative, God's mouthpiece on earth.¹

In a move likely intended to quell dissent, Rutherford began teaching that since Jesus returned invisibly in 1914, the Holy Spirit was no longer needed. After Jesus was enthroned in 1919, he began using angels to deliver his instructions to the Watchtower Society.²

In 1930, he revisited Russell's teaching and changed the date of Christ's Second Presence from 1874 to 1914.³ He also taught that Christ has been present invisibly at Watchtower since 1919.⁴ Because Christ has been present in his temple, the Holy Spirit is no longer necessary and is no longer present with us.⁵

¹ Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, "Loyal to Christ and His Faithful Slave," *Watchtower*, April 1, 2007, 22, accessed August 6, 2018, <http://www.watchtowerwayback.org/jw-wb/English/Magazines/The%20Watchtower/2007%20The%20Watchtower.pdf>. "'On arriving' to inspect the 'slave' in 1918, Christ found a spirit-anointed remnant of faithful disciples who since 1879 had been using this journal [the Watchtower] and other Bible-based publications to provide spiritual 'food at the proper time'. He acknowledged them as his collective instrument, or 'slave', and in 1919 entrusted them with the management of all his earthly belongings."

² Joseph Rutherford, *Vindication* (New York: Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, 1932.), 3:250, accessed March 16, 2018, <https://ia800209.us.archive.org/29/items/VindicationVolume3/ByJudgeRutherford/1932-VINDICATION-3.pdf>. "This pictures the heavenly messenger or angels of the Lord, now used by the Lord in behalf of the remnant. These angels are invisible to human eyes and are there to carry out the orders of the Lord. No doubt, they first hear the instruction which the Lord issues to his remnant and then these invisible messengers pass such instruction on to the remnant. The facts show that the angels of the Lord with him at his temple have been thus rendering service unto the remnant since 1919."

³ Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, *The Golden Age*, April 30, 1930, 503, accessed July 9, 2018, <http://www.watchtowerwayback.org/jw-wb/English/Magazines/Awake/1930%20Golden.Age%20Num269-Num294.pdf>. "If it is true that Jesus has been present since the year 1914, then it must be admitted that nobody has seen Him with his natural eyes. The only way that He can be seen is by signs or evidences, which Jesus declared indicate His presence."

⁴ J.F. Rutherford, *Preservation* (New York: Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, 1932), 211, accessed July 10, 2018, [http://www.watchtowerwayback.org/jw-wb/English/Books/Teachings/1932%20Preservation%20\(pr32\).pdf](http://www.watchtowerwayback.org/jw-wb/English/Books/Teachings/1932%20Preservation%20(pr32).pdf). "The class of spirit-begotten ones on earth whom Naomi pictured at this point (1919) came to a realization that Christ Jesus the great Judge had come to the temple. of Jehovah and that the famine had ended, and that God had lifted the 'rod of the wicked from the lot of the righteous', and now they must busy themselves with the kingdom work and henceforth hold themselves entirely aloof and separate from the wicked."

Later a dispute over the ransom doctrine split their friendship. However, Barbour was not the person who had developed the original chronology. The chronology was developed by John Aquila Brown. He outlined his beliefs in the book *Even-Tide* (1823). The chronology began with the fall of Judah. Brown chose 604 B.C. as the date of that fall.⁶ Then utilizing Daniel, chapter 4 he determined that the end of all things would be in 1917. However, Barbour found some discrepancies and revised the date to 1914.⁷ Otherwise, the time line was accepted intact. For any that have not seen the date 604 used for the fall of the Jewish nation, it is because the date accepted by most, if not all, historians and theologians is 586 BC.

After Russell's death, Rutherford taught that Jehovah and Jesus Had come to earth to inspect all the churches in 1914. After studying all he churches, they determined that only the Watchtower Society was faithful to Jehovah's Word. Therefore, in 1919, God selected men from among the anointed 144,000 thousand, to be His mouthpiece on earth. Those chosen and anointed believers were the men who published the Watchtower.⁸

For the Jehovah's Witness the Good News has a strong emphasis on the Kingdom of God (God's theocratic rule on earth). Jesus has been enthroned since 1914; the last days will end soon and

⁵ Ibid., 193-194, "By his spirit, the holy spirit, Jehovah God guides or leads his people up to a certain point of time, and thus he did until the time when 'the comforter' was taken away, which would necessarily occur when Jesus, the Head of his organization, came to the temple and gathered unto himself those whom he found faithful when he, as the great Judge, began his judgment, in 1918."

⁶ Ibid., 30. "What he posited was that the typical theocratic kingdom of Judah had fallen under Gentile rule in 604 BC. Thereafter there would be no godly government on earth until the four great empires—the Babylonian, Medo-Persian, Macedonian, and Roman—had had their sway."

⁷ Ibid., 31. "Instead of using 1917 as the terminus for those times, he calculated slightly differently and marked them as concluding in the autumn of 1914. In that year, Christ's kingdom would come to hold fully sway over the earth, and the Jews, as a people, would be restored to God's favor."

⁸ Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, "Who Really Is the Faithful and Discreet Slave?", *Watchtower*, July 15, 2013, 22, accessed March 16, 2018, <https://www.jw.org/en/publications/magazines/w20130715/jesus-parable-wheat-and-weeds/>. "In recent decades, that slave has been closely identified with the Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses. Note, however, that the word 'slave' in Jesus' illustration is singular, indicating that this is a composite slave. The decisions of the Governing Body are thus made collectively."

Armageddon will occur.⁹ Then God will raise the dead, and the millennium will begin. The emphasis of the Good News is directed at what Jehovah is doing.

The prior Gospel of Christendom is really no Gospel at all. Since 1914 they have been faithfully proclaiming the 'Good News' that leads to life. The true Gospel had been unavailable from the time of the last Apostle until Charles Taze Russell founded the Watchtower Society.

Jehovah's Witnesses believe that the Kingdom of God is a real government that has influence over this world. Jesus' authority began to be displayed when he was installed as king in 1914.¹⁰

1799

Charles Taze Russell adopted the historicist teachings of the Second Adventist. The Second Adventist interpreted prophecy using the day-year theory. This system understood that a biblical day was in reality a prophetic year. Viewing Daniel and Revelation, the Adventist sought to apply biblical prophecies to their time, a trait that is still common among Advent Christians. It was agreed by many that the year AD 539 marked the beginning of Papal rule and therefore the beginning of the 1260 years spoken of in Daniel. Therefore, the date of the beginning of the end times was arrived at by adding 539 years and 1260 years. The chosen date was 1799. Nelson Barbour, who initially taught Russell about the prophetic dates, understood the date to be 1798, a date Russell corrected to 1914.¹¹

⁹ Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, "The Kingdom of God Is Among You," *Watchtower*, December 1, 1928, 365, accessed July 30, 2018, <http://www.watchtowerwayback.org/jw-wb/English/Magazines/The%20Watchtower/1928%20The%20Watchtower.pdf>. "Now we are in the day of greater fulfilment. In 1920, that is, after the imprisoned condition and beheading experience of God's people during the war period, Bible Students came to a correct understanding of our Lord's prophecy contained in Matthew 24: 14. They then realized that "this gospel" which was to be preached in all the world for a testimony to the Gentiles or all nations, was not a gospel of a kingdom yet to come but a gospel to the effect that the Messianic King has begun His reign over earth, and 'the kingdom of God is among us' therefore."

¹⁰ Charles Taze Russell, *Millennial Dawn*, vol. 2, *The Time Is at Hand* (Allegheny, PA: Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, 1889), 99-101, accessed August 5, 2018, [http://www.watchtowerwayback.org/jw-wb/English/Books/Teachings/1889%20Studies%20in%20the%20Scriptures%20Vol2-The%20Time%20Is%20At%20Hand%20\(1st%20edition\).pdf](http://www.watchtowerwayback.org/jw-wb/English/Books/Teachings/1889%20Studies%20in%20the%20Scriptures%20Vol2-The%20Time%20Is%20At%20Hand%20(1st%20edition).pdf). "In view of this strong Bible evidence concerning the Times of the Gentiles, we consider it an established truth that the final end of the kingdoms of this world, and the full establishment of the Kingdom of God, will be accomplished by the end of A. D. 1914."

Russell taught that 1260 years of oppression at the hand of the papacy was drawing to an end. The judgment of God was coming. In this interim, God's Word would go forth declaring His Kingdom.¹² The power of sin was broken.¹³ Following Russell's death, 1799 would continue to be proclaimed as 'the beginning of the end' in publications through the 1920s. Rutherford wrote of the 1799 date in the *Harp of God* and *Creation*.¹⁴ Watchtower also mentions the date in 1922.¹⁵ The date is significant because it sets the foundation for 1914, a date, unique and central

¹¹ Nelson Barbour, *Three Worlds and the Harvest of This World* (Rochester, NY: Nelson Barbour, 1877), 158, accessed August 5, 2018, <http://www.watchtowerwayback.org/jw-wb/English/Books/Teachings/1877%20The%20three%20worlds.pdf>. "The wonders there referred to, were the 'time of trouble, the resurrection,' etc., and with present light, we understand that the definite time in this case reached to the end of the 1260 years of papal dominion, and therefore ended in 1798; but the completion of the scattering of the power of the Holy people, will not be ended until the end of the times of the Gentiles, or in 1914."

¹² Russell, *The Time Is at Hand* (1889), 296. "Henceforth we deal with the Antichrist, whose gradual development and organization from secretly working ambition are a fitting prelude to the terrible character displayed after the coveted power had been grasped—from 539 A.D. to 1799 A.D., 1260 years. Of this period the first three hundred years mark the rise of this temporal power; the last three mark its waning under the influences of the Reformation and civilization; and the intermediate period of seven centuries embraces Papacy's glory-time and the 'dark ages' of the world, full of frauds and deceptions in the name of Christ and true religion."

¹³ Russell, *Thy Kingdom Come* (1891), 122. "Since the beginning (1799) of the Time of the End, God has been preparing his consecrated 'holy people', his 'Sanctuary', for the great blessings he intended to pour upon them during these forty years of harvest: which blessings are also intended as special preparation for their entering with Christ into full joy and joint-heirship with him, as his bride. At the exact 'time appointed,' 1799, the end of the 1260 days, the power of the Man of Sin, the great oppressor of the Church, was broken, and his dominion taken away."

¹⁴ J. F. Rutherford, *The Harp of God: Proof Conclusive that Millions Now Living Will Never Die* (New York: Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, 1921), 228-229, accessed August 5, 2018, <http://www.watchtowerwayback.org/jw-wb/English/Books/Teachings/1921%20The%20harp%20of%20God.pdf>. "While he was doing this, the British in the north, under the leadership of Lord Nelson, were making an effective attack upon Napoleon's form at sea. Napoleon began this Egyptian campaign in 1798,

finished it and returned to France on October 1, 1799. The campaign is briefly, yet graphically, described in the prophecy, verses 40 to 44; and being completed in 1799, marks, according to the Prophet's own words, the beginning of the 'time of the end'" Also J. F. Rutherford, *Creation* (1927), 294-295, accessed August 5, 2018, <http://www.watchtowerwayback.org/jw-wb/English/Books/Teachings/1927%20Creation.pdf>. "In Biblical symbology a 'time' means a year of twelve months of thirty days each, or 360 days. Each day is considered for a year, as the prophet says: 'I have appointed thee each day for a year'. (Ezek. 4:6) Here are mentioned, then, three and a half times of 360 prophetic days each, or a total of 1260 prophetic days, which would mark the beginning of the time of the end of this beastly order. Twelve hundred and sixty years from 539 A. D. brings us to 1799, which is another proof that 1799 definitely marks the beginning of 'the time of the end'. This also shows that it is from the date 539 A. D. that the other prophetic days of Daniel must be counted."

¹⁵ Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, "Who Is Wise," *Watchtower*, March 1, 1922, 71, accessed August 5, 2018, <http://www.watchtowerwayback.org/jw-wb/English/Magazines/The%20Watchtower/1922>

to Watchtower doctrine. Now, however, the events claimed for the date of 1799 have been moved forward to 1914 and 1799 has been discarded.¹⁶

1874

Russell, following Barbour and the Second Adventist, understood that when man had been on the earth for 6000 years, Jesus would come, the church would be raptured, and the thousand years of Sabbath rest would occur. Russell calculated that man's time on earth was coming to an end in 1874. He believed that this would bring about the second advent of Christ and a time of harvest.¹⁷ Russell believed that Jesus was now a spirit creature and would not be seen by human eyes.¹⁸ The Second Adventist did not believe this and thought that His return would be visible. Following 1874, Russell taught that Jesus was present, invisibly. Rutherford maintained this belief until the beginning of the 1930s. A Watchtower from 1924 confirmed 1874 as the year of Jesus' return.¹⁹ As late as 1929 a book written by Rutherford vouched for the

%20The%20Watchtower.pdf. "The Lord showed Daniel that from the time of this union or formation of the 'dreadful and terrible beast' to the 'time of the end' would be 1260 years; thereby marking 1799 again as the date of the 'time of the end.'"

¹⁶ Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, "Who Can Accurately Predict Man's Future?", *Awake!* January 22, 1973, 8, accessed August 5, 2018, <http://www.watchtowerwayback.org/jw-wb/English/Magazines/Awake/1973%20Awake.pdf>. "Jehovah's witnesses pointed to the year 1914, decades in advance, as marking the start of "the conclusion of the system of things."

¹⁷ Russell, *Thy Kingdom Come* (1891), 128. "The six thousand years in which God has permitted evil to dominate the world, prior to the beginning of the great seventh or sabbatic thousand, or 'Times of Restitution, dates, from the entrance of sin into the world. And since the Times of Restitution began with October 1874, that must be the end of the six thousand years reign of Sin ; and the difference between that and the date shown in the chronology from Adam's creation represents the period of sinlessness in Eden, which really belongs to the reign of righteousness."

¹⁸ Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, "View from the Tower," *Zion's Watchtower and Herald of Christ's Presence*, August 1883, 1, accessed August 5, 2018, <http://www.watchtowerwayback.org/jw-wb/English/Magazines/The%20Watchtower/1883%20The%20Watchtower.pdf>. "And concerning the Lord's second coming, while we realized that he is no longer a man but is now the new creature—the express image of the Father's person- a quickening spirit, yet we failed somehow to make a proper application of this to his second coming, and unthinkingly and ignorantly, rather expected his coming to be as a glorified man, than as a spiritual being. It was not until about 1874 that these things became clearer, so that we realized that when Jesus should come, it would be as unobserved by human eyes as though an angel had come; and that it could be known only by some miracle, by some manifestation or demonstration."

1874 date.²¹ However, in 1932, 1874 was ignored and the date of Jesus' return was changed to 1914.²¹ Then in 1943 a new chronology was proposed and the date 1874 was retired. 1914 became the new date of Jesus' invisible return, and 1874 was abandoned as a significant date.²²

1878

In the years prior to 1878, Russell worked with Nelson Barbour, an Adventist publisher. Russell and Barbour had reasoned that Jesus must return to rapture the church in 1878.²³ They

¹⁹ Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, "The Outlook for 1924," *Watchtower*, January 1, 1924, 5, accessed August 5, 2018, <http://www.watchtowerwayback.org/jw-wb/English/Magazines/The%20Watchtower/1924%20The%20Watchtower.pdf>. "Surely there is not the slightest room for doubt in the mind of a truly consecrated child of God that the Lord Jesus is present and has been since 1874. . . ."

²¹ Joseph Franklin Rutherford, *Prophecy* (New York: Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, 1929), 65, accessed August 5, 2018, <http://www.watchtowerwayback.org/jw-wb/English/Books/Teachings/1929%20Prophecy.pdf>. "The Scriptural proof is that the second presence of the Lord Jesus Christ began in 1874 A.D."

²¹ Joseph Franklin Rutherford, *What is Truth?* (New York: Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, 1932), 48, accessed August 5, 2018, [http://www.watchtowerwayback.org/jw-wb/English/Brochures/1932%20What%20is%20truth%20\(wtr-E\).pdf](http://www.watchtowerwayback.org/jw-wb/English/Brochures/1932%20What%20is%20truth%20(wtr-E).pdf). "The Scriptures show that he must wait until the end of the Gentile times, which times began in 606 B.C., extended over a period of 2520 years, and came to an end in the autumn of 1914. That was the period of time in which Jehovah permitted Satan to carry on his wicked work without interference. At the end of that period of time. Jesus Christ, in obedience to his Father's will, began the great work of ousting Satan and establishing kingdom. The year 1914, therefore, marks the second coming of Christ."

²² Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, *The Truth Shall Make You Free* (New York: Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, 1943), 152, accessed August 5, 2018, [http://www.watchtowerwayback.org/jw-wb/English/Books/Teachings/1943%20The%20truth%20shall%20make%20you%20free%20\(tf\).pdf](http://www.watchtowerwayback.org/jw-wb/English/Books/Teachings/1943%20The%20truth%20shall%20make%20you%20free%20(tf).pdf). "From Adam's creation to the end of 1943 A.D. is 5,971 years We are therefore near the end of six thousand years of human history, with conditions upon us and tremendous events at hand foreshadowed by those of Noah's day."

Therefore, since 1874 was in place because it was thought to be the end of 6000 years and the beginning of the Sabbath thousand years, the rearrangement of the prophetic timeline meant that 1874 was no longer a contender for the return of Jesus. That event would logically be located in the mid-1970s except that 1914 is central to Watchtower theology and Jesus was to have returned in 1914.

²³ Jason Wright, "C. T. Russell and the date 1878," *Watchtower Investigated UK* (June 17, 2014), accessed May 5, 2018, <https://watchtowerinvestigated.wordpress.com/2014/06/17/c-t-russell-and-the-date-1878-by-jason-wright/>. "Hence Barbour proclaimed a three and a-half year period was already underway, starting in 1874 (Jesus invisible return/Parousia) and ending in the spring of 1878, it was what he called the anti-typical harvest period (parallel dispensation). This period ended with the translation of the Elijah class (little flock) and Jesus taking up his throne and became king in heaven. So there we have it! In 1877 Russell and Barbour were absolutely sure the translation of the little flock (true church) would occur at latest April 6th 1878."

reached that conclusion because they believed Jesus had returned invisibly to earth in 1874. They had made the calculations utilizing reasoning common to premillennialism in that era.²⁴

Mirroring was common in prophetic teaching. Some believed significant events were going to be mirrored in the coming prophetic events. As an example, after Jesus' first advent occurred, he began his ministry. This ministry took three and a half years. A mirroring of that time would mean that Jesus would return to heaven with his 144,000 saints three and a half years after his invisible return. At that point he would be installed as the ruling king.²⁵ Therefore, Russell believed the rapture of the church would occur in 1878. Based on this, both Barbour and Russell began to teach and preach that the time was short for the church. When 1878 came and went, many were disheartened. Nelson Barbour struggled to understand how they could have been wrong. However, Russell was not discouraged. After considering the matter, Russell decided that he was not mistaken about the date. The problem was that he had been mistaken about what would transpire. Though there was no change in the visible church, there was a change in spiritual realms. The Adventist had expected a fleshly manifestation, not a spiritual manifestation. This did not occur, and Russell determined that what had actually happened was that those of the anointed class (144,000) who had previously died were in fact resurrected to be with Jesus, and from that point on all those who were anointed would go directly to be with Jesus when they died.²⁶ In addition, Jehovah installed Jesus as King in 1878. This was a spiritual event and Jehovah was in the process of establishing his kingdom.²⁷

²⁴ Russell, *The Time Is at Hand* (1889), 218. "As shown in the accompanying diagram, the period of their favor, from the commencement of their national existence at the death of Jacob, down to the end of that favor at the death of Christ, A.D. 33, was eighteen hundred and forty-five (1845) years."

²⁵ Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, *Jehovah's Witnesses—Proclaimers of God's Kingdom*, 632. "Based on the premise that events of the first century might find parallels in related events later, they also concluded that if Jesus' baptism and anointing in the autumn of 29 C.E. paralleled the beginning of an invisible presence in 1874, then his ride into Jerusalem as King in the spring of 33 C.E. would point to the spring of 1878 as the time when he would assume his power as heavenly King."

Since Rutherford moved the date of the invisible return of Jesus forward to 1914, the year 1874 was vacated. Therefore, the dates of 1878 and the date of 1881 were also vacated, as they were dependent on 1874.

1881

Russell called his followers to serve God diligently, to give everything to the service of his Kingdom. He believed God was filling the ranks of the 144,000 and the time to join the anointed 'little flock' would soon come to a close.²⁸ The opportunity to be among the anointed would end in 1881.²⁹ After that time, it would be the job of the anointed to call people to become part of the Great Multitude. Because this date was based on the 1874 return of Jesus which was vacated, it also is no longer a pertinent date.

1914

The year 1914 is unique for Jehovah's Witnesses. The use and centrality of this date sets them apart from all other groups. The rest of their theology, aberrant or not, can be found elsewhere in different groups, but 1914 is unique.

²⁶ *Jehovah's Witnesses—Proclaimers of God's Kingdom*, 632. "They also thought they would be given their heavenly reward at that time. When that did not occur, they concluded that since Jesus' anointed followers were to share with him in the Kingdom, the resurrection to spirit life of those already sleeping in death began then."

²⁷ *Ibid.* "They also thought they would be given their heavenly reward at that time. When that did not occur, they concluded that since Jesus' anointed followers were to share with him in the Kingdom, the resurrection to spirit life of those already sleeping in death began then. It was also reasoned that the end of God's special favor to natural Israel down to 36 C.E. might point to 1881 as the time when the special opportunity to become part of spiritual Israel would close."

²⁸ Russell, *The Time Is at Hand* (1889), 235. "As in the type that date—three and a half years after the death of Christ—marked the end of all special favor to the Jew and the beginning of favor to the Gentiles, so we recognize A.D. 1881 as marking the close of the high calling, or invitation to the blessing peculiar to this age - to become joint-heirs with Christ and partakers of the divine nature."

²⁹ Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, *Jehovah's Witnesses—Proclaimers of God's Kingdom*, 632. "It was also reasoned that the end of God's special favor to natural Israel down to 36 C.E. might point to 1881 as the time when the special opportunity to become part of spiritual Israel would close."

The date had been calculated by Russell as he searched for the meaning of the “Time of the Gentiles.” He first determined the beginning of this time by determining when the rule of the Jews was broken. He identified that time as the year that the tribe of Judah went into captivity to Babylon. Russell accepted a date of 606 BC that had been suggested previously by John Aquila Brown.³⁰ The date itself was later changed by a year to 607, but the 1914 date was not adjusted. The length of the period was found by examining Daniel, chapter 4. Believing that the cutting down of the tree represented the fall of Judah, Russell focused on a period of seven times or seven years. Since each year is 360 days long (lunar years), the total number of years was 2520 years. When this is added to 606 BC, it gives the date 1914. Therefore, the end of the “Time of the Gentiles” was 1914. Russell knew immediately that time was short and that the end was drawing near.³¹

There are a number of significant flaws with the calculation of 1914. The first is the calculation of the date for the end of the Jewish times. The return from the Babylonian exile is the date used to begin calculating the end of the Jewish times. The dates 536 thru 539 BC are commonly used for the return from the exile to Babylon. There is inadequate information

³⁰ Penton, *Apocalypse Delayed*, 30. “In fact, it was John Aquila Brown who first explained what he considered to be the key to the length of those times in a book called *Even-Tide*, published in London in 1823. What he posited was that the typical theocratic kingdom of Judah had fallen under Gentile rule in 604 B.C. Thereafter, there would be no godly government on earth until four great empires –the Babylonian, Medo-Persian, Macedonian, and Roman–had had their sway. Then Christ, as David’s heir, would rule in Jerusalem. But how long would it be before those empires expired? Brown found his answer in the fourth chapter of the book of Daniel.” Brown believed 1917 was the year of the end. Barbour found fault with his calculations and decided upon 1914, a date Russell followed.

³¹ Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, “Heed God’s Prophetic Word for Our Day,” *Watchtower*, April 1, 1984, 16, accessed August 6, 2018, <http://www.watchtowerwayback.org/jw-wb/English/Magazines/The%20Watchtower/1984%20The%20Watchtower.pdf>. “Writing in the *Bible Examiner* of October 1876, Russell said: ‘The seven times will end in A.D. 1914.’ He also was a joint publisher of the 1877 book *Three Worlds, and the Harvest of This World*, which showed (on pages 83 and 189) that the 2,520-year period of Gentile world domination without interference by any kingdom of God began with the Babylonian overthrow of the kingdom of Judah in the late seventh century BCE and would end in 1914 CE. Similarly, the *Watch Tower* issue of March 1880 stated: ‘The Times of the Gentiles’ extend to 1914, and the heavenly kingdom will not have full sway till then.’”

available to choose one over the other. Since the initial date used to calculate the end of the Jewish times is uncertain, it would be difficult to be precise. The date selected for the end of the Jewish times, the year Judah went into captivity, is said to be 607 BC. The Watchtower Society alone presents that number. There is not a single shred of historical data to suggest that 607 is the correct date.³² The vast majority of archeologist, historians, and biblical experts (essentially everyone) believe the correct date is 586 BC. Further difficulty arises when the idea of a second fulfillment of Daniel chapter 4 is suggested. No other section of Daniel has a second fulfillment. Then there is the problem of calculating with lunar years (360 days) and utilizing the result in a system of solar years (365 days). Further, nothing in the Daniel verses hint at the Gentile times or the end times. Therefore, it appears therefore that the selection of 1914 has multiple fatal flaws.³³

The date was felt by Russell to be significant for a number of reasons. It was the end of the Gentile Times. False religion and all government would be cast down. Armageddon would occur, and all the dead would be raised. Finally, Jesus would begin his thousand-year reign on paradise earth.³⁴ Therefore, it is clear that Russell and the early Bible Students taught and

³² Franz, *Crisis of Conscience*, 29-30. "Months of research were spent on this one subject of 'Chronology' and it resulted in the longest article in the Aid publication. Much of the time was spent endeavoring to find some proof, some backing in history, for the 607 BCE date so crucial to our calculations for 1914. Charles Ploeger, a member of the headquarters staff, was at that time serving as a secretary for me and he searched through the libraries of the New York city area for anything that might substantiate that date historically. We found absolutely nothing in support of 607 BCE All historians pointed to a date twenty years later."

³³ "607: 1914: Seven Times," *JWFacts.com*, accessed August 6, 2018, <https://www.jwfacts.com/watchtower/607-seven-times-prophecy.php>. "There are numerous issues and inconsistencies with how Watchtower interprets the Seven Times. The major issue with how Watchtower arrives at 1914 is that Jerusalem did not fall in 607 B.C. . . . However, even if the assumption is made that 607 B.C. is correct, Watchtower's interpretation fails at a number of other levels. There is no reason to believe Daniel 4 has two fulfillments, 606 B.C. or 607 B.C.? 539 B.C. or 537 B.C.? July or October? 70 Weeks and the 7 Times? 360 Day 'Prophetic Year' for a Solar Year?"

³⁴ "Changed Dates: Failed Predictions," *JWFacts.com*, accessed August 6, 2018, <https://www.jwfacts.com/watchtower/1800s.php>. "1914 has been a pivotal date for the Watchtower. The expectations prior to 1914 included it being the end of the Gentile Times, the end of Armageddon, the fall of false religion, the end of all governments, the resurrection, the start of Jesus 1000 year reign and paradise on earth."

understood that 1914 marked the end of the world. Rutherford, and those who followed him, changed the focus and began to teach that 1914 was the beginning of the 'end times' as none of the predicted events occurred in 1914. This was because the date is central to Watchtower theology and cannot be easily abandoned. It became more prudent to change the significance of the date than maintain the earlier understanding. So rather than being the end of all things, 1914 became the 'beginning of the end'. Along with this new understanding, it was proclaimed that the generation of 1914 would not pass away without Armageddon occurring. That did not happen, and the Watchtower Society has now abandoned the claim that those alive in 1918 would not die before Armageddon. The Watchtower Society uncoupled the end of time from 1914, saying that anyone who knew an anointed person from that generation also belongs to the generation that would see Jesus return. This is referred to as an overlapping generation.³⁵ The major issue that prevents the Watchtower Society from abandoning 1914 is that it is the underpinning for 1918, the year that Jesus and Jehovah are said to have come and inspected the churches of the world. Based on that that inspection, in 1919 only the Jehovah's Witnesses were found to be pure and true to His Word. Therefore, Jehovah appointed the Watchtower Society as His organization and His mouthpiece for the world. If 1914 is abandoned, the declaration of the Watchtower Society's as God's mouthpiece disappears as well.

³⁵ Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, "Holy Spirit's Role in the Outworking of Jehovah's Purpose," *Watchtower*, April 15, 2010, 10, accessed August 6, 2018, <http://www.watchtowerwayback.org/jw-wb/English/Magazines/The%20Watchtower/2010%20The%20Watchtower%20STUDY.Pdf>. "He evidently meant that the lives of the anointed who were on hand when the sign began to become evident in 1914 would overlap with the lives of other anointed ones who would see the start of the great tribulation. That generation had a beginning, and it surely will have an end."

1918

When 1914 failed, there were many who looked to 1918 to be the date of the end.³⁶ As with the previous failures, the date was moved forward continuing the expectancy that something momentous was about to happen.³⁷ During this time, Rutherford taught Jesus accompanied Jehovah to the spiritual temple to cleanse his people.³⁸

1919

The Watchtower teaches a cleansing of the temple took place in 1918. There was also in inspection of all the churches that was to have begun in 1918. Jesus and Jehovah determined that only the Watchtower Society was mature and capable enough to be His mouthpiece.³⁹ Later there was a revision, and it was determined that the inspection had begun, not in 1918 but instead in

³⁶ Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, "1917 Annual Report," *Watchtower*, December 15, 1917, 373-374, accessed August 6, 2018, <http://www.watchtowerwayback.org/jw-wb/English/Magazines/The%20Watchtower/1917%20The%20Watchtower.pdf>. "It is with sincere joy that we are privileged to report that amongst the activities of the Watch Tower Bible And Tract Society for 1917 the Seventh Volume of Studies In The Scriptures has been published and is now going forth. We count this as another one of the strong proofs that the harvest is nearing the end, and that in all probability the Spring of 1918 will mark the beginning of the closing up of all activities of the kingdom class on this side the veil."

³⁷ Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, "The Concluding Work of the Harvest," *Watchtower*, October 1, 1917, 292-293, accessed August 6, 2018, <http://www.watchtowerwayback.org/jw-wb/English/Magazines/The%20Watchtower/1917%20The%20Watchtower.pdf>. "The parallel, therefore, would establish definitely that the harvest would close forty years thereafter; to wit, in the spring of A.D. 1918. If this be true, and the evidence is very conclusive that it is true, then we have only a few months in which to labor before the great night settles down when no man can work."

³⁸ Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, "The True Lord Comes for Judgement," *Watchtower*, July 1, 1989, 31, accessed August 6, 2018, <http://www.watchtowerwayback.org/jw-wb/English/Magazines/The%20Watchtower/1989%20The%20Watchtower.pdf>. "During his earthly ministry, Jesus cleansed the temple. In 1918 he accompanied Jehovah to the spiritual temple to cleanse God's people"

³⁹ Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, "Loyal to Christ and His Faithful Slave," *Watchtower*, April 1, 2007, 22, accessed August 6, 2018, <http://www.watchtowerwayback.org/jw-wb/English/Magazines/The%20Watchtower/2007%20The%20Watchtower.pdf>. "'On arriving' to inspect the 'slave' in 1918, Christ found a spirit-anointed remnant of faithful disciples who since 1879 had been using this journal [the Watchtower] and other Bible-based publications to provide spiritual 'food at the proper time'. He acknowledged them as his collective instrument, or 'slave,' and in 1919 entrusted them with the management of all his earthly belongings."

1914.⁴⁰ Still, only the Watchtower could be God's Society. Interestingly there is no logical or scriptural reasoning for these claims.

[Jerusalem did not fall in 607 B.C.](#)

Watchtower 2011, Oct 1 & Nov 1

The October and November 1st 2011 Watchtower attempt to prove that Jerusalem fell in 607, rather than the historically accepted 587. Download in PDF format [Part 1](#) and [Part 2](#) of Carl Jonsson's brilliant examination of these Watchtower articles, which show the intellectual dishonesty of Watchtower by including inaccurate information and misquotes.

For the seven times to end in 1914, the Watchtower is forced to claim Jerusalem was destroyed and completely desolate in 607 B.C. However, it is universally accepted that Jerusalem was destroyed in 587 B.C. This section shows that the evidence is conclusive that Jerusalem did not fall in 607 B.C.

The Watchtower claims secular evidence regarding 587 is incorrect because it disagrees with Bible Chronology. In reality, secular evidence does not contradict Bible chronology, but rather the flawed *Watchtower interpretation* of Bible chronology.

[more](#)

[Inconsistent Methodology](#)

Discussion of the Watchtower interpretation of the Seven Times generally focuses on 607 or 587. The starting point really should be that *Daniel 4 is not an end time prophecy*. Since each prophecy in Daniel had only one fulfilment, there is no reason to believe *Daniel 4* should contain two prophetic messages.

Recognising that *Daniel 4* is not an end time prophecy makes the rest of the information presented somewhat redundant. However, for Jehovah's Witnesses intent on insisting that there should be a secondary application, examination of the Watchtower's interpretative methodology reveals it to be illogical and grossly inconsistent. This section dissects how the prophecy is calculated and the methodological flaws.

[more](#)

⁴⁰ Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, "Look I Am with You All the Days," *Watchtower*, July 15, 2013, 11, 14, accessed August 6, 2018, <http://www.watchtowerwayback.org/jw-wb/English/Magazines/The%20Watchtower/2013%20The%20Watchtower%20STUDY.Pdf>. "In 2013, this teaching was simplified by removing 1918 from the equation. . . . To settle that question, Jesus began to inspect the spiritual temple in 1914. That inspection and cleansing work involved a period of time—from 1914 to the early part of 1919." Endnotes: "This is an adjustment in understanding. Previously, we thought that Jesus' inspection took place in 1918."

When were the 70 years?

The Watchtower claims historians are wrong regarding 587 B.C. because the year 607 B.C. is necessary to reconcile the Bible's claim of a 70 year period of desolation. This is incorrect, as it can be shown that the 607 B.C. fabrication is not required for the 70 year period to hold true.

[more](#)

Historical development of the prophecy

It is a common Witness misconception that the Watchtower was miraculously guided by holy spirit to understand that the last days were to start in 1914. In actual fact, the Watchtower interpretation of the Seven Times was taken from 19th century Second Adventist preachers. Furthermore, the prophecy was originally used to predict the world would end in 1914.

[more](#)

Did the Last Days Start 1914?

The Watchtower attempts to support its claim that the Last Days started in 1914 by presenting information to prove there are substantially more earthquakes, wars, famine and sickness since the start of the twentieth century. This article shows how inaccurate and dishonest such information is.

[more](#)

A person should be realistic about the ability of the Watchtower Society to interpret prophecy. To date there has been a proven time prophecy failure rate of 100%. As shown in the [Dates section](#), the Watchtower used Bible prophecy to explain that the following dates were of significance; 1780, 1799, 1829, 1844, 1846, 1872, 1874, 1875, 1878, 1880, 1881, 1891, 1906, 1910, 1915, 1920, 1921 and 1925. Every single one of these interpretations is now admitted as wrong. Even 1914 and 1918 were not fulfilled as expected and subsequently reinterpreted after the event. This does not inspire confidence that Holy Spirit guides Watchtower prophetic interpretation, or that current understanding of 1914 is correct.

ARTICLE 3

1914 : Failed Watchtower Prophecy

One of the most misleading statements in Watchtower publications is that they accurately foretold 1914 to be the “start” of the conclusion of this system of things. Rather, Watchtower falsely predicted 1914 to be the “end” of the system of things, the conclusion of Armageddon and the start of the earthly paradise.

It is important to know what Watchtower preached would happen in the years leading up to and including 1914, and compare this with what it now claims was said.

What Watchtower said prior to 1914	What Watchtower <i>claims</i> it said prior to 1914
"The year A.D. 1878 ... clearly marks the time for the actual assuming of power as King of kings, by our present, spiritual, invisible Lord - ..." The Time is At Hand (1911 ed) p.239	"The Watchtower has consistently presented evidence to honesthearted students of Bible prophecy that Jesus' presence in heavenly Kingdom power began in 1914. " Watchtower 1993 Jan 15 p.5
"But bear in mind that the end of 1914 is not the date for the beginning, but for the end of the time of trouble. Zion's Watch Tower 1894 Jul 15 p.226	"Jehovah's witnesses pointed to the year 1914, decades in advance, as marking the start of "the conclusion of the system of things." Awake! 1973 Jan 22 p.8

The contradictory statements above help identify two critical facts:

1. Watchtower falsely predicted this system would end in 1914
2. Watchtower is not entirely honest about its history

Governing Body member Samuel Herd makes the statement in Watchtower's 2016 documentary *The Kingdom 100 Years and Counting*;

"At the kingdom's birth in 1914, the Bible Students were not exactly sure what was going to happen, but they knew it would be a pivotal year."

This is a fabrication, as Watchtower was *dogmatic* as to exactly what was going to occur in 1914. Expectations for 1914 were forcefully presented as fact, as shown in the following quotes.

- "the deliverance of the saints **must take place** some time before 1914 is manifest" [Thy Kingdom Come \(1911 ed.\) p.228](#)
- "the Day of Vengeance ... **will end** in October, 1914" [The Day of Vengeance p.547](#)

- "the great "time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation," **will** reach its culmination" *The Time Is at Hand* (1889 ed.) [page 77](#) - [page 78](#)
- "we present **proofs** that the setting up of the Kingdom of God is already begun" *The Time Is At Hand* (1889 ed.) [p.101](#)
- "we consider it *an established truth* that the final end of the kingdoms of this world, and the full establishment of the Kingdom of God, will be accomplished near the end of A.D.1914." *Studies in the Scriptures - The Time is at Hand* (1889) 1911 ed. [p.99](#)
- "October, 1914, **will witness** the full end of Babylon" *Watch Tower* 1911 Jun 15 [p.190](#) ([reprints p.4842](#))
- "Christendom, **will have passed away**, as already shown in prophecy." *Thy Kingdom Come* (1891 ed.) [p.153](#)

The early followers were as convinced they knew what was going to happen in 1914 as current followers are convinced the Great Tribulation and Armageddon will come at any moment, resulting in the destruction of all worldly people. This is because the same manipulative terminology used prior to 1914 is still used in Watchtower publications to this day.

1914 is the pivotal date for the existence of Jehovah's Witnesses, currently explained as the date:

- the Gentile times ended
- Jesus started ruling in heaven
- the Last Days began

1914 is the basis for the interpretation of the majority of other Bible prophecies. Most importantly, this was the time during which Jesus is said to have come to inspect and cleanse the Watchtower Society, resulting in [Jesus choosing it in 1919 to be the only organization](#) he works through in our time, and the only means of salvation.

The current understanding is significantly different to the [original teachings](#). Prior to 1914, the Watchtower believed:

- The Last Days began 1799
- Jesus Parousia started 1874
- Jesus started ruling in heaven in 1878
- The Gentile Times would end in 1914, resulting in the:
 - end of Armageddon
 - fall of false religion
 - end of all earthly governments
 - heavenly and earthly resurrections

- paradise on earth

The 1914 doctrine has changed by necessity, and continued to change in the twenty first century, as it has been falsified by the progression of history. It has progressed from:

1. The last days started in 1799, ending in 1914.
2. The last days started in 1914, ending within a single lifetime/generation of those born prior to 1914.
3. The last days started in 1914, with an unspecified ending, after a period of an "overlapping generation."

The ability of the Watchtower to accurately foretell the meaning of 1914 is a great source of faith for Jehovah's Witnesses, unaware of what Watchtower said prior to 1914. Nothing Russell said about 1914 came to pass. For Russell and early Watchtower followers, the 2nd of October 1914 was expected to be the the conclusion of this system of things.

“Quite a few delegates stayed at Bethel, and, of course, members of the headquarters staff were present at the breakfast table on Friday morning, **October 2**. Everyone was seated when Brother Russell entered. As usual, he said cheerily, “Good morning, all.” But this particular morning was different. Instead of proceeding promptly to his seat, he clapped his hands and joyfully announced: “The Gentile times have ended; their kings have had their day.” “How we clapped our hands!” exclaims Cora Merrill. Brother Macmillan admitted: “We were highly excited and I would not have been surprised if at that moment we had just started up, that becoming the signal to begin ascending heavenward—but of course there was nothing like that, really.” Sister Merrill adds: “After a brief pause he [Russell] said: ‘Anyone disappointed? I’m not. Everything is moving right on schedule!’ Again we clapped our hands.’” [Yearbook 1975 pp.72,73](#)

The expectation was 1914 would see the final end of worldly kingdoms, replaced by God's Kingdom fully established on earth.

"In view of this strong Bible evidence concerning the Times of the Gentiles, we consider it an established truth that the final end of the kingdoms of this world, and the full establishment of the Kingdom of God, will be accomplished by the end of A.D. 1914." [Studies in the Scriptures - The Time is at Hand \(1889\) 1911 ed. p.99](#)

From the 1911 edition forward, this quote gave an additional year for these events to be fully accomplished, extending to A.D.1915.

will be overthrown and dissolved ; but we are living in a special and peculiar time, the " Day of Jehovah," in which matters culminate quickly ; and it is written, " A short work will the Lord make upon the earth." (See Vol. I., chap. xv.) For the past eleven years these things have been preached and published substantially as set forth above ; and in that brief time the development of influences and agencies for the undermining and overthrow of the strongest empires of earth has been wonderful. In that time Communism, Socialism and Nihilism sprang into vigorous existence, and already are causing great uneasiness among the rulers and high ones of earth, whose hearts are failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth ; for the present powers are being mightily shaken, and ultimately shall pass away with a great tumult.

In view of this strong Bible evidence concerning the Times of the Gentiles, we consider it an established truth that the final end of the kingdoms of this world, and the full establishment of the Kingdom of God, will be accomplished by the end of A. D. 1914. Then the prayer of the Church, ever since her Lord took his departure—" Thy Kingdom come"—will be answered ; and under that wise and just administration, the whole earth will be filled with the glory of the Lord—with knowledge, and righteousness, and peace (Psa. 72 : 19 ; Isa. 6 : 3 ; Hab. 2 : 14) ; and the will of God shall be done "*on earth, as it is done in heaven.*"

Daniel's statement, that God's Kingdom will be set up, not after these kingdoms of earth are dissolved, but in their days, while they still exist and have power, and that it is God's Kingdom which shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms (Dan. 2 : 44), is worthy of our special consideration. So it was with each of these beastly governments : it existed before it acquired universal dominion. Babylon existed long before it conquered Jerusalem and

will be overthrown and dissolved ; but we are living in a special and peculiar time, the " Day of Jehovah," in which matters culminate quickly ; and it is written, " A short work will the Lord make upon the earth." (See Vol. I., chap. xv.) For the past eleven years these things have been preached and published substantially as set forth above ; and in that brief time the development of influences and agencies for the undermining and overthrow of the strongest empires of earth has been wonderful. In that time Communism, Socialism and Nihilism sprang into vigorous existence, and already are causing great uneasiness among the rulers and high ones of earth, whose hearts are failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth ; for the present powers are being mightily shaken, and ultimately shall pass away with a great tumult.

In view of this strong Bible evidence concerning the Times of the Gentiles, we consider it an established truth that the final end of the kingdoms of this world, and the full establishment of the Kingdom of God, will be accomplished near the end of A.D. 1915. Then the prayer of the Church, ever since her Lord took his departure—" Thy Kingdom come"—will be answered ; and under that wise and just administration, the whole earth will be filled with the glory of the Lord—with knowledge, and righteousness, and peace (Psa. 72 : 19 ; Isa. 6 : 3 ; Hab. 2 : 14) ; and the will of God shall be done "*on earth, as it is done in heaven.*"

Daniel's statement, that God's Kingdom will be set up, not after these kingdoms of earth are dissolved, but in their days, while they still exist and have power, and that it is God's Kingdom which shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms (Dan. 2 : 44), is worthy of our special consideration. So it was with each of these beastly governments : it existed before it acquired universal dominion. Babylon existed long before it conquered Jerusalem and

The Time is at Hand (1889 ed.) p.99 The Time is at Hand (1911 ed.) p.99

Watchtower quotes prior to 1914

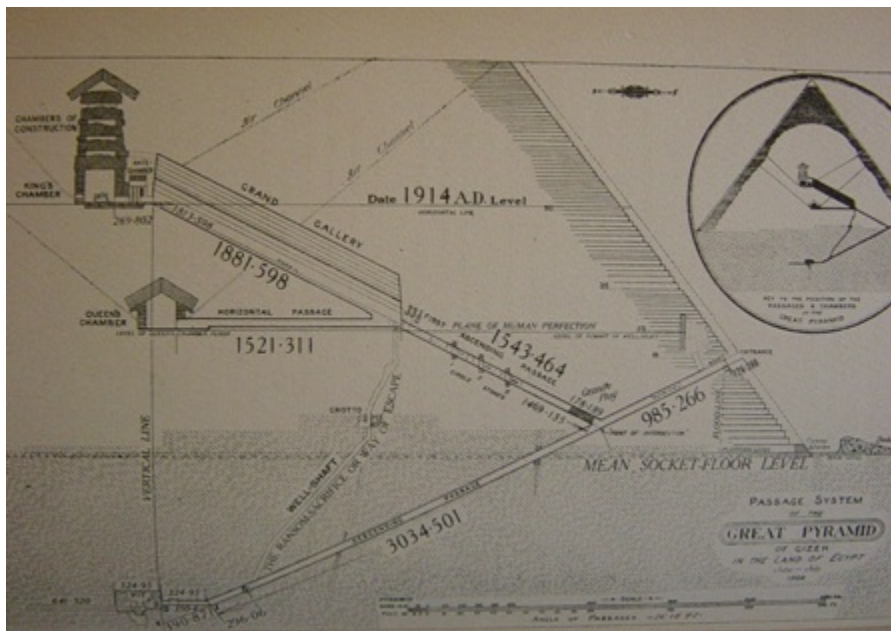
Russell taught that Jesus invisible presence began in 1874 and rulership in 1878.

"Our Lord, the appointed King, is now present since October 1874, A.D., according to the testimony of the prophets, to those who have ears to hear it: and the formal inauguration of his kingly office dates from April 1878, A.D.:" [*Studies in Scriptures Series - The Day of Vengeance \(1897\) p.621*](#)

The heavenly kingdom was shown Scripturally to begin *before* the end of the Gentile Times.

"But the kingdom of God is to be set up before the days of the Gentile end, for "in the days of theses kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom; and it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms" (Dan. 2:44)." *Three Worlds and the Harvest of This World* (Barbour & Russell, 1877) p.27

As shown at [Freemasonry & Adventist Links](#), Russell used pyramidology to support this belief.



Russell originally was a follower of the teachings of Barbour, and together they co-authored works such as the 1877 book *Three Worlds, and the Harvest of This World*. After splitting from Barbour in June 1879, Russell began publishing the magazine *Zion's Watch Tower and Herald of Christ's Presence* in July 1879. This became distinctly his own religion with the incorporation of the organization "Zion's Watch Tower Tract Society" shortly thereafter. Russell continued to publish many of the prophetic interpretations he had received from Barbour, as can be seen in what follows when comparing *Three Worlds* and *Watchtower* quotes.

1874 to 1914 were described as the greatest period of trouble in human history, the period of Armageddon itself, with the end of trouble to be in 1914.

"Now, in view of recent labor troubles and threatened anarchy, our readers are writing to know if there may not be a mistake in the 1914 date. They do not see how present conditions can hold out so long under the strain. We see no reason for changing the figures - nor could we change them if we would. They are, we believe, God's dates, not ours. But bear in mind that the end of 1914 is not the date for the beginning, but for the end of the time of trouble." [Zion's Watch Tower 1894 Jul 15 p.226 \(reprints 1677\)](#)

The following quotes during the lead up to 1914 show there could be no doubt as to what Watchtower followers expected. The end of the Last Days in 1914 was to initiate a number of endings and new beginnings.

- 1914 - the end of the preaching work
- 1914 - the end of all religion
- 1914 - the wholesale destruction of all government
- 1914 - the end of the Great Tribulation
- 1914 - the end of Armageddon
- 1914 - Russell and his followers to be raised to heaven
- 1914 - Jesus' Kingdom established as paradise on earth
- 1914 - commencement of the earthly resurrection

The following Watchtower quotes are just a small selection that highlight how they promoted these assertions.

Harvest Work (Preaching) Complete

"HARVEST" is a term which gives a general idea as to what work should be expected to transpire between the dates 1874 and 1914." [Studies In the Scriptures - Thy Kingdom Come p.135](#)

"These, already examined, show that the close of 1874 marked the beginning, as the close of 1914 will mark the end, of this 40 years of harvest; ..." [Studies In the Scriptures - Thy Kingdom Come pp.149-150](#)

Babylon the Great (Christendom) Utterly Destroyed

"The seventh trumpet sounds from Aug. 1840, until "the time of trouble," or day of wrath is ended. Hence, it doubtless ends with the times of the Gentiles, and this forty years of conquest; and therefore, sounds until A. D. 1914; at the end of which, **Babylon the great, will have fallen**, and the "dragon" be bound: that is, the nations will be subdued, and "the prince of this world cast out."" [Three Worlds and The Harvest of This World \(1877\) p.143](#)

"A.D. 33, to A.D. 70 was 36 ½ years; and so from A.D. 1878 to the end of A.D. 1914 is 36 ½ years. And, with the end of A.D. 1914, what God calls Babylon, and what men call Christendom,

will have passed away, as already shown in prophecy." [*Studies In the Scriptures - Thy Kingdom Come* \(1891\) p.153](#)

"October, 1914, will witness the full end of Babylon, "as a great millstone cast into the sea," utterly destroyed as a system." [*Watch Tower* 1911 Jun 15 p.190 reprints p.4842](#)

Governments overthrown

"True, it is expecting great things to claim, as we do, that within the coming twenty-six years all present governments will be overthrown and dissolved; but we are living in a special and peculiar time, the "Day of Jehovah,"...

In view of this strong Bible evidence concerning the Times of the Gentiles, we consider it an established truth that the final end of the kingdoms of this world, and the full establishment of the Kingdom of God, will be accomplished at the end of A. D. 1914."

Studies In the Scriptures - The Time Is At Hand (1889) pp.98-99

will be overthrown and dissolved ; but we are living in a special and peculiar time, the " Day of Jehovah," in which matters culminate quickly ; and it is written, " A short work will the Lord make upon the earth." (See Vol. I., chap. xv.) For the past eleven years these things have been preached and published substantially as set forth above ; and in that brief time the development of influences and agencies for the undermining and overthrow of the strongest empires of earth has been wonderful. In that time Communism, Socialism and Nihilism sprang into vigorous existence, and already are causing great uneasiness among the rulers and high ones of earth, whose hearts are failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth ; for the present powers are being mightily shaken, and ultimately shall pass away with a great tumult.

In view of this strong Bible evidence concerning the Times of the Gentiles, we consider it an established truth that the final end of the kingdoms of this world, and the full establishment of the Kingdom of God, will be accomplished by the end of A. D. 1914. Then the prayer of the Church, ever since her Lord took his departure—" Thy Kingdom come"—will be answered ; and under that wise and just administration, the whole earth will be filled with the glory of the Lord—with knowledge, and righteousness, and peace (Psa. 72 : 19 ; Isa. 6 : 3 ; Hab. 2 : 14) ; and the will of God shall be done "*on earth, as it is done in heaven.*"

Daniel's statement, that God's Kingdom will be set up, not after these kingdoms of earth are dissolved, but in their days, while they still exist and have power, and that it is God's Kingdom which shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms (Dan. 2 : 44), is worthy of our special consideration. So it was with each of these beastly governments : it existed before it acquired universal dominion. Babylon existed long before it conquered Jerusalem and

"Be not surprised, then, when in subsequent chapters we present proofs that the setting up of the Kingdom of God is already begun, that it is pointed out in prophecy as due to begin the exercise of power in A.D. 1878, and that the "battle of the great day of God Almighty" (Rev. 16:14), which will end in A.D. 1914 with the complete overthrow of earth's present rulership, is already commenced. The gathering of the armies is plainly visible from the standpoint of God's Word." *Studies In the Scriptures - The Time Is At Hand* (1889) p.101

Be not surprised, then, when in subsequent chapters we present proofs that the setting up of the Kingdom of God is already begun, that it is pointed out in prophecy as due to begin the exercise of power in A. D. 1878, and that the "battle of the great day of God Almighty" (Rev. 16:14.), which will end in A. D. 1914 with the complete overthrow of earth's present rulership, is already commenced. The gathering of the armies is plainly visible from the standpoint of God's Word.

End of the "Time of Trouble" (Great Tribulation)

Barbour and Russell published that the time of trouble would end in 1914, a teaching Russell continued to promote in *Zion's Watch Tower*.

"The seventh trumpet sounds from Aug. 1840, until "the time of trouble," or day of wrath is ended. Hence, it doubtless ends with the times of the Gentiles, and this forty years of conquest; and therefore, sounds until A. D. 1914; at the end of which, Babylon the great, will have fallen, and the "dragon" be bound: that is, the nations will be subdued, and "the prince of this world cast out." [*Three Worlds and The Harvest of This World* \(1877\) p.143](#)

"But bear in mind that the end of 1914 is not the date for the beginning, but for the end of the time of trouble." [*Zion's Watch Tower* 1894 Jul 15 p.226](#)

The End the "Day of Vengeance" (Armageddon)

Armageddon, also referred to as the Day of Vengeance, and the Battle of the Great Day, was to end in October 1914.

"we have seen that God has a set time for every feature of his plan, and that we are even now in this "Day of Vengeance," which is a period of forty years; that it began in October, 1874, and will end in October, 1914." [*Studies In the Scriptures - The Day of Vengeance* 1911 ed pp.546,547](#)

"... the battle of the great day of God Almighty ... The date of the close of that "battle" is definitely marked in Scripture as October, 1914. It is already in progress, its beginning dating from October, 1874. ... The Scriptures show also that the battle of the great day will begin with the church of God, and that the overthrow of the great nominal church systems will precede the

overthrow of the present civil powers; for the Lord is about to shake, not only the earth (the civil organisation for society), but heaven (the ecclesiastical powers) also (Heb. 12:26), to the end that great "Babylon," falsely called Christendom -Christ's kingdom- may be completely destroyed." [Zion's Watch Tower 1892 Jan 15 pp.21-23](#)

"... the "battle of the great day of God Almighty" (Rev. 16:14), which will end in A.D. 1914 with the complete overthrow of earth's present rulership, is already commenced."

Studies In the Scriptures - The Time Is At Hand (1889) p.101

Be not surprised, then, when in subsequent chapters we present proofs that the setting up of the Kingdom of God is already begun, that it is pointed out in prophecy as due to begin the exercise of power in A. D. 1878, and that the "battle of the great day of God Almighty" (Rev. 16:14.), which will end in A. D. 1914 with the complete overthrow of earth's present rulership, is already commenced. The gathering of the armies is plainly visible from the standpoint of God's Word.

144,000 Resurrected to Heaven

The 144,000, also known as the "body of Christ" or "the saints", were to all be in heaven by 1914, prior to the completion of Armageddon.

"That the deliverance of the saints must take place some time before 1914 is manifest, since the deliverance of fleshly Israel, as we shall see, is appointed to take place at that time... Just how long before 1914 the last living members of the body of Christ will be glorified, we are not directly informed;..." *Studies In the Scriptures - Thy Kingdom Come* (1908 ed.) p.228

deliverance to the whole race, from the tyranny and oppression of the great enslaver, Sin, from the shadow and pains of sickness, and from the prison-house of death: "For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain, . . . waiting for the . . . *deliverance* of OUR BODY"—the "body of Christ" (Rom. 8:22, 23); because, according to Jehovah's arrangement, the new order of things cannot be established until the great ruler, the Christ complete, Head and body, has come fully into power.

That the deliverance of the saints must take place some time before 1914 is manifest, since the deliverance of fleshly Israel, as we shall see, is appointed to take place at that time, and the angry nations will then be authoritatively commanded to be still, and will be made to recognize the power of Jehovah's Anointed. Just how long before 1914 the last living members of the body of Christ will be glorified, we are not directly informed; but it certainly will not be until their work in the flesh is done; nor can we reasonably presume that they will long remain after that work is accomplished. With these two thoughts in mind, we can approximate the time of the deliverance.

While there are clear indications that some of the living members of the body will witness the gathering of the storm and share in some of the troubles it will bring, there are also indications that none of these will pass entirely through it, nor even far into it. The Master's words, "Watch, that ye may be accounted *worthy to escape* those things that shall come to pass" (Luke 21:36), seem to indicate this. And yet we know that we are already passing through the beginning of these troubles (the troubles upon the nominal Church incident to its testing), and that we are escaping, while many on every hand are falling into error and infidelity. We escape, not by being taken from the scene of trouble, but by being supported, strengthened and kept

"There were also other expectations concerning 1914. Alexander H. Macmillan, who had been baptized in September 1900, later recalled: "A few of us seriously thought we were going to heaven during the first week of that October. In fact, recalling the morning that Russell announced the end of the Gentile Times, MacMillan admitted: "We were highly excited and I would not have been surprised if at that moment we had just started up, that becoming the signal to begin ascending heavenward-but of course there was nothing like that."" [Jehovah's Witnesses - Proclaimers of God's Kingdom pp.61-62](#)

"As October 1914 approached, some of the Bible Students expected that at the end of the Gentile Times they, as spirit-anointed Christians, would receive their heavenly reward. Illustrating this is an incident that took place at a convention of the Bible Students in Saratoga Spring, New York, September 27-30, 1914. A. H. Macmillan, who had been baptized 14 years earlier, gave a discourse on Wednesday, September 30. In it he stated: " This is probably the last public address I shall ever deliver, because we shall be going home [to heaven] soon."" [Jehovah's Witnesses - Proclaimers of God's Kingdom p.62](#)

Jesus to start ruling the earth

SETTING UP THE EARTHLY GOVERNMENT ---- Not until the full end of Gentile Times (October, A.D. 1914) should we expect the earthly phase of God's Kingdom; for in giving a lease of dominion to the Gentiles until that date God made no mistake and his plans alter not. The earthly phase of the Kingdom of God when set up will be Israelitish; for such is God's engagement or covenant with Abraham and his natural seed. Even the chief favor, the spiritual Kingdom, was offered first to fleshly Israel, and would have been given to them if they had been ready at heart to receive it on the conditions attached to it, - *to suffer with Christ* and afterward to be glorified with him." [Studies In the Scriptures - The Day of Vengeance pp.624,625](#)

The end of the harvest was to be followed by both the heavenly and earthly paradise.

"When this is fully accomplished, as it must be within this harvest period, then will follow the resurrection of the ancient worthies, then the kingdom of God, in both its heavenly and earthly phases, will be established and manifested to the world, - an event due at the close of this harvest period and time of trouble." [Watchtower 1895 May 15 p.123-124 reprints 1816](#)

Earthly Resurrection to occur

"And yet "Jerusalem must be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled;" hence, trodden down until A. D. 1914, when the day of wrath will be passed, and the resurrection and return of the "whole house of Israel" due." [Three Worlds and The Harvest of This World](#) (1877) pp.165-166

"The beginning of the earthly phase of the Kingdom in the end of A.D. 1914 will, we understand, consist wholly of the resurrected holy ones of olden time-from John the Baptizer back to Abel-"Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and all the holy prophets." [Studies In the Scriptures - The Day of Vengeance p.625](#)

The Time is At Hand - 7 (Unfulfilled) Expectations

The Time Is at Hand (1889) pages 76 to 78 claimed seven things would happen in 1914. Not one of these eventuated. The following statements are extracted from that list;

1. "the disintegration of the rule of imperfect men. Firstly, That at that date the Kingdom of God, for which our Lord taught us to pray, saying, "Thy Kingdom come," will begin to assume control, and that it will then shortly be "set up," or firmly established, in the earth, on the ruins of present institutions."
2. He whose right it is thus to take the dominion will then be present as earth's new Ruler; and not only so, but it will also prove that he will be present for a considerable period before that date;
3. the last member of the divinely recognized Church of Christ, the "royal priesthood," "the body of Christ," will be glorified with the Head;
4. Jerusalem shall no longer be trodden down
5. Israel's blindness will begin to be turned away
6. the great "time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation," will reach its culmination in a world-wide reign of anarchy
7. It will prove that before that date God's Kingdom, organized in power, will be in the earth and then smite and crush the Gentile image (Dan. 2:34)-and fully consume the power of these kings." *Studies In the Scriptures Series II - The Time Is at Hand* (1889) pp.76-78

become corrupt, vain and idolatrous, in proportion as they had attained national distinction. This was in the days of King Zedekiah; and the divine decree was expressed in the words of the prophet: "Thus saith the Lord God, remove the diadem and take off the crown: this shall not be the same: exalt him that is low and abase him that is high. I will overturn, overturn, overturn it; and it shall be no more until he come whose right it is, and I will give it him."—Ezek. 21: 24-27.

This overturning of the crown, or dominion, has been accomplished. It was first turned over to Babylon, then to Medo-Persia, then to Grecia, and then to Rome. The character of these empires, as recorded on the pages of history, we have found to agree perfectly with the prophetic descriptions, as portrayed in Nebuchadnezzar's vision of the great image and in Daniel's vision of the four beasts. This overturned condition of Israel's dominion was to continue until Christ, the rightful heir to the throne of Israel and all the earth, who purchased it with his own precious blood, would come and take control. His, as we have seen, will be the fifth universal empire of earth, the Kingdom of God under the whole heavens. But unlike the preceding four dominions which were permitted for an appointed time, and therefore recognized, though not approvingly, this one will be approved and established by God, as his representative in the earth. It will be God's Kingdom, the Kingdom of Jehovah's Anointed. It will be established gradually, during a great time of trouble with which the Gospel age will close, and in the midst of which present dominions shall be utterly consumed, passing away amid great confusion.

In this chapter we present the Bible evidence proving that the full end of the times of the Gentiles, *i. e.*, the full end of their lease of dominion, will be reached in A. D.

1914; and that that date will be the farthest limit of the rule of imperfect men. And be it observed, that if this is shown to be a fact firmly established by the Scriptures, it will prove:—

Firstly, That at that date the Kingdom of God, for which our Lord taught us to pray, saying, “Thy Kingdom come,” will obtain full, universal control, and that it will then be “set up,” or firmly established, in the earth, on the ruins of present institutions.

Secondly, It will prove that he whose right it is thus to take the dominion will then be present as earth’s new Ruler; and not only so, but it will also prove that he will be present for a considerable period before that date; because the overthrow of these Gentile governments is directly caused by his dashing them to pieces as a potter’s vessel (Psa. 2:9; Rev. 2:27), and establishing in their stead his own righteous government.

Thirdly, It will prove that some time before the end of A. D. 1914 the last member of the divinely recognized Church of Christ, the “royal priesthood,” “the body of Christ,” will be glorified with the Head; because every member is to reign with Christ, being a joint-heir with him of the Kingdom, and it cannot be fully “set up” without every member.

Fourthly, It will prove that from that time forward Jerusalem shall no longer be trodden down of the Gentiles, but shall arise from the dust of divine disfavor, to honor; because the “Times of the Gentiles” will be fulfilled or completed.

Fifthly, It will prove that by that date, or sooner, Israel’s blindness will begin to be turned away; because their “blindness in part” was to continue only “*until* the fulness of the Gentiles be come in” (Rom. 11:25), or, in other words, until the full number from among the Gentiles, who are to be members of the body or bride of Christ, would be fully selected.

Sixthly, It will prove that the great “time of trouble such

as never was since there was a nation," will reach its culmination in a world-wide reign of anarchy; and then men will learn to be still, and to know that Jehovah is God and that he will be exalted in the earth. (Psa. 46:10.) The condition of things spoken of in symbolic language as raging waves of the sea, melting earth, falling mountains and burning heavens will then pass away, and the "new heavens and new earth" with their peaceful blessings will begin to be recognized by trouble-tossed humanity. But the Lord's Anointed and his rightful and righteous authority will first be recognized by a company of God's children while passing through the great tribulation—the class represented by *m* and *t* on the Chart of the Ages (see also pages 235 to 239, VOL. I.); afterward, just at its close, by fleshly Israel; and ultimately by mankind in general.

Seventhly, It will prove that *before that date* God's Kingdom, organized in power, will be in the earth and then smite and crush the Gentile image (Dan. 2:34)—and fully consume the power of these kings. Its own power and dominion will be established as fast as by its varied influences and agencies it crushes and scatters the "powers that be"—civil and ecclesiastical—iron and clay.

THE BEGINNING OF GENTILE TIMES, 606 B. C.

Our Lord's words, "until the *times** of the Gentiles be fulfilled," imply that the times of the Gentiles must have a definitely appointed limit; because an unlimited, indefinite period could not be said to be fulfilled. So, then, Gentile rule had a beginning, will last for a *fixed time*, and will end at the time appointed.

* The Greek word here rendered "times" is *kairos*, which signifies a *fixed time*. It is the same word translated "times" in the following passages: Mark 1:15; I Tim. 6:15; Rev. 12:14; Acts 3:19; 17:26. The word "seasons" in Acts 1:7 is from the same Greek word.

Proof or Not?

Watchtower presented its conclusions as undeniable. Closer to the date, there was some back pedalling, saying the conclusions are not positive, but based on evidence and proof.

"We do not know positively that the month of October, 1914, will see the church all glorified, and the time of trouble ushered in. We merely say, Here are the evidences. Here are the proofs. Look at them for yourself and see what you then think. It is for each to accept or reject the facts." [Watch Tower 1913 Oct 15 p308-309 reprints 5329](#)

Was Watchtower, or was it not, presenting it was positive about its predictions for 1914? What were followers supposed to think when words like proof, facts and evidence were used? Russell was messing with minds - "We do not know positively", but are you brave enough to "reject the facts?"

Studies in the Scriptures - Editions after 1914

Editions of *Studies in the Scriptures* written prior to 1914 were very specific about what would happen prior to and during 1914. These journals continued to be used after 1914. To overcome the obviously erroneous predictions, in 1915 they were reissued with amendments.

For example, prior to 1914, editions of *Studies In the Scriptures - Thy Kingdom Come* stated on p.228 that the resurrection would occur before 1914. From the 1915 edition onwards, this was changed to state that the resurrection was to occur soon after 1914.

<i>Studies In the Scriptures - Thy Kingdom Come</i> pre 1914	<i>Studies In the Scriptures - Thy Kingdom Come</i> post 1914 editions
<p>"That the deliverance of the saints must take place some time before 1914 is manifest, since the deliverance of fleshly Israel, as we shall see, is appointed to take place at that time, and the angry nations will then be authoritatively commanded to be still, and will be made to recognize the power of Jehovah's Anointed. Just how long before 1914 the last living members of the body of Christ will be glorified, we are not directly informed; but it certainly will not be until their work in the flesh is done; nor can we reasonably presume that they will long remain after that work is accomplished. With these two thought in mind, we can approximate the time of the deliverance."</p> <p>Click here for scan of 1911 edition</p>	<p>"That the deliverance of the saints must take place very soon after 1914 is manifest, since the deliverance of fleshly Israel, as we shall see, is appointed to take place at that time, and the angry nations will then be authoritatively commanded to be still, and will be made to recognize the power of Jehovah's Anointed. Just how long after 1914 the last living members of the body of Christ will be glorified, we are not directly informed; but it certainly will not be until their work in the flesh is done; nor can we reasonably presume that they will long remain after that work is accomplished."</p> <p>Click here for scan of 1923 edition</p>

Instead of being slated to "end in October 1914", rewrites claimed (still erroneously) that Armageddon was to "end very shortly" and "very soon after".

movements in this direction at any time. But in our previous studies (VOLS. II. and III.) we have seen that God has a set time for every feature of his plan, and that we are even now in this "Day of Vengeance," which is a period of forty years; that it began in October, 1874, and will

The Battle of the Great Day.

547

end in October, 1914. The twenty-three years past of this "day" have certainly laid a broad and deep foundation in church, in state, in finances and in social conditions and sentiments for the great events predicted in the Scriptures.

movements in this direction at any time. But in our previous studies (VOLS. II. and III.) we have seen that God has a set time for every feature of his plan, and that we are even now in this "Day of Vengeance," which is a period of forty years; that it began in October, 1874, and will

The Battle of the Great Day.

547

end very shortly. The ominous years already past of this "day" have certainly laid a broad and deep foundation in church, in state, in finances and in social conditions and sentiments for the great events predicted in the Scriptures.

Studies In the Scriptures - The Day of Vengeance pp.546,547
1911 edition compared to 1923 edition

The [1915 Mar 1 issue of the Watch Tower](#) admitted to these changes in the following article.

"CHANGES IN "SCRIPTURE STUDIES"

We call attention to a few slight changes which have been made in four pages of Vol. II. and six pages of Vol. III., "STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES." These are all trivial and do not alter the real sense and lesson, but conform to the facts as we have them today. The pages containing these corrections are as follows:

Vol. II., page 77, line 1, "will be the farthest limit," reads "will see the disintegration."

Vol. II., page 77, line 6, "will obtain full universal control," reads "will begin to assume control."

Vol. II., page 77, lines 16,17, "end of A.D. 1914," reads "end of the overthrow."

Vol. II., page 81, line 9, "can date only from A.D. 1914," reads "could not precede A.D. 1915."

Vol. II., page 170, line 16, "at that time they will all be overturned."*

*How long it will require to accomplish this overturning we are not informed, but have reason to believe the period will be short.

Vol. II., page 221, line 25, "full favor until A.D. 1914," reads "full favor until after 1915."

Vol. III., page 94, line 29, "in this end or harvest," reads "at the end of this harvest."

Vol. III., page 126, line 12, "at A.D. 1914," reads "after 1914."

Vol. III., page 133, line 21, "ere the harvest is fully ended."+

+The end of the harvest will probably include the burning of the tares.

Vol. III., page 228, line 11, "**some time before 1914,**" reads "**very soon after 1914.**"

Vol. III., page 228, line 15, "just how long before," reads "just how long after."

Vol. III., page 362, line 11, "some time before," reads "some time near."

Vol. III., page 364, line 14, "must not only witness," reads "may not only witness.""

CHANGES IN "SCRIPTURE STUDIES"

We call attention to a few slight changes which have been made in four pages of Vol. II. and six pages of Vol. III., "STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES." These are all trivial and do not alter the real sense and lesson, but conform to the facts as we have them today. The pages containing these corrections are as follows:

Vol. II., page 77, line 1, "will be the farthest limit," reads "will see the disintegration."

Vol. II., page 77, line 6, "will obtain full universal control," reads "will begin to assume control."

Vol. II., page 77, lines 16, 17, "end of A. D. 1914," reads "end of the overthrow."

Vol. II., page 81, line 9, "can date only from A. D. 1914," reads "could not precede A. D. 1915."

Vol. II., page 170, line 16, "at that time they will all be overturned."

Vol. II., page 221, line 25, "full favor until A. D. 1914," reads "full favor until after 1915."

Vol. III., page 94, line 29, "in this end or harvest," reads "at the end of this harvest."

Vol. III., page 126, line 12, "at A. D. 1914," reads "after 1914."

Vol. III., page 133, line 21, "ere the harvest is fully ended," reads "some time before 1914."

Vol. III., page 228, line 11, "some time before 1914," reads "very soon after 1914."

Vol. III., page 228, line 15, "just how long before," reads "just how long after."

Vol. III., page 362, line 11, "some time before," reads "some time near."

Vol. III., page 364, line 14, "must not only witness," reads "may not only witness."

Unless we find the chronology in Vols. II. and III. to be wrong, we must believe that it will be practically the same chronology as will be used throughout the Millennial age.

So far from the events of our time disproving the chronology, they seem to confirm it. The gathering of the nations to the Valley of Jehoshaphat ("valley of graves") is evidently in progress. They are gradually realizing it to be a life and death struggle that will be awfully costly. They do not see, as we do, that it means their destruction—"grinding to powder." Nevertheless they are apprehensive of what we see coming: viz., the EARTHQUAKE of revolution, to be followed by the FIRE of anarchy, which will utterly consume them and prepare the earth for Messiah's kingdom, and cause them to hear the "still small voice."—1 Kings 19:11, 12.

The present is a time of testing, we believe, to many of the Lord's people. Have we in the past been active merely because we hoped for our glorious change in A. D. 1914, or have we been active because of our love and loyalty to the Lord and his message and the brethren!

Never before has the world been so ready to hear the kingdom message. Never before, therefore, have the privileges and opportunities of the colporteurs been so great. If there are some parts where colporteurs find it difficult to make sales because of scarcity of money, there are other parts of the country where money is not so scarce and where high prices for food make the community prosperous.

Let us see to it that we testify to the Lord by our faithfulness in letting our light shine more and more, demonstrating our loyalty to him even unto death. "Faithful is he that called you," who also will do for us "exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us."

[Watch Tower 1915 Mar 1 \(reprints 5649\)](#)

Watchtower's Dishonest Presentation of its' History

Watchtower claims its foresight of 1914 as proof of Jehovah's direction. Is this justified, knowing the Watchtower was incorrect in virtually every aspect?

The following quotes show the positive spin the Watchtower puts on Russell's inaccurate teachings, in an attempt to make people believe holy spirit directs Watchtower interpretation of Bible prophecy. These quotes range from misleading but technically true, through to blatantly false. Phrases stating Watchtower foretold 1914 to be the end of the Gentile Times are strictly accurate, but lead the reader to the incorrect conclusion that the expectations for what would occur were accurate. Statements abound that Watchtower pointed forward to 1914 as "the start of "the conclusion of the system of things,"" the start of "Jesus Presence," or the start of his "rulership."

When reading these quotes, it is important to remember that in 1914 the Watchtower was teaching Jesus' presence began in 1874 and his heavenly rulership began in 1878.

"Our belief that the Kingdom began to be *setup*, or brought into power, in April, 1878, be it observed, rests on exactly the same foundation as our belief that the Lord became present in October, 1874, and that the harvest began at that time." [*Studies in the Scriptures - Thy Kingdom Come p.235*](#)

As late as 1930, the Watchtower was still referring to 1874 as the start of Jesus presence.

"... from the beginning of the Lord's presence in 1874 the Devil used the Papal system as the chief opposing instrument of God's kingdom ..." [*Watch Tower 1930 Sep 15 p.275*](#)

Those in Watchtower's writing department are well aware of the organisation's history. For instance, the 1993 *Proclaimers* book states:

"Based on the premise that events of the first century might find parallels in related events later, they also concluded that if Jesus' baptism and anointing in the autumn of 29 C.E. paralleled the beginning of an invisible presence in **1874**, then his riding into Jerusalem as King in the spring of 33 C.E. would point to the spring of **1878** as the time when he would assume his power as heavenly King." [*Jehovah's Witnesses - Proclaimers of God's Kingdom p.632*](#)

Yet in that very same year, Watchtower articles falsely claim:

"*The Watchtower*^[1] has **consistently** presented evidence to honest hearted students of Bible prophecy that Jesus' presence in heavenly Kingdom power began in 1914. Events since that year testify to Jesus' *invisible* presence." [*Watchtower 1993 Jan 15 p.5*](#)

"Jehovah's Witnesses have consistently shown from the Scriptures that the year 1914 marked the beginning of this world's time of the end and that "the day of judgment and of destruction of the ungodly men" has drawn near." [*Watchtower 1993 Aug 15 p.9*](#)

The following examples of untruthful Watchtower statements regarding its teachings prior to 1914 span decades, and the leadership of numerous Presidents and Governing Body members, showing that manipulation through deception is systemic to how Watchtower leaders control Jehovah's Witness members.

"Decades before 1914, Jehovah's worshippers declared to the nations that the end of "the appointed times of the nations" would come in that year and that the world would **enter into** an unequaled period of trouble." [Watchtower 2013 Feb 15 p.18](#)

"As that "time" **approached**, Jehovah took steps to reveal the answer to a group of humble Bible students. With the help of God's spirit, they discerned that "the appointed times of the nations" began with the destruction of Jerusalem in 607 B.C.E. and that those "times" were 2,520 years in length. From this, they deduced that 1914 marked the end of "the appointed times of the nations." They **also came to realize that 1914 was the beginning of the end** for this system of things." [Watchtower 2004 Feb 1 p.19](#)

"... a prophecy providentially caused sincere 19th-century Bible students to be in expectation. By linking the "seven times" of Daniel 4:25 with "the times of the Gentiles", they anticipated that **Christ would receive Kingdom power in 1914.**" [Watchtower 1998 Sep 15 p.15](#)

"Back in 1904, the book *The New Creation* called attention to this new organization that came into existence in the first century C.E. (*Studies In The Scriptures*, Series VI, Study V, entitled "The Organization of the New Creation") Owing to its view of what the end of the Gentile Times would mean, that book did not envision the remarkable organizational work that was due to take place after the crippling effects of the first world war of human history." [Watchtower 1989 Sep 1 pp.12-13](#)

"From the mid-1870's, Jehovah's people had been anticipating that **catastrophic events would start** in 1914 and would mark the end of the Gentile Times." [Revelation - Its Grand Climax at Hand! \(1988\) p.105](#)

"As far back as 1876, Jehovah's Witnesses realized that Bible prophecy marked the year 1914 C.E. as a time when major events would take place that would have far-reaching effects on human affairs. They gave the reason for this fact wide publicity." [True Peace And Security \(1986\) p.70](#)

"How did Jehovah's Witnesses know more than 30 years in advance that 1914 would be an important date for divine rulership? Though the Witnesses at the time did not understand the full implication of events about to take place, the *Watch Tower* magazine as far back as December of 1879 pointed to 1914 as a marked date in regard to Bible prophecy. And the Mar 1880 issue of the *Watch Tower* linked God's Kingdom rule with the ending of what Jesus Christ referred to as "the appointed times of the nations," or "the times of the Gentiles." (Luke 21:24; Authorized Version) That *Watch Tower* said: "'The Times of the Gentiles' extend to 1914, and the heavenly kingdom will not have full sway till then.'" [Watchtower 1984 Apr 1 p.6](#) 1914 a Marked Year-Why?

"Even earlier, however, C. T. Russell wrote an article entitled "Gentile Times: When Do They End?" It was published in the *Bible Examiner* of October 1876, and therein Russell said: "The seven times will end in A.D. 1914." He had correctly linked the Gentile Times with the "seven times" mentioned in the book of Daniel. (Dan. 4:16, 23, 25, 32) **True to such calculations**, 1914 did mark the end of those times and **the birth of God's kingdom in heaven** with Christ Jesus as

king. Just think of it! Jehovah granted his people that knowledge nearly four decades before those times expired." [Yearbook 1975 p.37](#)

"This remnant of anointed ones have identified themselves on the pages of history since 1914 C.E. Before this year members of this anointed remnant had been earnestly studying God's Word apart from Christendom. They put the Holy Bible ahead of man-made religious traditions. As early as 1876 they were publishing that the Gentile Times of 2,520 years would terminate in the year 1914. Events that have taken place from that year onward prove **they were not wrong.**" *God's Eternal Purpose Now Triumphing For Man's Good* (1974) pp.178-179

"Of all men used by God to prophesy, Jesus is outstanding. Based on what he said, along with the words of Daniel and John, Jehovah's witnesses pointed to the year 1914, decades in advance, as **marking the start of "the conclusion** of the system of things." [Awake! 1973 Jan 22 p.8](#)

"When in 1914 C.E. the 2,520 years of the Gentile Times ended for the Gentile nations to trample on Jerusalem's right to a Messianic kingship in the royal line of David, the Most High God Jehovah installed the Messiah Jesus on the heavenly throne in order to reign and go subduing among his enemies. (Psalm 110:1-6; Acts 2:34-36; Hebrews 10:12, 13) During World War I (1914-1918 C.E.) the dedicated, baptized remnant of spiritual Israelites publicly proclaimed that the Gentile Times had ended and that the Most High God had made his Son Jesus Christ reigning King in the heavens." [Paradise Restored to Mankind - By Theocracy! \(1972\) p.273](#)

"For over thirty years before that date and for half a century since, Jehovah's witnesses have pointed to the year 1914 as the time for the end of "the appointed times of the nations" and the time in which **Christ would begin his Kingdom rule.** (Luke 21:24)" [Watchtower 1966 Feb 15 p.103](#)

"His rule would be from the heavens. This was a new revelation of great importance to God's people who had been anxiously awaiting his second presence toward the end of the nineteenth century. The truth that 1914 marked the end of the "times of the nations" that started in 607 B.C. and the beginning of the "time of the end" for the nations and hence the beginning of his presence, was new knowledge over which God's people could rejoice." [Watchtower 1965 Jul 15 p.428](#)

"Why, then, do the nations not realize and accept the approach of this climax of judgment? It is because they have not heeded the world wide advertising of Christ's return and his second Presence. Since long before World War I Jehovah's witnesses pointed to 1914 as the time for this great event to occur." [Watchtower 1954 Jun 15 p.370](#)

"As for the time of Christ's second presence, Daniel's prophecy is again the one that gives the chronology for it. (Dan. 4:16) It was figured out as pointing to A.D. 1914, and The Watchtower called notice to the significance of 1914 in the year 1879." [Watchtower 1952 Nov 1 p.658](#)

"Under the guidance of God's spirit of freedom the magazine today known as The Watchtower but known back there as Zion's Watch Tower, began to be published in Jul, 1879. In the first year

of its publication it pointed to the date 1914 as marked in the Bible." [*What Has Religion Done For Mankind? \(1951\) p.308*](#)

It is disappointing to learn that your religion incorrectly predicted the end would occur in 1914, as it shows it is directed by humans and not God. To find that the leaders continue to lie about what was said is more disturbing, as it shows the leaders actively colluded to deceive and manipulate their followers.

Reality Check

The only aspect of Russell's 1914 prediction to remain is the term "end of the Gentile times." Though the term is still in use, the meaning has greatly changed. Before 1914, this meant that earthly governments would end in total destruction and false religion would be overturned, heralding God's kingdom on earth. Now it simply means that Jesus is ruling in heaven, a handy concept as it is invisible, unnoticed, and unfalsifiable.

It is interesting that Russell's incorrect understanding of 1914 had a huge weight of Scriptural prophecy to support it. Some of the reasoning was as follows:

- The 1260 days prophecy pointed to 1799 as the last days
- The 2300 day prophecy pointed to 1844
- The 1335 day prophecy, end of the 6000 years and jubilee cycles all pointed to 1874 as the beginning of Jesus presence

From the above prophecies 1914 could be determined because:

- 1914 was a 40 year Jewish harvest from 1874.
- It was a 70 year generation from 1844.
- It was indicated by the prophecy of the seven times
- 40 years from 1874 to 1914 corresponds to 40 years from Jesus baptism in 30 A.D. to Jerusalem's destruction in 70 A.D.
- 36 ½ years from 1878 to 1914 corresponded to 36 ½ years of trouble from Jesus death to the Jerusalem's destruction in 70 A.D.

Each of these lines of reasoning are now explained as wrong by Watchtower, and few Jehovah's Witnesses are even aware of the huge importance placed on 1874 for over 50 years.

Russell stated in *Zion's Watch Tower* 1892 Jan 1 p.22 that "never was there such a general time of banding together as at present." Yet all this weight of evidence that the 1800's were the "last days" has since been discarded. Today, only one prophecy is used to specifically point to 1914 as the start of Jesus presence; that is, the Seven Times. The other scriptural proofs are now considered to have been wrong.

As impressive as Russell's reasoning looks, it was progressively changed as one prediction after another failed to eventuate. Russell originally wrote that the Bible Students ascension to heaven and the fall of Babylon were to happen in years prior to 1914. 1914 was just the date when the Gentile times would end and paradise be established on earth. As his predictions failed to eventuate these occurrences were moved to 1914. Russell was clearly wrong when not one of these had occurred by the end of 1914.

In addition to his predictions being wrong, Russell was unsure whether to use the year 1914 or 1915. As shown later, he did not know how to deal the year zero when calculating prophecy, and so fluctuated between saying the end would arrive in 1914 or 1915.

As 1914 came closer Russell's writings became less confident that his predictions were correct and started hedging his comments. Where as in 1892 the Jan 15 p.23 Zion's Watch Tower used the term "definitely marked in Scripture" Russell started to use terms like "possibly shortly after", and "not infallible". Bible Students started to be prepared for failure.

"We shall be as glad as any one if we shall all experience our change from earthly to spirit conditions before 1915, and and this is our expectation; but if this should not be the Lord's will, then it would not be our will. So far as we have been able to see up to the present time, the failure of a full development of matters in 1915, or before, would imply that all the chronological arrangements, as we have them, are wrong--our view of the Harvest and all. And we have no reason to believe that these are wrong. We remember that we are not infallible, and that our judgment is not infallible; but the wonderful inventions of today, and the light that is dawning in every direction, as well as the universal unrest, seem in corroboration of the chronology--that we are in the dawning of the New Age. But just how far along we are we do not positively know." [Watch Tower 1914 Jan 1 p.5 \(reprints 5374\)](#)

When Jesus earthly kingdom did not eventuate in 1914, Watchtower publications began to promote 1915. When 1915 amounted to nothing, the entire meaning of all Russell's prophetic interpretation required rewriting. It took until 1943^[2] for the new understanding to finally be clarified.

"In the year 1943 the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society published the book *"The Truth Shall Make You Free."* ... This moved forward the end of six thousand years of man's existence into the decade of the 1970's. Naturally this did away with the year 1874 C.E. as the date of return of the Lord Jesus Christ and the beginning of his invisible presence or parousia. ... Page 324 of the above book positively says: "The King's presence or parousia began in 1914."" [God's Kingdom of a Thousand Years Has Approached pp.209-210](#)

Why has the Watchtower Society discontinued its belief in all their original date interpretations but retained 1914? The occurrence of World War One appeared to give 1914 historical significance whilst none are able to be attached to any of the other 20 or so dates promoted. However, the Watchtower explanation of the prophecy of the [Seven Times](#) is examined and shown to be based on historical errors and inconsistent reasoning, leaving no reason to say that 1914 is of any relevance to us today.

Blame the Members

As soon as proven wrong about 1914, Russell went into damage control, dishonestly rewriting history. Reading through the older publications, it is evident how forcefully the predictions for 1914 were presented as truth. Russell began claiming his teachings were nothing more than inference.

“The Lord did not say that the Church would all be glorified by 1914. We **merely inferred** it and, evidently, erred.” [Watch Tower 1916 Apr 15 reprints p.5888](#)

“We did not say positively that this would be the year. We merely left every one to look at the facts of history and reckon for himself. ... But would it be a reasonable expectation that the Gentile Kingdoms would be snuffed out inside of an hour or inside of a day? ... We do not think that any would have been justified in so thinking. If any had such expectation, it was unwarranted.” [Watch Tower 1914 Nov 1 pp.325-326 reprints p.5565](#)

Even more unsavoury is the manner in which Russell attacked the motives of those that stopped being his followers.

"If there is any reason that would lead any to let go of the Lord and His Truth and to cease sacrificing for the Lord's Cause, then it is not merely the love of God in the heart which has prompted interest in the Lord, but something else; probably a hoping that the time was short; the consecration was only for a certain time. If so, now is a good time to let go." [Watch Tower 1914 Nov 1 reprints p.5570](#)

"The present is a time of testing, we believe, to many of the Lord's people. Have we in the past been active merely because we hoped for our glorious change in A.D. 1914, or have we been active because of our love and loyalty to the Lord and his message and the brethren!" [Watch Tower 1915 Mar 1 reprints p.5649](#)

Those that stopped following Russell did so because they came to the conclusion he was a charlatan. They did not "let go of the Lord", but rather came to realise that Russell and his interpretations could not be trusted. It is of extreme arrogance for Russell to equate those that stopped following his failed teachings with leaving the Lord, and of impure motives, and it is of little wonder that many came to recognise him as a false teacher.

Rutherford continued with this strategy of blaming members for their enthusiasm in accepting Watchtower information as truth.

"It seems to be a weakness of many Bible Students that if they locate a future date in the Bible, immediately they center as many prophecies upon that date as possible. This has been the cause of many siftings in the past. As far as we recall, all the dates foreseen were correct. The difficulty was that the friends inflated their imaginations beyond reason; and that when their imaginations burst asunder, there were inclined to throw away everything. ... Many can remember how "absolutely sure" some were about 1914. No doubt the Lord was pleased with the zeal manifested by his servants; but did they have a Scriptural basis for all they expected to come to

pass that year? Let us be cautious, therefore about predicting particulars." [Watch Tower 1925 Feb 15 p.57](#)

It is disappointing to note Watchtower continues being critical of these individuals in the early 1900's, rather than lay blame where it squarely belongs, on Watchtower leaders.

"Tom: You stated earlier that Pastor Russell was not too certain as to exactly what would take place in 1914. Was that the general attitude of the Witnesses at that time?"

John: There is no doubt that many throughout this period were overzealous in their statements as to what could be expected. Some read into the *Watch Tower* statements that were never intended, and while it was necessary for Russell to call attention to the certainty that a great change was due at the end of the Gentile times, he still encouraged his readers to keep an open mind, especially as regards the time element." [Jehovah's Witnesses in the Divine Purpose p.52](#)

"Some of Us Had Been a Bit Too Hasty"

As October 1914 approached, some of the Bible Students expected that at the end of the Gentile Times they, as spirit-anointed Christians, would receive their heavenly reward. Illustrating this is an incident that

[Jehovah's Witnesses - Proclaimers of God's Kingdom p.62](#)

Watchtower blames those who believed they were going to heaven on misunderstanding the message and labels those that stop following the Watchtower leaders as having been serving out of wrong motives.

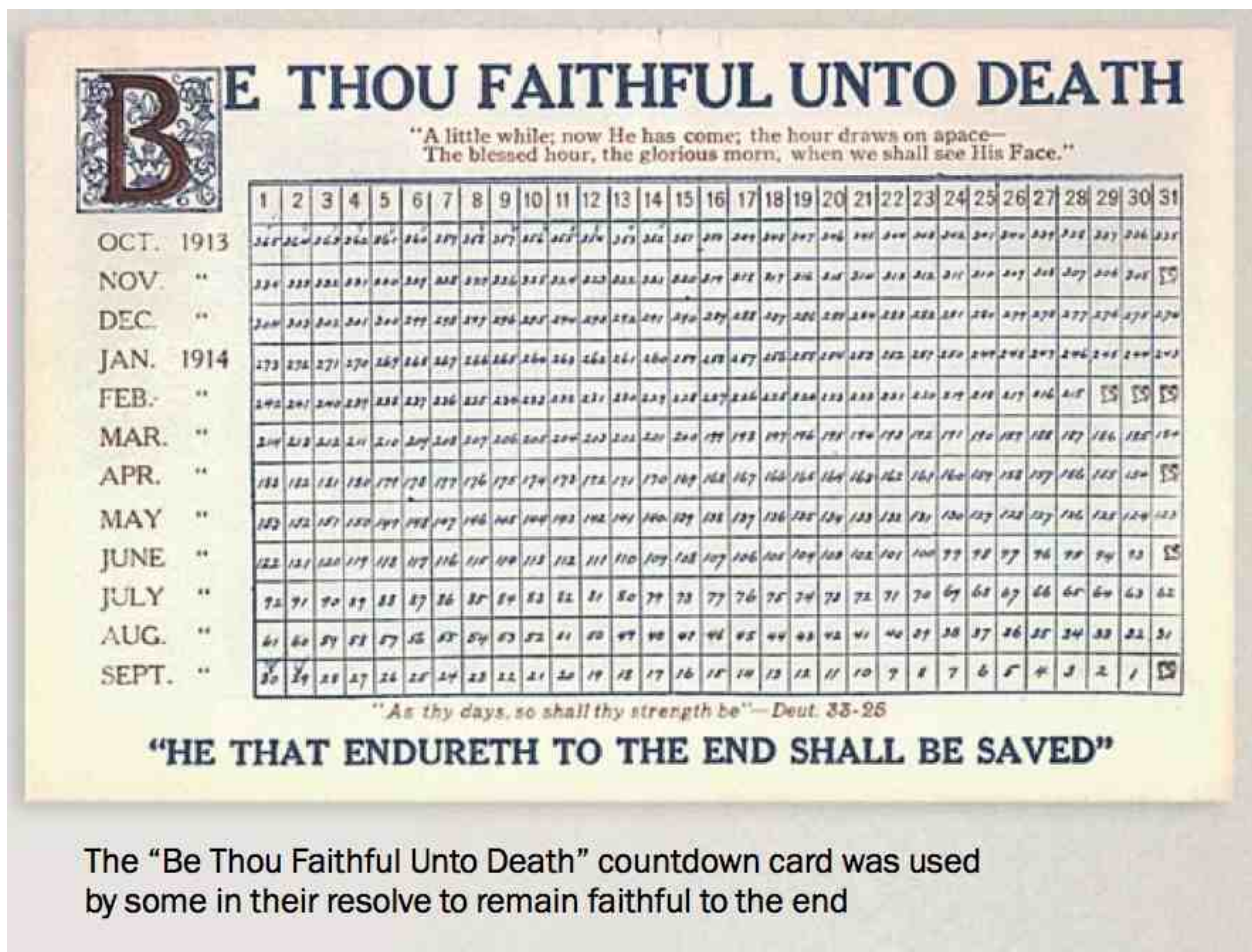
"Disappointed expectations as to the return of the Lord Jesus had in the 19th century caused many followers of William Miller and various Adventist groups to lose faith. But what about the Bible Students associated with Russell? Had some been attracted by the thought of their own early salvation rather than love for God and a strong desire to do his will?" [Jehovah's Witnesses - Proclaimers of God's Kingdom p.62](#)

"Their thoughts and desires had been fixed primarily on the prospect of being changed to heavenly life. When this did not occur at the anticipated time, they closed their minds to the significance of the amazing things that did take place in 1914. They lost sight of all the precious truths that they had learned from God's Word, and they began to ridicule the people who had helped them to learn these." [Jehovah's Witnesses - Proclaimers of God's Kingdom p.636](#)

This is such a conceited comment. Bible Students were attracted to Russell's message because they thought it was truth, and when he was proven to be a fraud they stopped following him. If some believed in a resurrection prior to Russell, whilst following Russell's teachings, and after they ceased to believe his interpretations, it is irrelevant whether they hoped the resurrection would come "early." At least, they were honest enough to admit they had been deceived.

The *Yearbook* 2014 discusses how some members carried a countdown card that ended with the date 1st October 1914. It avoids mentioning the Watchtower's responsibility for such expectations.

“Some Bible Students even carried a countdown card so that they could mark off each passing day. Many felt that they would be called beyond the veil, or to heaven, on that date.” [Yearbook 2014 p.174](#)



[Yearbook 2014 p.175](#)

This is a common Watchtower formula; blame the members. Rather than apologise for error, say the followers were overzealous, misunderstood things or read into things. As prior quotes showed, this is just not true. The statements flowed unendingly, "this is an established truth",

there is "proof", these things "will" occur. It was spelled out so clearly there was no need for the members to read in what was not intended.

Possibly worse is that these mistakes are also handed off to be the fault of the Lord. Rather than admit he had spent decades misleading people, Russell passes blame to the Lord for overruling these lies and false prophecies.

"The author acknowledges that in this book he presents the thought that the Lord's saints might expect to be with Him in glory at the ending of the Gentile Times. This was a natural mistake to fall into, but the Lord overruled it for the blessing of His people." [Studies in the Scriptures - The Time is At Hand 1916 foreword iv](#)

The 1916 foreword to *The Time is At Hand* introduced the comment that the book "makes no claim to infallibility".

"This Volume makes no claim to infallibility, and no claim of any direct inspiration from God in the interpretation of His Word. On the contrary, it does claim that the Divine Revelation is the Bible. Its endeavour has been to collate the Bible evidences to offer suggestions in respect to the significance." [Studies in the Scriptures - The Time is At Hand 1916 foreword i](#)

Russell had attracted thousands of convinced followers with statements that his interpretations were beyond doubt, and then when proven wrong excused this deception by adding a simple foreword that he never claimed to be infallible.

The Governing Body continues to use this strategy to great effect,

"The Governing Body is neither inspired nor infallible. Therefore, it can err in doctrinal matters or in organizational direction." [Watchtower 2017 Feb p.26](#)

The Governing body take this concept even further than intended by Russell, by demanding absolute allegiance to their interpretation as [spirit directed](#) truth, then allowing an escape route by claiming they are not inspired. This is disingenuous, as being directed by holy spirit is the same as being inspired.

Carl Sagan regarding Watchtower predictions

Carl Sagan made an important observation regarding a "prominent American religion [which] confidently predicted that the world would end in 1914." Whilst not naming the religion, there is little doubt who he was referring to. He is not at all flattering about people that choose to accept the reasoning for why the world did not end as expected then, and continue to follow such evasive religious leaders.

"Doctrines that make no predictions are less compelling than those which make correct predictions; they are in turn more successful than doctrines that make false predictions.

But not always. One prominent American religion confidently predicted that the world would end in 1914. Well, 1914 has come and gone, and -- while the events of that year were certainly of some importance -- the world does not, at least so far as I can see, seem to have ended. There are

at least three responses that an organized religion can make in the face of such a failed and fundamental prophecy. They could have said, "Oh, did we say '1914'? So sorry, we meant '2014.' A slight error in calculation. Hope you weren't inconvenienced in any way." But they did not. They could have said, "Well, the world would have ended, except we prayed very hard and interceded with God so He spared the Earth." But they did not. Instead, they did something much more ingenious.

They announced that the world had in fact ended in 1914, and if the rest of us hadn't noticed, that was our lookout. **It is astonishing in the face of such transparent evasions that this religion has any adherents at all.** But religions are tough. Either they make no contentions which are subject to disproof or they quickly redesign doctrine after disproof. The fact that religions can be so shamelessly dishonest, so contemptuous of the intelligence of their adherents, and still flourish does not speak very well for the tough-mindedness of the believers. But it does indicate, if a demonstration were needed, that near the core of the religious experience is something remarkably resistant to rational inquiry."

Broca's Brain, Carl Sagan (New York: Ballantine Books, 1979, pp. 332-33)

Conclusion

The stream of time has proven all Watchtower predicted for 1914 wrong, either by it changing its doctrine on specific points, or definitive predictions not occurring. Yet, Watchtower boasts about this part of its history, choosing to gloat over its remarkable foresight that the Gentile Times would end in 1914.

"Very noteworthy was the striking accuracy with which that book pointed to the end of the Gentile Times, "the appointed times of the nations."" [Yearbook 1975 p.37](#)

The end of the Gentile times are a vague and unverifiable concept, and it cannot be proven they ended in 1914, making it hardly noteworthy that a prediction was made that cannot be proven or disproven. Likewise, it cannot be proven that Jesus started ruling in 1914, as the Watchtower describes this as an unseen event. What is noteworthy that the verifiable predictions Watchtower made for 1914, such as the end of religion, the end of government, and the earthly resurrection, all failed to eventuate.

Russell was not guided by Jehovah to uniquely understand Daniel's prophecy of the Seven Times; he took his interpretation from Adventists such as Barbour. His interpretation was wrong, as he adamantly stated that 1914 would be "the final end" of this system of things. Watchtower has not presented a consistent understanding of 1914 and the current interpretation was not finalised until 1943.

Watchtower spent decades promoting its most prominent doctrine that the end would occur in 1914. Should a person trust Watchtower when it was proven so dramatically wrong? Can a person trust it when it continues to resort to deception when presenting its history? How can a person belong to an organization that refuses to accept responsibility for its mistakes, passing the blame to its faithful followers?

The admonition from Paul at 2 *Thessalonians* 2:1-2 is apt.

"However, brothers, respecting the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered together to him, we request of YOU not to be quickly shaken from YOUR reason nor to be excited either through an inspired expression or through a verbal message or through a letter as though from us, to the effect that the day of Jehovah is here."

In view of how Watchtower lies about its past mistakes, [Is This Life All There Is? page 46](#) asks a pertinent question:

"Knowing these things, what will you do? It is obvious that the true God, who is himself "the God of truth" and who hates lies, will not look with favor on persons who cling to organizations that teach falsehood. (Psalm 31:5; Proverbs 6:16-19; Revelation 21:8) And, really, would you want to be even associated with a religion that had not been honest with you?"

"A religion that teaches lies cannot be true." [Watchtower 1991 Dec 1 p.7](#)

Footnotes

[1] Some Watchtower apologists may try to reason that the Jan 15 1993 quote is accurate, since *The Watchtower* only took that title since October 15 1931, by which time Jesus presence had been moved to 1914. Any false statements regarding 1874 had appeared when the magazine was called *The Watch Tower*. If that truly was the writers intend, it must be seen as deliberately misleading. Nor it is a fair comment, since *The Watchtower* refers to its older magazines collectively as *The Watchtower*. For instance *The Watchtower* 1936 p.382 says "It was about that date [1879] that the second presence of the Lord began to be considered in the pages of *The Watchtower*, which since then until now has been the means of communicating truth to those who love the Lord."

[2] *God's Kingdom of a Thousand Years Has Approached* p.209 states the understanding of 1874 changed in 1943. Although 1874 ceased being a millennium marker in 1943, the reasoning that changing "the six thousand years ... did away with the year 1874 C.E. as the date of return of the Lord Jesus Christ" is quite dishonest, since 1874 had already been changed to 1914 in 1930.

In the 1920's, Watchtower was still teaching that Jesus presence started in 1874.

Bible prophecy shows that the Lord was due to appear for the second time in the year 1874. Fulfilled prophecy shows beyond a doubt that he did appear in 1874. Fulfilled prophecy is otherwise designated the physical facts; and these facts are indisputable. All true watchers are familiar with these facts, as set forth in the Scriptures and explained in the interpretation by the Lord's special servant.

The Watch Tower November 1, 1922 p. 333

"Bible prophecy shows that the Lord was due to appear for the second time in the year 1874. Fulfilled prophecy shows beyond a doubt that he did appear in 1874. Fulfilled prophecy is otherwise designated the physical facts; and these facts are indisputable." *Watch Tower* 1922 Nov 1 p.333

The Scriptural proof is that the second presence of the Lord Jesus Christ began in 1874 A.D. This proof

"The Scriptural proof is that the second presence of the Lord Jesus Christ began in 1874 A.D. This proof ... " [Prophecy 1929 pp.65,66](#)

Golden Age 1930 Apr 30 first indicated that Jesus arrival was 1914. ("The end of the world would therefore mean the arriving of the time when Satan's rule would be disputed by Christ, whose right it is to rule. That period of 2520 years ended in the fall of 1914." p.505) This was discussed again in the 1931 booklet, *The Kingdom, the Hope of The World* and then the *Watchtower* in 1932.

What is Truth? made clear that the Second Coming had shifted to 1914.

The prophecy of the Bible, fully supported by the physical facts in fulfilment thereof, shows that the second coming of Christ dates from the fall of the year 1914. One of the great prophecies bearing upon this point is that set forth in the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew. That

"The prophecy of the Bible, fully supported by the physical facts in fulfilment thereof, shows that the second coming of Christ dates from the fall of the year 1914." [What is Truth? \(1932\) p.48](#)

This was clarified in the 1933 *Watchtower*.

When Jesus reached heaven he was told by Jehovah that he must sit and wait until God's due time to put the enemy Satan under his feet. In the year 1914 that due time of waiting came to an end. Christ Jesus received the authority of the kingdom and was sent forth by Jehovah to rule amidst his enemies. The year 1914, therefore, marks the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, the King of glory.

"The year 1914, therefore, marks the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, the King of glory." [Watchtower 1933 Dec 1 p.362](#)

The following poster incorporates quotes from *Studies in the Scriptures - The Battle of Armageddon* (1897) with images from *The Photo Drama of Creation* (1914), concisely depicting that despite the doomsday similarities with current teachings, *Watchtower* prophetic interpretation was a complete failure.

WATCH TOWER BIBLE & TRACT SOCIETY

STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES SERIES IV

The Battle of Armageddon



THINGS ALL NEED TO KNOW
 "NONE OF THE WICKED WILL UNDERSTAND"
 — BUT WHICH —
 "THE WISE SHALL UNDERSTAND" THAT—

The end has come!

- Fulfillment of prophecy marks our day as the Time of the End, beginning 1799
- Our Lord is now present, since October 1874, the Kingdom was set up in 1878 A. D.
- The "generation"—36½ years—from 1878 shall not pass till "all these things be fulfilled."

The hour of judgment is come

- We are now in this "Day of Vengeance," the time of trouble or Judgment day which is a period of forty years.
- it began in October 1874 and will end very shortly.

The complete
 of "this present evil world"
 and The full
 of the Messianic Kingdom upon
 will be fully accomplished
 "Times of the

The present generation will witness
**world-wide revolution and
 universal anarchy**

- The French Revolution referred to as an illustration of the great crisis now approaching.
- The battle of this great day of God Almighty will be the greatest revolution the world has ever seen - peasant against prince, pew against pulpit, labor against capital.

The saints are not to be in this battle

- The saints, the little flock, are to escape by being changed and glorified.
- God's saints now know "of that day and hour!"

**destruction
 establishment**

- political, financial, ecclesiastical -
 the ruins of the present kingdoms,
 by the end of the
 "Gentiles"—1915.

Source of image: cs.jw.poster@gmail.com

ARTICLE 4

In 1914, both Jesus and Jehovah had come to earth to inspect all the churches of the world. After the inspection it was determined that, only the Watchtower Society was faithful to God.

Therefore, Jehovah appointed the Watchtower Society to be God's sole representative, God's mouthpiece on earth.⁴¹

In 1930, he revisited Russell's teaching and changed the date of Christ's Second Presence from

1874 to 1914.⁴² He also taught that Christ has been present invisibly at Watchtower since 1919.⁴³

Because Christ has been present in his temple, the Holy Spirit is no longer necessary and is no

longer present with us.⁴⁴ Instead, Christ utilized His angels to bring revelation to the

Judge.⁴⁵

⁴¹ Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, "Loyal to Christ and His Faithful Slave," *Watchtower*, April 1, 2007, 22, accessed August 6, 2018, <http://www.watchtowerwayback.org/jw-wb/English/Magazines/The%20Watchtower/2007%20The%20Watchtower.pdf>. "'On arriving' to inspect the 'slave' in 1918, Christ found a spirit-anointed remnant of faithful disciples who since 1879 had been using this journal [the Watchtower] and other Bible-based publications to provide spiritual 'food at the proper time'. He acknowledged them as his collective instrument, or 'slave', and in 1919 entrusted them with the management of all his earthly belongings."

⁴² Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, *The Golden Age*, April 30, 1930, 503, accessed July 9, 2018, <http://www.watchtowerwayback.org/jw-wb/English/Magazines/Awake/1930%20Golden.Age%20Num269-Num294.pdf>. "If it is true that Jesus has been present since the year 1914, then it must be admitted that nobody has seen Him with his natural eyes. The only way that He can be seen is by signs or evidences, which Jesus declared indicate His presence."

⁴³ J.F. Rutherford, *Preservation* (New York: Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, 1932), 211, accessed July 10, 2018, [http://www.watchtowerwayback.org/jw-wb/English/Books/Teachings/1932%20Preservation%20\(pr32\).pdf](http://www.watchtowerwayback.org/jw-wb/English/Books/Teachings/1932%20Preservation%20(pr32).pdf). "The class of spirit-begotten ones on earth whom Naomi pictured at this point (1919) came to a realization that Christ Jesus the great Judge had come to the temple. of Jehovah and that the famine had ended, and that God had lifted the 'rod of the wicked from the lot of the righteous', and now they must busy themselves with the kingdom work and henceforth hold themselves entirely aloof and separate from the wicked."

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 193-194, "By his spirit, the holy spirit, Jehovah God guides or leads his people up to a certain point of time, and thus he did until the time when 'the comforter' was taken away, which would necessarily occur when Jesus, the Head of his organization, came to the temple and gathered unto himself those whom he found faithful when he, as the great Judge, began his judgment, in 1918."

⁴⁵ J. F. Rutherford, *Riches* (New York: Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, 1936), 316, accessed July 10, 2018, [http://www.watchtowerwayback.org/jw-wb/English/Books/Teachings/1936%20Riches%20\(ch\).pdf](http://www.watchtowerwayback.org/jw-wb/English/Books/Teachings/1936%20Riches%20(ch).pdf). "That does not mean that those who prepare the manuscript for The Watchtower are inspired, but rather it means that the Lord through his angels sees to it that the information is given to his people in due time, and he brings to pass the events in fulfillment of his prophecy and then invites those devoted to him to see the same."

The chronology was developed by John Aquila Brown. He outlined his beliefs in the book *Even-Tide* (1823). The chronology began with the fall of Judah. Brown chose 604 B.C. as the date of that fall.⁴⁶ Then utilizing Daniel, chapter 4 he determined that the end of all things would be in 1917. However, Barbour found some discrepancies and revised the date to 1914.⁴⁷ Otherwise, the time line was accepted intact. For any that have not seen the date 604 used for the fall of the Jewish nation, it is because the date accepted by most, if not all, historians and theologians is 586 BC.

After Russell's death, Rutherford taught that Jehovah and Jesus Had come to earth to inspect all the churches in 1914. After studying all he churches, they determined that only the Watchtower Society was faithful to Jehovah's Word. Therefore, in 1919, God selected men from among the anointed 144,000 thousand, to be His mouthpiece on earth. Those chosen and anointed believers were the men who published the Watchtower.⁴⁸

Their Good News differs from the Gospel with which the evangelical is familiar. For the

Jehovah's Witness the Good News has a strong emphasis on the Kingdom of God (God's

theocratic rule on earth). Jesus has been enthroned since 1914; the last days will end soon and

Armageddon will occur.⁴⁹ Then God will raise the dead, and the millennium will begin. The

emphasis of the Good News is directed at what Jehovah is doing. The Jehovah's Witness is to

proclaim this coming Kingdom and be part of the Watchtower Society. They must work hard to

qualify for the eternal life that will be available at the end of the millennium.⁵⁰ The idea of 'being

saved' is foreign to the Jehovah's Witness. The majority of verses we associate with being a

⁴⁶ Ibid., 30. "What he posited was that the typical theocratic kingdom of Judah had fallen under Gentile rule in 604 BC. Thereafter there would be no godly government on earth until the four great empires—the Babylonian, Medo-Persian, Macedonian, and Roman—had had their sway."

⁴⁷ Ibid., 31. "Instead of using 1917 as the terminus for those times, he calculated slightly differently and marked them as concluding in the autumn of 1914. In that year, Christ's kingdom would come to hold fully sway over the earth, and the Jews, as a people, would be restored to God's favor."

⁴⁸ Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, "Who Really Is the Faithful and Discreet Slave?", *Watchtower*, July 15, 2013, 22, accessed March 16, 2018, <https://www.jw.org/en/publications/magazines/w20130715/jesus-comparable-wheat-and-weeds/>. "In recent decades, that slave has been closely identified with the Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses. Note, however, that the word 'slave' in Jesus' illustration is singular, indicating that this is a composite slave. The decisions of the Governing Body are thus made collectively."

⁴⁹ Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, "The Kingdom of God Is Among You," *Watchtower*, December 1, 1928, 365, accessed July 30, 2018, <http://www.watchtowerwayback.org/jw-wb/English/Magazines/The%20Watchtower/1928%20The%20Watchtower.pdf>. "Now we are in the day of greater fulfilment. In 1920, that is, after the imprisoned condition and beheading experience of God's people during the war period, Bible Students came to a correct understanding of our Lord's prophecy contained in Matthew 24: 14. They then realized that "this gospel" which was to be preached in all the world for a testimony to the Gentiles or all nations, was not a gospel of a kingdom yet to come but a gospel to the effect that the Messianic King has begun His reign over earth, and 'the kingdom of God is among us' therefore."

believer in Christ are said to be for the 144,000. Those in the Great Multitude do not benefit from those verses. They cannot be ‘born again’.

The prior Gospel of Christendom is really no Gospel at all. Since 1914 they have been faithfully proclaiming the ‘Good News’ that leads to life. The true Gospel had been unavailable from the time of the last Apostle until Charles Taze Russell founded the Watchtower Society.

Jehovah’s Witnesses believe that the Kingdom of God is a real government that has influence over this world. Jesus’ authority began to be displayed when he was installed as king in 1914.⁵¹ Their goal is to obey God, spreading His Kingdom. Ultimately, the whole world will be under the control of God’s Kingdom. This is the message they proclaim, God’s coming rule.

1799

Charles Taze Russell adopted the historicist teachings of the Second Adventist. The Second Adventist interpreted prophecy using the day-year theory. This system understood that a biblical day was in reality a prophetic year. Viewing Daniel and Revelation, the Adventist sought to apply biblical prophecies to their time, a trait that is still common among Advent Christians. It was agreed by many that the year AD 539 marked the beginning of Papal rule and therefore the beginning of the 1260 years spoken of in Daniel. Therefore, the date of the beginning of the end

⁵⁰ Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, “Working Hard for the Reward of Eternal Life,” *Watchtower*, August 15, 1972, 493, accessed July 30, 2018, <http://www.watchtowerwayback.org/jw-wb/English/Magazines/The%20Watchtower/1972%20The%20Watchtower.pdf>. “Why are God’s dedicated people working so hard? It is because their heart is in God’s work. Their dedication is genuine. They meant it when they chose to put God’s will first in their lives. And besides that, they are mindful of the rich reward that God holds out to them—the reward of everlasting life! What a powerful incentive this! All lovers of life should want to join the ranks of Jehovah’s witnesses.”

⁵¹ Charles Taze Russell, *Millennial Dawn*, vol. 2, *The Time Is at Hand* (Allegheny, PA: Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, 1889), 99-101, accessed August 5, 2018, [http://www.watchtowerwayback.org/jw-wb/English/Books/Teachings/1889%20Studies%20in%20the%20Scriptures%20Vol2-The%20Time%20Is%20At%20Hand%20\(1st%20edition\).pdf](http://www.watchtowerwayback.org/jw-wb/English/Books/Teachings/1889%20Studies%20in%20the%20Scriptures%20Vol2-The%20Time%20Is%20At%20Hand%20(1st%20edition).pdf). “In view of this strong Bible evidence concerning the Times of the Gentiles, we consider it an established truth that the final end of the kingdoms of this world, and the full establishment of the Kingdom of God, will be accomplished by the end of A. D. 1914.”

times was arrived at by adding 539 years and 1260 years. The chosen date was 1799. Nelson Barbour, who initially taught Russell about the prophetic dates, understood the date to be 1798, a date Russell corrected to 1914.⁵²

Russell taught that 1260 years of oppression at the hand of the papacy was drawing to an end. The judgment of God was coming. In this interim, God's Word would go forth declaring His Kingdom.⁵³ The power of sin was broken.⁵⁴ Following Russell's death, 1799 would continue to be proclaimed as 'the beginning of the end' in publications through the 1920s. Rutherford wrote of the 1799 date in the *Harp of God and Creation*.⁵⁵ Watchtower also mentions the date in

⁵² Nelson Barbour, *Three Worlds and the Harvest of This World* (Rochester, NY: Nelson Barbour, 1877), 158, accessed August 5, 2018, <http://www.watchtowerwayback.org/jw-wb/English/Books/Teachings/1877%20The%20three%20worlds.pdf>. "The wonders there referred to, were the 'time of trouble, the resurrection,' etc., and with present light, we understand that the definite time in this case reached to the end of the 1260 years of papal dominion, and therefore ended in 1798; but the completion of the scattering of the power of the Holy people, will not be ended until the end of the times of the Gentiles, or in 1914."

⁵³ Russell, *The Time Is at Hand* (1889), 296. "Henceforth we deal with the Antichrist, whose gradual development and organization from secretly working ambition are a fitting prelude to the terrible character displayed after the coveted power had been grasped-from 539 A.D. to 1799 A.D., 1260 years. Of this period the first three hundred years mark the rise of this temporal power; the last three mark its waning under the influences of the Reformation and civilization; and the intermediate period of seven centuries embraces Papacy's glory-time and the 'dark ages' of the world, full of frauds and deceptions in the name of Christ and true religion."

⁵⁴ Russell, *Thy Kingdom Come* (1891), 122. "Since the beginning (1799) of the Time of the End, God has been preparing his consecrated 'holy people', his 'Sanctuary', for the great blessings he intended to pour upon them during these forty years of harvest: which blessings are also intended as special preparation for their entering with Christ into full joy and joint-heirship with him, as his bride. At the exact 'time appointed,' 1799, the end of the 1260 days, the power of the Man of Sin, the great oppressor of the Church, was broken, and his dominion taken away."

⁵⁵ J. F. Rutherford, *The Harp of God: Proof Conclusive that Millions Now Living Will Never Die* (New York: Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, 1921), 228-229, accessed August 5, 2018, <http://www.watchtowerwayback.org/jw-wb/English/Books/Teachings/1921%20The%20harp%20of%20God.pdf>. "While he was doing this, the British in the north, under the leadership of Lord Nelson, were making an effective attack upon Napoleon's form at sea. Napoleon began this Egyptian campaign in 1798,

finished it and returned to France on October 1, 1799. The campaign is briefly, yet graphically, described in the prophecy, verses 40 to 44; and being completed in 1799, marks, according to the Prophet's own words, the beginning of the 'time of the end'" Also J. F. Rutherford, *Creation* (1927), 294-295, accessed August 5, 2018, <http://www.watchtowerwayback.org/jw-wb/English/Books/Teachings/1927%20Creation.pdf>. "In Biblical symbology a 'time' means a year of twelve months of thirty days each, or 360 days. Each day is considered for a year, as the prophet says: 'I have appointed thee each day for a year'. (Ezek. 4:6) Here are mentioned, then, three and a half times of 360 prophetic days each, or a total of 1260 prophetic days, which would mark the beginning of

1922.⁵⁶ The date is significant because it sets the foundation for 1914, a date, unique and central to Watchtower doctrine. Now, however, the events claimed for the date of 1799 have been moved forward to 1914 and 1799 has been discarded.⁵⁷

1874

Russell, following Barbour and the Second Adventist, understood that when man had been on the earth for 6000 years, Jesus would come, the church would be raptured, and the thousand years of Sabbath rest would occur. Russell calculated that man's time on earth was coming to an end in 1874. He believed that this would bring about the second advent of Christ and a time of harvest.⁵⁸ Russell believed that Jesus was now a spirit creature and would not be seen by human eyes.⁵⁹ The Second Adventist did not believe this and thought that His return would be visible. Following 1874, Russell taught that Jesus was present, invisibly. Rutherford

the time of the end of this beastly order. Twelve hundred and sixty years from 539 A. D. brings us to 1799, which is another proof that 1799 definitely marks the beginning of 'the time of the end'. This also shows that it is from the date 539 A. D. that the other prophetic days of Daniel must be counted."

⁵⁶ Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, "Who Is Wise," *Watchtower*, March 1, 1922, 71, accessed August 5, 2018, <http://www.watchtowerwayback.org/jw-wb/English/Magazines/The%20Watchtower/1922%20The%20Watchtower.pdf>. "The Lord showed Daniel that from the time of this union or formation of the 'dreadful and terrible beast' to the 'time of the end' would be 1260 years; thereby marking 1799 again as the date of the 'time of the end.'"

⁵⁷ Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, "Who Can Accurately Predict Man's Future?," *Awake!* January 22, 1973, 8, accessed August 5, 2018, <http://www.watchtowerwayback.org/jw-wb/English/Magazines/Awake/1973%20Awake.pdf>. "Jehovah's witnesses pointed to the year 1914, decades in advance, as marking the start of "the conclusion of the system of things."

⁵⁸ Russell, *Thy Kingdom Come* (1891), 128. "The six thousand years in which God has permitted evil to dominate the world, prior to the beginning of the great seventh or sabbatic thousand, or 'Times of Restitution, dates, from the entrance of sin into the world. And since the Times of Restitution began with October 1874, that must be the end of the six thousand years reign of Sin ; and the difference between that and the date shown in the chronology from Adam's creation represents the period of sinlessness in Eden, which really belongs to the reign of righteousness."

⁵⁹ Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, "View from the Tower," *Zion's Watchtower and Herald of Christ's Presence*, August 1883, 1, accessed August 5, 2018, <http://www.watchtowerwayback.org/jw-wb/English/Magazines/The%20Watchtower/1883%20The%20Watchtower.pdf>. "And concerning the Lord's second coming, while we realized that he is no longer a man but is now the new creature—the express image of the Father's person- a quickening spirit, yet we failed somehow to make a proper application of this to his second coming, and unthinkingly and ignorantly, rather expected his coming to be as a glorified man, than as a spiritual being. It was not until about 1874 that these things became clearer, so that we realized that when Jesus should come, it would be as

maintained this belief until the beginning of the 1930s. A Watchtower from 1924 confirmed 1874 as the year of Jesus' return.⁶⁰ As late as 1929 a book written by Rutherford vouched for the 1874 date.⁶¹ However, in 1932, 1874 was ignored and the date of Jesus' return was changed to 1914.⁶² Then in 1943 a new chronology was proposed and the date 1874 was retired. 1914 became the new date of Jesus' invisible return, and 1874 was abandoned as a significant date.⁶³

unobserved by human eyes as though an angel had come; and that it could be known only by some miracle, by some manifestation or demonstration.”

⁶⁰ Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, “The Outlook for 1924,” *Watchtower*, January 1, 1924, 5, accessed August 5, 2018, <http://www.watchtowerwayback.org/jw-wb/English/Magazines/The%20Watchtower/1924%20The%20Watchtower.pdf>. “Surely there is not the slightest room for doubt in the mind of a truly consecrated child of God that the Lord Jesus is present and has been since 1874. . . .”

⁶¹ Joseph Franklin Rutherford, *Prophecy* (New York: Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, 1929), 65, accessed August 5, 2018, <http://www.watchtowerwayback.org/jw-wb/English/Books/Teachings/1929%20Prophecy.pdf>. “The Scriptural proof is that the second presence of the Lord Jesus Christ began in 1874 A.D.”

⁶² Joseph Franklin Rutherford, *What is Truth?* (New York: Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, 1932), 48, accessed August 5, 2018, [http://www.watchtowerwayback.org/jw-wb/English/Brochures/1932%20What%20is%20truth%20\(wtr-E\).pdf](http://www.watchtowerwayback.org/jw-wb/English/Brochures/1932%20What%20is%20truth%20(wtr-E).pdf). “The Scriptures show that he must wait until the end of the Gentile times, which times began in 606 B.C., extended over a period of 2520 years, and came to an end in the autumn of 1914. That was the period of time in which Jehovah permitted Satan to carry on his wicked work without interference. At the end of that period of time. Jesus Christ, in obedience to his Father's will, began the great work of ousting Satan and establishing kingdom. The year 1914, therefore, marks the second coming of Christ.”

⁶³ Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, *The Truth Shall Make You Free* (New York: Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, 1943), 152, accessed August 5, 2018, [http://www.watchtowerwayback.org/jw-wb/English/Books/Teachings/1943%20The%20truth%20shall%20make%20you%20free%20\(tf\).pdf](http://www.watchtowerwayback.org/jw-wb/English/Books/Teachings/1943%20The%20truth%20shall%20make%20you%20free%20(tf).pdf). “From Adam's creation to the end of 1943 A.D. is 5,971 years We are therefore near the end of six thousand years of human history, with conditions upon us and tremendous events at hand foreshadowed by those of Noah's day.”

Therefore, since 1874 was in place because it was thought to be the end of 6000 years and the beginning of the Sabbath thousand years, the rearrangement of the prophetic timeline meant that 1874 was no longer a contender for the return of Jesus. That event would logically be located in the mid-1970s except that 1914 is central to Watchtower theology and Jesus was to have returned in 1914.

1878

In the years prior to 1878, Russell worked with Nelson Barbour, an Adventist publisher. Russell and Barbour had reasoned that Jesus must return to rapture the church in 1878.⁶⁴ They reached that conclusion because they believed Jesus had returned invisibly to earth in 1874. They had made the calculations utilizing reasoning common to premillennialism in that era.⁶⁵ Mirroring was common in prophetic teaching. Some believed significant events were going to be mirrored in the coming prophetic events. As an example, after Jesus' first advent occurred, he began his ministry. This ministry took three and a half years. A mirroring of that time would mean that Jesus would return to heaven with his 144,000 saints three and a half years after his invisible return. At that point he would be installed as the ruling king.⁶⁶ Therefore, Russell believed the rapture of the church would occur in 1878. Based on this, both Barbour and Russell began to teach and preach that the time was short for the church. When 1878 came and went, many were disheartened. Nelson Barbour struggled to understand how they could have been wrong. However, Russell was not discouraged. After considering the matter, Russell decided that he was not mistaken about the date. The problem was that he had been mistaken about what

⁶⁴ Jason Wright, "C. T. Russell and the date 1878," *Watchtower Investigated UK* (June 17, 2014), accessed May 5, 2018, <https://watchtowerinvestigated.wordpress.com/2014/06/17/c-t-russell-and-the-date-1878-by-jason-wright/>. "Hence Barbour proclaimed a three and a-half year period was already underway, starting in 1874 (Jesus invisible return/Parousia) and ending in the spring of 1878, it was what he called the anti-typical harvest period (parallel dispensation). This period ended with the translation of the Elijah class (little flock) and Jesus taking up his throne and became king in heaven. So there we have it! In 1877 Russell and Barbour were absolutely sure the translation of the little flock (true church) would occur at latest April 6th 1878."

⁶⁵ Russell, *The Time Is at Hand* (1889), 218. "As shown in the accompanying diagram, the period of their favor, from the commencement of their national existence at the death of Jacob, down to the end of that favor at the death of Christ, A.D. 33, was eighteen hundred and forty-five (1845) years."

⁶⁶ Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, *Jehovah's Witnesses—Proclaimers of God's Kingdom*, 632. "Based on the premise that events of the first century might find parallels in related events later, they also concluded that if Jesus' baptism and anointing in the autumn of 29 C.E. paralleled the beginning of an invisible presence in 1874, then his ride into Jerusalem as King in the spring of 33 C.E. would point to the spring of 1878 as the time when he would assume his power as heavenly King."

would transpire. Though there was no change in the visible church, there was a change in spiritual realms. The Adventist had expected a fleshly manifestation, not a spiritual manifestation. This did not occur, and Russell determined that what had actually happened was that those of the anointed class (144,000) who had previously died were in fact resurrected to be with Jesus, and from that point on all those who were anointed would go directly to be with Jesus when they died.⁶⁷ In addition, Jehovah installed Jesus as King in 1878. This was a spiritual event and Jehovah was in the process of establishing his kingdom.⁶⁸

Since Rutherford moved the date of the invisible return of Jesus forward to 1914, the year 1874 was vacated. Therefore, the dates of 1878 and the date of 1881 were also vacated, as they were dependent on 1874.

1914

The year 1914 is unique for Jehovah's Witnesses. The use and centrality of this date sets them apart from all other groups. The rest of their theology, aberrant or not, can be found elsewhere in different groups, but 1914 is unique.

The date had been calculated by Russell as he searched for the meaning of the "Time of the Gentiles." He first determined the beginning of this time by determining when the rule of the Jews was broken. He identified that time as the year that the tribe of Judah went into captivity to Babylon. Russell accepted a date of 606 BC that had been suggested previously by John Aquila

⁶⁷ *Jehovah's Witnesses—Proclaimers of God's Kingdom*, 632. "They also thought they would be given their heavenly reward at that time. When that did not occur, they concluded that since Jesus' anointed followers were to share with him in the Kingdom, the resurrection to spirit life of those already sleeping in death began then."

⁶⁸ *Ibid.* "They also thought they would be given their heavenly reward at that time. When that did not occur, they concluded that since Jesus' anointed followers were to share with him in the Kingdom, the resurrection to spirit life of those already sleeping in death began then. It was also reasoned that the end of God's special favor to natural Israel down to 36 C.E. might point to 1881 as the time when the special opportunity to become part of spiritual Israel would close."

Brown.⁶⁹ The date itself was later changed by a year to 607, but the 1914 date was not adjusted. The length of the period was found by examining Daniel, chapter 4. Believing that the cutting down of the tree represented the fall of Judah, Russell focused on a period of seven times or seven years. Since each year is 360 days long (lunar years), the total number of years was 2520 years. When this is added to 606 BC, it gives the date 1914. Therefore, the end of the “Time of the Gentiles” was 1914. Russell knew immediately that time was short and that the end was drawing near.⁷⁰

There are a number of significant flaws with the calculation of 1914. The first is the calculation of the date for the end of the Jewish times. The return from the Babylonian exile is the date used to begin calculating the end of the Jewish times. The dates 536 thru 539 BC are commonly used for the return from the exile to Babylon. There is inadequate information available to choose one over the other. Since the initial date used to calculate the end of the Jewish times is uncertain, it would be difficult to be precise. The date selected for the end of the Jewish times, the year Judah went into captivity, is said to be 607 BC. The Watchtower Society alone presents that number. There is not a single shred of historical data to suggest that 607 is the

⁶⁹ Penton, *Apocalypse Delayed*, 30. “In fact, it was John Aquila Brown who first explained what he considered to be the key to the length of those times in a book called *Even-Tide*, published in London in 1823. What he posited was that the typical theocratic kingdom of Judah had fallen under Gentile rule in 604 B.C. Thereafter, there would be no godly government on earth until four great empires –the Babylonian, Medo-Persian, Macedonian, and Roman–had had their sway. Then Christ, as David’s heir, would rule in Jerusalem. But how long would it be before those empires expired? Brown found his answer in the fourth chapter of the book of Daniel.” Brown believed 1917 was the year of the end. Barbour found fault with his calculations and decided upon 1914, a date Russell followed.

⁷⁰ Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, “Heed God’s Prophetic Word for Our Day,” *Watchtower*, April 1, 1984, 16, accessed August 6, 2018, <http://www.watchtowerwayback.org/jw-wb/English/Magazines/The%20Watchtower/1984%20The%20Watchtower.pdf>. “Writing in the *Bible Examiner* of October 1876, Russell said: ‘The seven times will end in A.D. 1914.’ He also was a joint publisher of the 1877 book *Three Worlds, and the Harvest of This World*, which showed (on pages 83 and 189) that the 2,520-year period of Gentile world domination without interference by any kingdom of God began with the Babylonian overthrow of the kingdom of Judah in the late seventh century BCE and would end in 1914 CE. Similarly, the *Watch Tower* issue of March 1880 stated: ‘The Times of the Gentiles’ extend to 1914, and the heavenly kingdom will not have full sway till then.’”

correct date.⁷¹ The vast majority of archeologist, historians, and biblical experts (essentially everyone) believe the correct date is 586 BC. Further difficulty arises when the idea of a second fulfillment of Daniel chapter 4 is suggested. No other section of Daniel has a second fulfillment. Then there is the problem of calculating with lunar years (360 days) and utilizing the result in a system of solar years (365 days). Further, nothing in the Daniel verses hint at the Gentile times or the end times. Therefore, it appears therefore that the selection of 1914 has multiple fatal flaws.⁷²

The date was felt by Russell to be significant for a number of reasons. It was the end of the Gentile Times. False religion and all government would be cast down. Armageddon would occur, and all the dead would be raised. Finally, Jesus would begin his thousand-year reign on paradise earth.⁷³ Therefore, it is clear that Russell and the early Bible Students taught and understood that 1914 marked the end of the world. Rutherford, and those who followed him, changed the focus and began to teach that 1914 was the beginning of the ‘end times’ as none of the predicted events occurred in 1914. This was because the date is central to Watchtower

⁷¹ Franz, *Crisis of Conscience*, 29-30. “Months of research were spent on this one subject of ‘Chronology’ and it resulted in the longest article in the Aid publication. Much of the time was spent endeavoring to find some proof, some backing in history, for the 607 BCE date so crucial to our calculations for 1914. Charles Ploeger, a member of the headquarters staff, was at that time serving as a secretary for me and he searched through the libraries of the New York city area for anything that might substantiate that date historically. We found absolutely nothing in support of 607 BCE All historians pointed to a date twenty years later.”

⁷² “607: 1914: Seven Times,” *JWFacts.com*, accessed August 6, 2018, <https://www.jwfacts.com/watchtower/607-seven-times-prophecy.php>. “There are numerous issues and inconsistencies with how Watchtower interprets the Seven Times. The major issue with how Watchtower arrives at 1914 is that Jerusalem did not fall in 607 B.C. . . . However, even if the assumption is made that 607 B.C. is correct, Watchtower's interpretation fails at a number of other levels. There is no reason to believe Daniel 4 has two fulfillments, 606 B.C. or 607 B.C.? 539 B.C. or 537 B.C.? July or October? 70 Weeks and the 7 Times? 360 Day ‘Prophetic Year’ for a Solar Year?”

⁷³ “Changed Dates: Failed Predictions,” *JWFacts.com*, accessed August 6, 2018, <https://www.jwfacts.com/watchtower/1800s.php>. “1914 has been a pivotal date for the Watchtower. The expectations prior to 1914 included it being the end of the Gentile Times, the end of Armageddon, the fall of false religion, the end of all governments, the resurrection, the start of Jesus 1000 year reign and paradise on earth.”

theology and cannot be easily abandoned. It became more prudent to change the significance of the date than maintain the earlier understanding. So rather than being the end of all things, 1914 became the 'beginning of the end'. Along with this new understanding, it was proclaimed that the generation of 1914 would not pass away without Armageddon occurring. That did not happen, and the Watchtower Society has now abandoned the claim that those alive in 1918 would not die before Armageddon. The Watchtower Society uncoupled the end of time from 1914, saying that anyone who knew an anointed person from that generation also belongs to the generation that would see Jesus return. This is referred to as an overlapping generation.⁷⁴ The major issue that prevents the Watchtower Society from abandoning 1914 is that it is the underpinning for 1918, the year that Jesus and Jehovah are said to have come and inspected the churches of the world. Based on that that inspection, in 1919 only the Jehovah's Witnesses were found to be pure and true to His Word. Therefore, Jehovah appointed the Watchtower Society as His organization and His mouthpiece for the world. If 1914 is abandoned, the declaration of the Watchtower Society's as God's mouthpiece disappears as well.

1918

When 1914 failed, there were many who looked to 1918 to be the date of the end.⁷⁵ As with the previous failures, the date was moved forward continuing the expectancy that something momentous was about to happen.⁷⁶ During this time, Rutherford taught Jesus

⁷⁴ Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, "Holy Spirit's Role in the Outworking of Jehovah's Purpose," *Watchtower*, April 15, 2010, 10, accessed August 6, 2018, <http://www.watchtowerwayback.org/jw-wb/English/Magazines/The%20Watchtower/2010%20The%20Watchtower%20STUDY.Pdf>. "He evidently meant that the lives of the anointed who were on hand when the sign began to become evident in 1914 would overlap with the lives of other anointed ones who would see the start of the great tribulation. That generation had a beginning, and it surely will have an end."

⁷⁵ Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, "1917 Annual Report," *Watchtower*, December 15, 1917, 373-374, accessed August 6, 2018, <http://www.watchtowerwayback.org/jw-wb/English/Magazines/The%20Watchtower/1917%20The%20Watchtower.pdf>. "It is with sincere joy that we are privileged to report that amongst the activities of the Watch Tower Bible And Tract Society for 1917 the Seventh Volume of Studies In The Scriptures has been published and is now going forth. We count this as another one of the

accompanied Jehovah to the spiritual temple to cleanse his people.⁷⁷

1919

The Watchtower teaches a cleansing of the temple took place in 1918. There was also in inspection of all the churches that was to have begun in 1918. Jesus and Jehovah determined that only the Watchtower Society was mature and capable enough to be His mouthpiece.⁷⁸ Later there was a revision, and it was determined that the inspection had begun, not in 1918 but instead in 1914.⁷⁹ Still, only the Watchtower could be God's Society. Interestingly there is no logical or scriptural reasoning for these claims.

Predictions for 1914 from JW facts. <http://jwfacts.mobi/1914-failed-jw-prophecy/>

1914 : Failed JW Prophecy

strong proofs that the harvest is nearing the end, and that in all probability the Spring of 1918 will mark the beginning of the closing up of all activities of the kingdom class on this side the veil.”

⁷⁶ Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, “The Concluding Work of the Harvest,” *Watchtower*, October 1, 1917, 292-293, accessed August 6, 2018, <http://www.watchtowerwayback.org/jw-wb/English/Magazines/The%20Watchtower/1917%20The%20Watchtower.pdf>. “The parallel, therefore, would establish definitely that the harvest would close forty years thereafter; to wit, in the spring of A.D. 1918. If this be true, and the evidence is very conclusive that it is true, then we have only a few months in which to labor before the great night settles down when no man can work.”

⁷⁷ Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, “The True Lord Comes for Judgement,” *Watchtower*, July 1, 1989, 31, accessed August 6, 2018, <http://www.watchtowerwayback.org/jw-wb/English/Magazines/The%20Watchtower/1989%20The%20Watchtower.pdf>. “During his earthly ministry, Jesus cleansed the temple. In 1918 he accompanied Jehovah to the spiritual temple to cleanse God's people”

⁷⁸ Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, “Loyal to Christ and His Faithful Slave,” *Watchtower*, April 1, 2007, 22, accessed August 6, 2018, <http://www.watchtowerwayback.org/jw-wb/English/Magazines/The%20Watchtower/2007%20The%20Watchtower.pdf>. “‘On arriving’ to inspect the ‘slave’ in 1918, Christ found a spirit-anointed remnant of faithful disciples who since 1879 had been using this journal [the Watchtower] and other Bible-based publications to provide spiritual ‘food at the proper time’. He acknowledged them as his collective instrument, or ‘slave,’ and in 1919 entrusted them with the management of all his earthly belongings.”

⁷⁹ Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, “Look I Am with You All the Days,” *Watchtower*, July 15, 2013, 11, 14, accessed August 6, 2018, <http://www.watchtowerwayback.org/jw-wb/English/Magazines/The%20Watchtower/2013%20The%20Watchtower%20STUDY.Pdf>. “In 2013, this teaching was simplified by removing 1918 from the equation. . . . To settle that question, Jesus began to inspect the spiritual temple in 1914. That inspection and cleansing work involved a period of time—from 1914 to the early part of 1919.” Endnotes: “This is an adjustment in understanding. Previously, we thought that Jesus’ inspection took place in 1918.”

One of the most misleading statements in Watchtower publications is that they accurately foretold 1914 to be the “start” of the conclusion of this system of things, and the year Jesus rulership began. In reality, 1914 had consistently been predicted to be the “end” of the system of things, and that Jesus began ruling in 1878.

THE WATCHTOWER SAID:	THE WATCHTOWER <i>CLAIMS</i> IT SAID:
<p>“But bear in mind that the end of 1914 is not the date for the beginning, but for the end of the time of trouble. <i>Zion’s Watch Tower</i> 1894 Jul 15 p.226</p>	<p>“Jehovah’s witnesses pointed to the year 1914, decades in advance, as marking the start of “the conclusion of the system of things.” <i>Awake!</i> 1973 Jan 22 p.8</p>
<p>“The year A.D. 1878, being the parallel of his assuming power and authority in the type, clearly marks the time for the actual assuming of power as King of kings, by our present, spiritual, invisible Lord....” <i>Studies in the Scriptures – Thy Kingdom Come</i> p.239</p>	<p>“The Watchtower has consistently presented evidence that Jesus’ presence in heavenly Kingdom power began in 1914.” <i>Watchtower</i> 1993 Jan 15 pp.5,9</p>

The contradictory statements above raise two critical questions:

- What *did* the Watchtower predict for 1914?
- Does the Watchtower *honestly* present its history?

1914 is the pivotal date for the existence of Jehovah’s Witnesses. It is currently explained as the date:

- The Last Days began
- Jesus started ruling in heaven
- The Gentile times ended

1914 is the basis for the interpretation of the majority of other Bible prophecies. Most importantly, 3 ½ years after 1914 is when Jesus is said to have come to inspect and cleanse the Watchtower Society, resulting in Jesus choosing it to be the only organization he works through in our time, and the only means of salvation.

The current understanding is significantly different to the teachings prior to 1914. Originally, the Watchtower believed:

- The Last Days began 1799
- Jesus Parousia started 1874
- Jesus started ruling in heaven in 1878

- The Gentile Times would end in 1914, resulting in
 - End of Armageddon
 - The fall of false religion
 - The end of all governments
 - The resurrection
 - Paradise on earth

The ability of the Watchtower to accurately foretell the meaning of 1914 is a great source of faith for Jehovah's Witnesses, unaware of what the Watchtower said prior to that date. 1914 was to be the final date of Russell's prophetic timeline, the conclusion of matters. Nothing that Russell said about 1914 came to pass.

Watchtower quotes prior to 1914

Russell taught that Jesus invisible rulership began in 1874.

“Our Lord, the appointed King, is now present since October 1874, A.D., according to the testimony of the prophets, to those who have ears to hear it: and the formal inauguration of his kingly office dates from April 1878, A.D.” Studies in Scriptures Series IV (1897) p.621

Russell used [pyramidology](#) to support this belief.

1874 to 1914 was described as the greatest time of trouble in history, with 1914 being the *conclusion* of the Last Days. Armageddon would begin, resulting in the wholesale destruction of all government and religion. Russell and his followers were to be raised to heaven and Jesus Kingdom would then be established as paradise on earth.

“Now, in view of recent labor troubles and threatened anarchy, our readers are writing to know if there may not be a mistake in the 1914 date. They do not see how present conditions can hold out so long under the strain. We see no reason for changing the figures – nor could we change them if we would. They are, we believe, God's dates, not ours. But bear in mind that the end of 1914 is not the date for the beginning, but for the end of the time of trouble.” Zion's Watch Tower 1894 Jul 15 p.226

The following quotes during the lead up to 1914 show there could be no doubt as to what followers of the Watchtower Society were to expect.

Armageddon ended

” the battle of the great day of God Almighty The date of the close of that “battle” is definitely marked in Scripture as October 1914. It is already in progress, its beginning dating from October, 1874.” Zion's Watch Tower 1892 Jan 15 p.23

Religion Utterly Destroyed

“The seventh trumpet sounds from Aug. 1840, until “the time of trouble,” or day of wrath is ended. Hence, it doubtless ends with the times of the Gentiles, and this forty years of conquest;

and therefore, sounds until A. D. 1914; at the end of which, Babylon the great, will have fallen, and the “dragon” be bound: that is, the nations will be subdued, and “the prince of this world cast out.”” *Three Worlds and The Harvest of This World* (1877) p.143

“A.D. 33, to A.D. 70 was 36 ½ years; and so from A.D. 1878 to the end of A.D. 1914 is 36 ½ years. And, with the end of A.D. 1914, what God calls Babylon, and what men call Christendom, will have passed away, as already shown in prophecy.” *Studies In the Scriptures – Thy Kingdom Come* (1891) p.153

“October, 1914, will witness the full end of Babylon, “as a great millstone cast into the sea,” utterly destroyed as a system.” *Watch Tower* 1911 Jun 15 p.190

Harvest work complete

“HARVEST” is a term which gives a general idea as to what work should be expected to transpire between the dates 1874 and 1914.” *Studies In the Scriptures – Thy Kingdom Come* p.135

“These, already examined, show that the close of 1874 marked the beginning, as the close of 1914 will mark the end, of this 40 years of harvest; while all the minutiae of the order and work of this harvest were portrayed in that of the Jewish age, its type.” *Studies In the Scriptures – Thy Kingdom Come* pp.149-150

Governments overthrown

Studies In the Scriptures – The Time Is at Hand foretold seven things would happen in 1914. Not one of these eventuated. The following statements are extracted from that list;

1. “the disintegration of the rule of imperfect men. at that date the Kingdom of God, for which our Lord taught us to pray, saying, “Thy Kingdom come,” will begin to assume control, and that it will then shortly be “set up,” or firmly established, in the earth, on the ruins of present institutions.”
2. He whose right it is thus to take the dominion will then be present as earth’s new Ruler; and not only so, but it will also prove that he will be present for a considerable period before that date;
3. the last member of the divinely recognized Church of Christ, the “royal priesthood,” “the body of Christ,” will be glorified with the Head;
4. Jerusalem shall no longer be trodden down
5. Israel’s blindness will begin to be turned away
6. the great “time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation,” will reach its culmination in a world-wide reign of anarchy
7. It will prove that before that date God’s Kingdom, organized in power, will be in the earth and then smite and crush the Gentile image (Dan. 2:34)-and fully consume the power of these kings.” *Studies In the Scriptures – The Time Is at Hand* (1889) pp.77, 78

“True, it is expecting great things to claim, as we do, that within the coming twenty-six years all present governments will be overthrown and dissolved . In view of this strong Bible evidence concerning the Times of the Gentiles, we consider it an established truth that the final end of the

kingdoms of this world, and the full establishment of the Kingdom of God, will be accomplished at the end of A. D. 1914 . Be not surprised, then, when in subsequent chapters we present proofs that the setting up of the Kingdom of God is already begun, that it is pointed out in prophecy as due to begin the exercise of power in A.D. 1878, and that the “battle of the great day of God Almighty” (Rev. 16:14), which will end in A.D. 1914 with the complete overthrow of earth’s present rulership, is already commenced. The gathering of the armies is plainly visible from the standpoint of God’s Word.” *Studies In the Scriptures – The Time Is At Hand* (1889) pp.99, 101

” we have seen that God has a set time for every feature of his plan, and that we are even now in this “Day of Vengeance,” which is a period of forty years; that it began in October, 1874, and will end in October, 1914 [very shortly].” *Studies In the Scriptures – The Day of Vengeance -* pp.546, 547

Jesus to start ruling the earth

SETTING UP THE EARTHLY GOVERNMENT — Not until the full end of Gentile Times (October, A.D. 1914) should we expect the earthly phase of God’s Kingdom; for in giving a lease of dominion to the Gentiles until that date God made no mistake and his plans alter not. The earthly phase of the Kingdom of God when set up will be Israelitish; for such is God’s engagement or covenant with Abraham and his natural seed. Even the chief favor, the spiritual Kingdom, was offered first to fleshly Israel, and would have been given to them if they had been ready at heart to receive it on the conditions attached to it—to suffer with Christ and afterward to be glorified with him.” *Studies In the Scriptures – The Day of Vengeance* pp.624,625

Resurrection to occur

“And yet “Jerusalem must be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled;” hence, trodden down until A. D. 1914, when the day of wrath will be passed, and the resurrection and return of the “whole house of Israel” due.” *Three Worlds and The Harvest of This World* (1877) p.166

“The beginning of the earthly phase of the Kingdom in the end of A.D. 1914 will, we understand, consist wholly of the resurrected holy ones of olden time—from John the Baptizer back to Abel—“Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and all the holy prophets.” *Studies In the Scriptures Series IV – The Day of Vengeance* p.625

Studies in the Scriptures after 1914

Editions of *Studies in the Scriptures* written prior to 1914 were very specific about what would happen prior to and during 1914. These journals continued to be used after 1914. To overcome the obviously erroneous predictions in 1915 they were reissued with amendments.

For example the 1908 edition of *Studies in the Scriptures Series III – Thy Kingdom Come* stated on p.228 that the resurrection would occur before 1914. The 1915 edition changed this to state that the resurrection was to occur soon after 1914.

THY KINGDOM COME 1908 ED.

THY KINGDOM COME 1915 ED.

“That the deliverance of the saints must take place **some time before 1914** is manifest...”

“That the deliverance of the saints must take place **very soon after 1914** is manifest...”

How the Watchtower presents its history

The Watchtower uses the Bible Student’s “foresight” of 1914 as proof of Jehovah’s direction. Can this be true, knowing the Watchtower was wrong?

The following quotes show the positive spin the Watchtower puts on Russell’s inaccurate teaching in an attempt to make people believe Holy Spirit directs the Watchtower Society to uncover Bible prophecy. Many of these statements *blatantly lie*, saying the Watchtower pointed to 1914 as “the start of “the conclusion of the system of things”” or the start of “Jesus Presence”, and the start of his “rulership”. In 1914 the Watchtower was teaching that Jesus presence began in [1874](#) and his heavenly rulership began in 1878.

“Our belief that the Kingdom began to be set up, or brought into power, in April, 1878, be it observed, rests on exactly the same foundation as our belief that the Lord became present in October, 1874, and that the harvest began at that time.” Thy Kingdom Come p.205

Other phrases, such as that the Watchtower foretold 1914 to be the end of the Gentile Times, are strictly accurate, but lead the reader to an incorrect conclusion about the understanding of this teaching.

“The Watchtower has **consistently presented** evidence that **Jesus’ presence in heavenly Kingdom power began in 1914**. Events since that year testify to Jesus’ presence. Jehovah’s Witnesses have consistently shown from the Scriptures that the year 1914 marked the beginning of this world’s time of the end and that “the day of judgment and of destruction of the ungodly men” has drawn near.” Watchtower 1993 Jan 15 pp.5,9

“From the mid-1870’s, Jehovah’s people had been anticipating that catastrophic events would start in 1914 and would mark the end of the Gentile Times.” Revelation – Its Grand Climax at Hand! (1988) p.105

“As early as 1876 they were publishing that the Gentile Times of 2,520 years would terminate in the year 1914. Events that have taken place from that year onward prove **they were not wrong**.” God’s Eternal Purpose Now Triumphant For Man’s Good (1974) pp.178-179

“Even earlier, however, C. T. Russell wrote an article entitled “Gentile Times: When Do They End?” It was published in the Bible Examiner of October 1876, and therein Russell said: “The seven times will end in A.D. 1914.” He had correctly linked the Gentile Times with the “seven times” mentioned in the book of Daniel. (Dan. 4:16, 23, 25, 32) **True to such calculations**, 1914 did mark the end of those times and **the birth of God’s kingdom in heaven** with Christ Jesus as king. Just think of it! Jehovah granted his people that knowledge nearly four decades before those times expired.” Yearbook 1975 p.37

“Of all men used by God to prophesy, Jesus is outstanding. Based on what he said, along with the words of Daniel and John, Jehovah’s witnesses pointed to the year 1914, decades in advance, as **marking the start of “the conclusion** of the system of things.” Awake! 1973 Jan 22 p.8

“As for the time of **Christ’s second presence**, Daniel’s prophecy is again the one that gives the chronology for it. (Dan. 4:16) It was figured out as pointing to A.D. 1914, and The Watchtower called notice to the significance of 1914 in the year 1879.” Watchtower 1952 Nov 1 p.658

“Why, then, do the nations not realize and accept the approach of this climax of judgment? It is because they have not heeded the world wide advertising of Christ’s return and his second Presence. Since long before World War I Jehovah’s witnesses pointed to 1914 as the time for this great event to occur.” Watchtower 1954 Jun 15 p.370

“For over thirty years before that date and for half a century since, Jehovah’s witnesses have pointed to the year 1914 as the time for the end of “the appointed times of the nations” and the time in which **Christ would begin his Kingdom rule**. (Luke 21:24)” Watchtower 1966 Feb 15 p.103

“a prophecy providentially caused sincere 19th-century Bible students to be in expectation. By linking the “seven times” of Daniel 4:25 with “the times of the Gentiles”, they anticipated that **Christ would receive Kingdom power in 1914**. ” Watchtower 1998 Sep 15 p.15

Reality Check

The only aspect of Russell’s 1914 prediction to remain is the term ‘Gentile times’. Though the term is still in use, the meaning has greatly changed. Before 1914 this meant that earthly governments would end in total destruction and false religion would be overturned, heralding God’s kingdom on earth. Now it simply means that Jesus is ruling in heaven, a handy concept as it is invisible and unnoticed.

It is interesting that Russell’s incorrect understanding of 1914 had a huge weight of scriptural prophecy to support it. Some of the reasoning was as follows:

- The 1260 days prophecy pointed to 1799 as the last days
- The 2300 day prophecy pointed to 1844
- The 1355 day prophecy, end of the 6000 years and jubilee cycles all pointed to 1874 as the beginning of Jesus presence

From the above prophecies 1914 could be determined because:

- 1914 was a 40 year Jewish harvest from 1874.
- It was a 70 year generation from 1844.
- It was indicated by the prophecy of the seven times
- 40 years from 1874 to 1914 corresponds to 40 years from Jesus baptism in 30 A.D. to Jerusalem’s destruction in 70 A.D.

- 36 ½ years from 1878 to 1914 corresponded to 36 ½ years of trouble from Jesus death to the Jerusalem's destruction in 70 A.D.

Each of these lines of reasoning are now considered wrong by Witnesses and few are even aware of the huge importance placed on 1874 for over 50 years.

Russell stated in *Zion's Watch Tower* 1892 Jan 1 p.22 that “never was there such a general time of banding together as at present.” Yet all this weight of evidence that the 1800's were the “last days” has since been discarded. Today, only one prophecy is used to specifically point to 1914 as the start of Jesus presence; that is, the Seven Times. The other scriptural proofs are now considered to have been wrong.

As impressive as Russell's reasoning looks, it was progressively changed as one prediction after another failed to eventuate. Russell originally wrote that the Bible Students ascension to heaven and the fall of Babylon were to happen in years prior to the end of the Gentile Times. 1914 was just the date when the Gentile times would end and paradise be established on earth. As his predictions failed to eventuate these occurrences were moved to 1914. Russell was clearly wrong when not one of these had occurred by the end of 1914.

In addition to his predictions being wrong, Russell was unsure whether to use the year 1914 or 1915. As shown later, he did not know how to deal the year zero when calculating prophecy, and so fluctuated between saying the end would arrive in 1914 or 1915.

As 1914 came closer Russell's writings became less confident that his predictions were correct and started hedging his comments. Where as in 1892 the January 15 p.23 *Zion's Watch Tower* used the term “definitely marked in Scripture” Russell started to use terms like “possibly shortly after”, and “not infallible”. Bible Students started to be prepared for failure.

“We shall be as glad as any one if we shall all experience our change from earthly to spirit conditions before 1915, and THIS IS OUR EXPECTATION; but if this should not be the Lord's will, then it would not be our will . So far as we have been able to see up to the present time, the failure of a full development of matters in 1915, or before, would imply that all the chronological arrangements, as we have them, are wrong—our view of the Harvest and all. And we have no reason to believe that these are wrong. We remember that we are not infallible, and that our judgment is not infallible; but the wonderful inventions of today, and the light that is dawning in every direction, as well as the universal unrest, seem in corroboration of the chronology—that we are in the dawning of the New Age. But just how far along we are we do not positively know.” *Watch Tower* 1914 Jan 1 p.5

When 1914 did not eventuate in Armageddon Watchtower publications began to promote 1915. When this year came to nothing the entire meaning of all his prophetic interpretation required rewriting. It took until 1943 for the new understanding to finally be clarified.

Why has the Watchtower Society discontinued its belief in all their original date interpretations but retained 1914? The occurrence of World War One in 1914 appears to give this single year a historical significance that can not be attached to any of the other 20 or so dates promoted. However, the Watchtower explanation of the prophecy of the [Seven Times](#) is examined and

shown to be based on historical errors and inconsistent reasoning, leaving no reason to say that 1914 is of any relevance to us today.

Conclusion

Russell was not guided by Jehovah to uniquely understand Daniels prophecy of the Seven Times; he took his interpretation from Adventists such as Barbour. He adamantly stated that 1914 would be “the final end” of this system of things. The Watchtower has not presented a consistent understanding of 1914 and the current interpretation was not finalised until 1943.

“In the year 1943 the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society published the book “The Truth Shall Make You Free.” This moved forward the end of six thousand years of man’s existence into the decade of the 1970’s. Naturally this did away with the year 1874 C.E. as the date of return of the Lord Jesus Christ and the beginning of his invisible presence or parousia. Page 324 of the above book positively says: “The King’s presence or parousia began in 1914.”” God’s Kingdom on a Thousand Years Has Approached p.209

That Jesus started ruling in 1914 can not be proven as the Watchtower describes this as an unseen event.

It is disappointing to read how the Watchtower describes those individuals in the early 1900’s that thought the end was to come in 1914.

“There is no doubt that many throughout this period were overzealous in their statements as to what could be expected. Some read into the Watch Tower statements that were never intended ” Jehovah’s Witnesses in the Divine Purpose p.52

The Watchtower Society blames those who believed they were going to heaven on misunderstanding the Watchtower message. Similarly, the Proclaimers book indicates that those who left were serving out of wrong motives.

“There were also other expectations concerning 1914. Alexander H. Macmillan, who had been baptized in September 1900, later recalled: “A few of us seriously thought we were going to heaven during the first week of that October. Had some been attracted by the thought of their own early salvation rather than love for God and a strong desire to do his will?” Jehovah’s Witnesses – Proclaimers of God’s Kingdom p. 61

This is a common Watchtower formula; blame the members. Rather than apologise for error, say the followers were overzealous, misunderstood things or read into things. As prior quotes showed, this is just not true. The statements flowed unendingly, ‘this is an established truth’, there is ‘proof’, these things ‘will’ occur. It was spelled out so clearly there was no need for the members to read in what was not intended.

Possibly worse is that these mistakes are also handed off to be the fault of God.

“This was a natural mistake to fall into, but the Lord overruled it for the blessing of His people.” Studies in the Scriptures – The Time is at Hand 1916 ed. foreword

The Watchtower Society spent decades promoting its most prominent doctrine that the end would occur in 1914. Can a person trust the Watchtower Society when it was proven so dramatically wrong? Can a person trust the Watchtower Society when it continues to resort to deception when presenting its history? How can a person want to belong to an organization that refuses to accept responsibility for its mistakes, passing the blame to its faithful followers?

The admonition from Paul at *2 Thessalonians 2:1-2* appears apt:

“However, brothers, respecting the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered together to him, we request of YOU not to be quickly shaken from YOUR reason nor to be excited either through an inspired expression or through a verbal message or through a letter as though from us, to the effect that the day of Jehovah is here.”

In view of how the Watchtower refers to its past mistakes, *Is This Life All There Is?* asks a pertinent question on page 46:

“Knowing these things, what will you do? It is obvious that the true God, who is himself “the God of truth” and who hates lies, will not look with favor on persons who cling to organizations that teach falsehood. (Psalm 31:5; Proverbs 6:16-19; Revelation 21:8) And, really, would you want to be even associated with a religion that had not been honest with you?”

CARL SAGAN – REGARDING WATCHTOWER PREDICTIONS

“Doctrines that make no predictions are less compelling than those which make correct predictions; they are in turn more successful than doctrines that make false predictions. But not always. One prominent American religion confidently predicted that the world would end in 1914. Well, 1914 has come and gone, and — while the events of that year were certainly of some importance — the world does not, at least so far as I can see, seem to have ended. There are at least three responses that an organized religion can make in the face of such a failed and fundamental prophecy. They could have said, “Oh, did we say ‘1914’? So sorry, we meant ‘2014.’ A slight error in calculation. Hope you weren’t inconvenienced in any way.” But they did not. They could have said, “Well, the world would have ended, except we prayed very hard and interceded with God so He spared the Earth.” But they did not. Instead, they did something much more ingenious. They announced that the world had in fact ended in 1914, and if the rest of us hadn’t noticed, that was our lookout. **It is astonishing in the face of such transparent evasions that this religion has any adherents at all.** But religions are tough. Either they make no contentions which are subject to disproof or they quickly redesign doctrine after disproof. The fact that religions can be so shamelessly dishonest, so contemptuous of the intelligence of their adherents, and still flourish does not speak very well for the tough-mindedness of the believers. But it does indicate, if a demonstration were needed, that near the core of the religious experience is something remarkably resistant to rational inquiry.” *Broca’s Brain*, Carl Sagan (New York: Ballantine Books, 1979, pp. 332-33)

ARTICLE 5

Jesus Inspects the Temple

- [w13 7/15 pp. 9-14](#)
- “Look! I Am With You All the Days”
-
-

w13 7/15 p. 11-12



[“Look! I Am With You All the Days”](#)

[The Watchtower Announcing Jehovah’s Kingdom—2013](#)

- - 6. (a) What is the larger fulfillment of Malachi’s prophecy? (b) During what time period did Jesus inspect the spiritual temple? (See also endnote.)

⁶ What is the larger fulfillment of Malachi’s prophecy? During the decades leading up to 1914, C. T. Russell and his close associates did a work like that of John the Baptizer. That vital work involved restoring Bible truths. The Bible Students taught the true meaning of Christ’s ransom sacrifice, exposed the hellfire lie, and proclaimed the coming end of the Gentile Times. Still, there were numerous religious groups who claimed to be Christ’s followers. So a crucial question needed to be answered: Who among those groups were the wheat? To settle that question, Jesus began to inspect the spiritual temple in 1914. That inspection and cleansing work involved a period of time—from 1914 to the early part of 1919.*

YEARS OF INSPECTION AND CLEANSING

7. When Jesus began his inspection in 1914, what did he find?

⁷ When Jesus began his inspection, what did he find? A small group of zealous Bible Students who for well over 30 years had given their strength and fortunes to pursue a vigorous preaching campaign.* What a joy it must have been for Jesus and the angels to find that those relatively few but sturdy wheat stalks had not been choked by Satan’s weeds! Still, there arose a need to “cleanse the sons of Levi,” the anointed ones. ([Mal. 3:2, 3](#); [1 Pet. 4:17](#)) Why so?

8. What developments took place after 1914?

⁸ In late 1914, some Bible Students were disheartened because they had not gone to heaven. During 1915 and 1916, opposition from outside the organization slowed down the preaching work. Worse, after Brother Russell’s death in October 1916, opposition arose from inside the organization. Four of the seven directors of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society rebelled against the decision to have Brother Rutherford take the lead. They tried to cause division among the brothers, but in August 1917, they left Bethel—a cleansing indeed! Also, some Bible Students gave in to the fear of man. Still, as a whole they willingly responded to Jesus’ cleansing work and made the needed changes. Hence, Jesus judged them to be true Christian wheat, but he rejected all imitation Christians, including all of those found within the churches of Christendom. ([Mal. 3:5](#); [2 Tim. 2:19](#))



[“Look! I Am With You All the Days”](#)

[The Watchtower Announcing Jehovah’s Kingdom—2013](#)

- - **Paragraph 6:** This is an adjustment in understanding. Previously, we thought that Jesus’ inspection took place in 1918.

- [w13 7/15 pp. 15-19](#)

- Feeding Many Through the Hands of a Few

-
-

w13 7/15 p. 19

FEEDING THE MANY FROM PENTECOST ONWARD

8. How did new believers at Pentecost show that they clearly recognized the channel that Christ was using?

⁹ Starting at Pentecost 33 C.E., the resurrected Christ used his apostles as the channel through which he fed the rest of his anointed disciples. **(Read Acts 2:41, 42.)** That channel was clearly recognized by the Jews and proselytes who became spirit-anointed Christians that day.

Unhesitatingly, they “continued devoting themselves to the teaching of the apostles.” According to one scholar, the Greek verb rendered “continued devoting themselves” can mean having “a steadfast and singleminded fidelity to a certain course of action.” The new believers had a deep hunger for spiritual food, and they knew exactly where to get it. With unwavering loyalty, they looked to the apostles to explain the words and deeds of Jesus and to shed fresh light on the meaning of the scriptures pertaining to him.*—[Acts 2:22-36](#).

9. How did the apostles show that they kept their responsibility to feed Jesus’ sheep clearly in focus?

⁹ The apostles kept their responsibility to feed Jesus’ sheep clearly in focus. For example, notice how they handled a sensitive and potentially divisive issue that arose in the newly formed congregation. Ironically, the matter involved food—*material* food. Greek-speaking widows were being overlooked in the daily food distribution, but Hebrew-speaking widows were not being overlooked. How did the apostles resolve this delicate issue? “The twelve” appointed seven qualified brothers to oversee the “necessary business,” the food distribution. The apostles—most of whom had no doubt shared in distributing food to the crowds whom Jesus had miraculously fed—saw that it was more important for them to focus on *spiritual* feeding.

Thus, they devoted themselves to “the ministry of the word.”—[Acts 6:1-6](#).

10. How did Christ use the apostles and older men in Jerusalem?

¹⁰ By 49 C.E., the surviving apostles had been joined by certain other qualified elders. **(Read Acts 15:1, 2.)** “The apostles and older men in Jerusalem” served as a governing body. As the Head of the congregation, Christ used this small group of qualified men to settle doctrinal issues and to oversee and direct the preaching and teaching of the Kingdom good news.—[Acts 15:6-29; 21:17-19; Col. 1:18](#).

11, 12. (a) What shows that Jehovah blessed the arrangement by means of which his Son fed the first-century congregations? (b) How was the channel that Christ used for spiritual feeding clearly recognizable?

¹¹Did Jehovah bless the arrangement by means of which his Son fed the first-century congregations? Most definitely! How can we be sure? The book of Acts gives us this report: “Now as they [the apostle Paul and his traveling companions] traveled on through the cities they would deliver to those there for observance the decrees that had been decided upon by the apostles and older men who were in Jerusalem. Therefore, indeed, the congregations continued to be made firm in the faith and to increase in number from day to day.” ([Acts 16:4, 5](#)) Notice that those congregations prospered as a result of their loyal cooperation with the governing body in Jerusalem. Is that not proof of Jehovah’s blessing on the arrangement by means of which his Son fed the congregations? Let us remember that spiritual prosperity is possible only with Jehovah’s rich blessing.—[Prov. 10:22; 1 Cor. 3:6, 7](#).

¹²Thus far we have seen that Jesus followed a pattern when feeding his followers: He fed many through the hands of a few. The channel he used for spiritual feeding was clearly recognizable. After all, the apostles—the original members of the governing body—could provide visible proof of heavenly backing. “Through the hands of the apostles many signs and portents continued to occur among the people,” states [Acts 5:12](#).^{*} Hence, there was no reason for those who became Christians to wonder, ‘Who really are the ones through whom Christ is feeding his sheep?’ But by the end of the first century, the situation changed.



In the first century, there was clear evidence of whom Jesus was using to feed the congregation (See paragraph 12)

WHEN THE WEEDS WERE MANY AND THE BLADES OF WHEAT FEW

13, 14. (a) What warning did Jesus give about an attack, and when did his words begin to come true? (b) From what two quarters would the attack come? (See endnote.)

¹³ Jesus foretold that the Christian congregation would come under attack. Remember, in his prophetic illustration of the wheat and the weeds, Jesus warned that a newly planted field of wheat (anointed Christians) would be oversown with weeds (imitation Christians). The groups, he said, would be allowed to grow side by side—undisturbed until the harvest, which would come at “a conclusion of a system of things.” ([Matt. 13:24-30, 36-43](#)) It was not long before Jesus’ words began to come true.*

¹⁴ The apostasy made some inroads in the first century, but Jesus’ faithful apostles acted “as a restraint,” holding back the contamination and influence of false teachings. ([2 Thess. 2:3, 6, 7](#)) However, once the last of the apostles died, the apostasy took root and flourished during a long growing season that lasted for many centuries. Additionally, during that time, the weeds became many and the blades of wheat were few. There was no consistent, organized channel for dispensing spiritual food. That would eventually change. But the question is, When?

HARVESTTIME—WHO WOULD DO THE FEEDING?

15, 16. The Bible Students’ diligent study of the Scriptures yielded what results, and what question arises?

¹⁵ As the end of the growing season neared, there were strong stirrings of interest in Bible truth. Recall that in the 1870’s, a small group of sincere truth-seekers got together and formed Bible classes apart from the weeds—imitation Christians within the churches and sects of Christendom. With humble hearts and open minds, those sincere Bible Students, as they called themselves, made a careful and prayerful search of the Scriptures.—[Matt. 11:25](#).

¹⁶ The Bible Students’ diligent study of the Scriptures yielded rich results. Those loyal men and women exposed false doctrines and spread spiritual truths, publishing and distributing Bible literature far and wide. Their work won the hearts and convinced the minds of many who were hungering and thirsting for spiritual truth. An intriguing question therefore arises: Were the Bible Students in the years that led up to 1914 the **appointed channel** through which Christ would feed his sheep? No. They were still in the growing season, and the arrangement for a **channel** to provide spiritual food was still taking shape. The time had not yet come for the weedlike imitation Christians to be separated from the true Christian wheat.

17. What important developments began to unfold in 1914?

¹⁷ As we learned in the preceding article, the harvest season began in 1914. In that year, a number of important developments began to unfold. Jesus was enthroned as King, and the last days began. ([Rev. 11:15](#)) From 1914 to the early part of 1919, Jesus accompanied his Father to

the spiritual temple to do a much-needed inspection and cleansing work.* ([Mal. 3:1-4](#)) Then, starting in 1919, it was time to begin gathering the wheat. Was it finally the time for Christ to appoint one organized channel to dispense spiritual food? Yes, indeed!

18. Jesus foretold that he would make what appointment, and what was the critical question as the last days got under way?

¹⁸In his prophecy about the time of the end, Jesus foretold that he would appoint a channel to give out spiritual “food at the proper time.” ([Matt. 24:45-47](#)) Which channel would he use? True to the pattern he set in the first century, Jesus would once again feed many through the hands of a few. But as the last days were just getting under way, the critical question was, Who will be the few? That and other questions about Jesus’ prophecy will be discussed in the next article.

Paragraph 3: On a later occasion, when Jesus miraculously fed 4,000 men, besides women and children, he again gave the food “to the disciples, the disciples in turn to the crowds.”—[Matt. 15:32-38](#).

Paragraph 7: During Peter’s lifetime, the “little sheep” who would be fed all cherished the heavenly hope.

Paragraph 8: The fact that new believers “*continued* devoting themselves to the teaching of the apostles” implies that the apostles were teaching on a regular basis. Some of the apostles’ teaching was permanently recorded in the inspired books that are now part of the Christian Greek Scriptures.

Paragraph 12: While others besides the apostles received miraculous gifts of the spirit, it seems that in most cases, the miraculous gifts were passed on to others directly by or in the presence of an apostle.—[Acts 8:14-18; 10:44, 45](#).

Paragraph 13: The apostle Paul’s words found at [Acts 20:29, 30](#) show that the congregation would be attacked from two quarters. First, imitation Christians (“weeds”) would “enter in among” true Christians. Second, “from among” true Christians, some would become apostates, speaking “twisted things.”

Paragraph 17: See the article “Look! I Am With You *All* the Days,” in this issue, page 11, [paragraph 6](#).

ARTICLE 6

1914 Time of the End

The Bible speaks of the time in which we are living as the 'last days' or the 'time of the end'.(2 Timothy 3:1; 1 Peter 1:5) It began in 1914 when Jesus Christ was enthroned as king in the heavens.

Source : us [Truth That Leads To Eternal Life, page 94, 1968](#) + [Cover](#)

[...] the beginning of the “time of the end” in 1914. And, as Jesus said, “this generation will by no means pass away until all these things be accomplished.” [...] of the time of the end in 1914 will still be live on earth to witness the end of this present wicked system of things.

Source : us [The Watchtower, 1 May 1968, page 272](#) + [Cover](#)

In examining these Scriptural facts, something else also captures our attention. According to Bible chronology, the time of the end began in the autumn of 1914 C.E., [...]

Source : us [Watchtower, May 1 1967, page 262](#) + [Cover](#)

"Times of the Nation"

Bible chronology also verifies that the "last days" began in 1914. [...] This is worthy of notice, particularly in view of prophecy mark this as the last generation of this wicked world.

Source : us [Awake Oct 8, 1966, page 19](#) + [Cover](#)

In examining these Scriptural facts, something else also captures our attention. According to Bible chronology, we are already over 52 years into the wicked system of things “time of the end”. That time began in the autumn of 1914. Watchtower May 1, 1967, page 262

ARTICLE 7

The date was felt by Russell to be significant for a number of reasons. It was the end of the Gentile Times. False religion and all government would be cast down. Armageddon would occur, and all the dead would be raised. Finally, Jesus would begin his thousand-year reign on paradise earth.⁸⁰ Therefore, it is clear that Russell and the early Bible Students taught and understood that 1914 marked the end of the world. Rutherford, and those who followed him, changed the focus and began to teach that 1914 was the beginning of the ‘end times’ as none of the predicted events occurred in 1914. This was because the date is central to Watchtower theology and cannot be easily abandoned. It became more prudent to change the significance of the date than maintain the earlier understanding. So rather than being the end of all things, 1914 became the ‘beginning of the end’. Along with this new understanding, it was proclaimed that the generation of 1914 would not pass away without Armageddon occurring. That did not happen, and the Watchtower Society has now abandoned the claim that those alive in 1918 would not die before Armageddon. The Watchtower Society uncoupled the end of time from 1914, saying that anyone who knew an anointed person from that generation also belongs to the generation that would see Jesus return. This is referred to as an overlapping generation.⁸¹ The major issue that prevents the Watchtower Society from abandoning 1914 is that it is the underpinning for 1918, the year that Jesus and Jehovah are said to have come and inspected the churches of the world. Based on that that inspection, in 1919 only the Jehovah’s Witnesses were found to be pure and true to His Word. Therefore, Jehovah appointed the Watchtower Society as His organization and His mouthpiece for the world. If 1914 is abandoned, the declaration of the Watchtower Society’s as God’s mouthpiece disappears as well.

⁸⁰ “Changed Dates: Failed Predictions,” *JWfacts.com*, accessed August 6, 2018, <https://www.jwfacts.com/watchtower/1800s.php>. “1914 has been a pivotal date for the Watchtower. The expectations prior to 1914 included it being the end of the Gentile Times, the end of Armageddon, the fall of false religion, the end of all governments, the resurrection, the start of Jesus 1000 year reign and paradise on earth.”

⁸¹ Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, “Holy Spirit’s Role in the Outworking of Jehovah’s Purpose,” *Watchtower*, April 15, 2010, 10, accessed August 6, 2018, <http://www.watchtowerwayback.org/jw-wb/English/Magazines/The%20Watchtower/2010%20The%20Watchtower%20STUDY.Pdf>. “He evidently meant that the lives of the anointed who were on hand when the sign began to become evident in 1914 would overlap with the lives of other anointed ones who would see the start of the great tribulation. That generation had a beginning, and it surely will have an end.”