

I try in my own mind and heart to understand the feelings of all [Jehovah's Witnesses], including those of the Governing Body. Based on my own [60 years] experience among them I believe that they are, in effect, the captives of a concept. The concept or mental image they have of "the organization" seems almost to take on a personality of its own, so that the concept itself controls them, moves them, or restrains them, by molding their thinking, their attitudes, their judgments...

The ...concept of "the organization" ... becomes, in fact, the dominant, controlling force. Crisis of Conscience, p. 296

The Society promotes the belief that whatever *they* say, it is as if *God* is the One who is speaking. For example,

the February 1, 1967 *Watchtower* says, "What (the Witnesses) are telling people is what God in his Word

says; he is the one talking.... So too, God uses men to speak to those within the congregation of believers...

When they give counsel...it is God who is speaking by means of them.' The article also asks, "How can one

identify the organization through which God is speaking to mankind today?" p. 72. On page 15 of the May 1,

2000 *Watchtower* the Governing Body reminds Witnesses that, "Jehovah speaks to us through the Bible and by

means of 'the faithful and discreet slave' [organization]." – See Chapter 6, "Who Is God's Organization?"

Total belief in this concept explains why Jehovah's Witnesses are so willing to accept whatever comes to them from the Watchtower Society no matter how complicated it is or how impossible it may be to understand, and even if it

doesn't make any sense to them. They view what comes from "God's organization" as coming from God himself.

One of the things that makes the Watchtower's organizational concept so powerful is that nobody notices that it is "in fact, the dominant, controlling force" in their decisionmaking process. But it controls them by molding the thinking of those who write the literature (under the direction of the Governing Body) as well as the Witnesses who read it. *Everything is explained and understood from the standpoint that the Watchtower Society is God's organization.*

If [you]¹⁷ have become thoroughly convinced that this is Jehovah's organization that he is guiding and directing his people [i.e. Once you are a captive of this concept], [you] shall not be unsettled by anything that happens ... If [you] really have faith [you] will know that if something is wrong God will straighten it out eventually. May 1, 1957 Watchtower, p.284.

*[Our] witness yet includes the invitation to **come to***

Jehovah's organization for salvation. November 15, 1981 Watchtower, p.21. – Also see Chapter 6, "Who Is God's Organization?"

What Can Be Known What Needs To Be Known

- 1. Paradise earth**
- 2. Everlasting life (You will never die)**
- 3. God's name "Jehovah"**
- 4. God's name is not "God" or "Lord"**
- 5. God is not a Trinity**
- 6. Jesus is not God**
- 7. Jesus didn't die on a cross**

8. The soul is not immortal
9. Hell is not hot
10. The dead are not conscious
11. The earth will not be destroyed
12. The sign of the last days
13. The new heavens
14. The new earth
15. God's Kingdom (Government)
16. Christian neutrality
17. Blood Transfusions
18. The "sign" of Christ's presence
19. Christmas, birthdays, holidays
20. How to identify the true religion
21. World Empire of false religion
22. Armageddon
23. The resurrection of the dead
24. When "death will be no more"
25. Born Again
26. The "superior authorities"
27. The "end of the Gentile times"
28. Baptism
29. Etc.

Versus

Is the

Watchtower

Society

God's

organization?

It is evident that the only way any organization could be God's organization would be if God appointed it as such. Jehovah's Witnesses believe that the Watchtower Society received that appointment in the spring of 1919 in fulfillment of the most important Scripture in Watchtower theology—Matthew 24:45-47. Jehovah's Witnesses don't think of Matthew 24:45-47 as the most important Scripture in their organization's theology because their Governing Body doesn't present it to them that way. This may be because their Governing Body may not think of it this way either. But that doesn't mean it isn't the most important Scripture in their theology. This religion could not exist without the way they interpret this Scripture. Just as the Christian religion would not exist **if Jesus is not God's Son**, the Watchtower religion would not exist **if the Watchtower**

Society is not God's organization.-

For the purpose of this study it is only necessary to *understand* their interpretation of this passage of Scripture—not to agree or disagree with it.

Whether it is *Biblically* correct doesn't matter. The only concern here is if it is *historically* correct. That is, does what went on in their history agree with the way they interpret

Matthew 24:45-47 in their January 15, 2008 *Watchtower*:

When Christ inspected the faithful and discreet slave' in 1918, he found those anointed ones on earth to be faithful in providing spiritual 'food at the proper time.' Hence, Jesus was pleased thereafter to appoint them "over all his belongings." (Read Matthew 24:45-47) -

p. 24

Their teaching is that Jesus returned in 1914 to begin his

Second Coming or “invisible presence”³⁰ in fulfillment of Matthew 24:3. Then in 1918 he began to make an examination of all the religions claiming to represent him to see if any of them had been faithfully and discreetly providing true teachings of the Bible (spiritual food) at the proper time during his absence. They say that the only religion he found doing so was the Watchtower Society and therefore *Jesus appointed them over all his earthly interests or “belongings” in the spring of 1919.*

Notice that the *only* reason Jesus would have made the above appointment is *if he had found them providing ‘spiritual food at the proper time.’* Their *God’s Kingdom of a Thousand Years Has Approached* book explains this very critical point under the heading “Time of Inspection by the Slave’s Master.” On pages 350-355 Frederick Franz explains...*The serving of food, the right sort of food at the proper time was the issue. It had to be according to this that a decision must be rendered by the returned master [Jesus] ... On inspecting [the Society] in the year 1919 C.E... Jesus Christ did find the appointed “slave” faithful and discreet in the feeding of his [disciples].*

Jehovah’s Witnesses know that this “food” and “feeding” refers to the teachings that come from the Watchtower Society. It is evident that Jesus would not base his decision *in 1919* on what the Society would be teaching *today*.³¹ Rather, as Franz explained on pages 349 and 350... *Could they, by even their latest record [of teachings] down till 1919 prove that they themselves were the*

*composite “faithful and discreet slave” class of Jesus Christ? ... The **quality** of the food itself was to be considered.*

– para. 40 And so Jesus would make his decision in 1919 based upon what they had been teaching “down till 1919.” He would check the “quality” of those teachings to make sure they were *the right things to be teaching and the right time to be teaching them* (“the right sort of food at the proper time”). What was Jesus’ decision? The book simply asserts that they “met the test.” – p. 350, para. 40

HEIR most detailed explanation of Matthew 24:45-47 is presented in the book *God’s Kingdom of a Thousand Years Has Approached*.²⁸ It was written by the Society’s most respected “eminent Bible scholar” Frederick Franz.²⁹ He was the president of the Watchtower Society from 1977 until his death in 1992. Published in 1973. See Chapter 17, “THE SLAVE WHO LIVED TO SEE THE ‘SIGN,’” pages 349-357.

This then is the very precise way they interpret and apply Matthew 24:45-47. This is the only official basis for their claim to being God’s “faithful and discreet slave organization” and “the only true religion” today.

And so when Jehovah’s Witnesses are asked, “Why do you believe the Society is God’s organization,” they all *should* answer...

Because of Jesus’ appointment in 1919 in fulfillment of Matthew 24:45-47.

If Jesus acknowledged the Society as his “faithful and discreet slave organization” and therefore appointed them

“over all his earthly interests” in 1919 then there is at least a chance that they are still God’s organization today. But if he didn’t make that appointment in 1919 then there is no chance no matter what they are teaching today.³²

There is only one way to know what decision Jesus would have made in 1919. Therefore according to their interpretation, there is only one way to know if the Society could be God’s organization today: *By examining the same teachings they say Jesus examined in 1918-1919 to see if they could have passed such an exam.* Jehovah’s Witnesses have never done this.

1876 Through 1919

The Teachings Jesus Examined

The Society’s teachings since 1919 were not part of the record that Jesus would have examined in 1918-1919.

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Although the Society no longer publishes any of the literature that they say Jesus examined in 1918-1919, they have made such an examination possible today with the publication of the organization’s history in their book *JEHOVAH’S WITNESSES Proclaimers of God’s Kingdom*. It

contains enough direct statements and references to other books that Jesus would have examined (which are available on the Internet) 34 so that it is possible today to know what decision he would have made in 1919.

#1 The Second Coming of Christ

40 Years Too Early Then 29 Years Too Late

Surely Jesus would have noticed what they were teaching about his Second Coming, or “invisible presence” as they prefer to call it. – Matthew 24:3 37

Today they teach that he returned to begin his Second Coming in 1914. But the *Proclaimers* book explains that this was *not* what they were teaching before, during and for many years after Jesus' “inspection” in 1918-1919. On pages 46 and 47 it explains that in 1876...

[Second Adventist Nelson Barbour] succeeded in convincing Charles Taze Russell that Christ's invisible presence [Second Coming] had begun in 1874.

Page 133 mentions this again along with a footnote explaining that “a clearer understanding of Biblical chronology”

[pointing to 1914] was published in **1943**.³⁸ Even if

Witnesses are able to notice what is being said about this

matter, they are unable to notice what it means. The first thing it means is that the Society didn't meet

any of their own standards relative to their teaching

about the Second Coming of Christ. Their 1874 date

was never (1) the right teaching, or (2) the right time to be teaching it. (3) It had not been what God reveals in

his Word, and (4) had been based on human wisdom.

Therefore it should have been rejected when Russell first

heard about it from Nelson Barbour in 1876. **2.** It also means that if Jesus did return in 1914, neither

President Russell nor President Rutherford ever knew it.³⁹ It is possible that there is not a single Jehovah's Witness who realizes this. What are the chances that God would select such prominent men for his sole "channel of communication" but then never communicate to them when His Son had returned?

3. It isn't just that they didn't know that Jesus' Second Coming began in 1914. They both insisted that they *did* know that it happened in 1874. What are the chances that "the God of *truth*" would deliberately allow his earthly channel to misinform the whole world about his Son's return for almost seven decades (1876-1943)?

4. The title of *The Watchtower* magazine included the words "Herald of Christ's Presence"... According to what they teach today, from 1879 to 1914 it was announcing that he was present *when he wasn't!*

Russell died in 1916. Rutherford died in 1942. According to the *Proclaimers* book, the date for Christ's

Second Coming ("invisible presence") was not changed to 1914 until the year following Rutherford's death.

Therefore, if Jesus returned in 1914 neither man ever knew it. This should come as quite a surprise to most

Witnesses if they were able to realize it. **5.** Since they believed that Jesus had returned in 1874 it means that they were not watching for his return in

1914. And yet in Luke's parallel account (12:37) Jesus said that they would be "happy" only if 'on arriving (he) found them watching for his return.' But he would not have found them watching in 1914 because they believed he had already arrived forty years earlier.

6. Luke 12:36 says, “At (Jesus) arriving and knocking they may *at once* open to him.” But if he arrived and began knocking in 1914 but they didn’t acknowledge his arrival until 1943, it means that he would have had to knock for *twenty-nine years* before they opened to him.

7. Since in 1914 they were the only religion that believed that Jesus had already returned, it means that they were the only Christian religion that was *not* watching or waiting for his return in 1914. And yet Jehovah’s Witnesses have been led to believe that they were the only religion that *was* watching for his return in that year. Again, the purpose of this examination is to make sure that what was going on in the Society’s history agrees with their interpretation of Matthew 24:45-47. In this case it is evident that they don’t agree. There is nothing in Jesus’ illustration or the Society’s interpretation of it that allows for his “faithful” slave to not realize that he had returned until almost 30 years after the fact (1914 to 1943). And it certainly doesn’t allow his “discreet” slave to so indiscreetly misinform the whole world about when he had returned for almost seven decades (1876-1943).

Surely the Society had not been either faithful or dis-creet relative to the time of the Second Coming of Christ.

And yet the only way they even have a chance of being God’s organization today is if they had been both faithful and discreet from 1876 to 1919.

But no matter how “positive” Russell’s “conviction” was; no matter how “convinced” he was; no matter how “determined” he was doesn’t change the fact that what he

“proclaimed” for the rest of his life wasn’t true. But again, the *Proclaimers* book simply ignores any significance to this fact while pointing the finger at everyone else when it mentions a pamphlet that Russell wrote in order “to counteract wrong views regarding the Lord’s return.”⁴² But Russell was never able to counteract *his own* wrong view. It wasn’t counteracted (according to what they teach today) until 27 years after his death.

In a personal letter to me dated 2/20/85 they said...

Those in Christendom professing to be Jesus’ disciples did not discern his invisible presence, from and after 1914, therefore proved to be asleep and unworthy of receiving any privileges in connection with dispensing spiritual food. But the Society didn’t discern his invisible presence from and after 1914 either.⁴³ If the lack of discernment on the part of Christendom proved that they were asleep and unworthy of receiving Jesus’ appointment, then wouldn’t the Society’s identical lack of discernment mean that they too were asleep and therefore just as unworthy of receiving any privileges in the dispensing of spiritual food?

Their letter may not be so much a deliberate attempt to mislead as it is an indication of the lack of clear thinking on the part of the Society’s religious leaders and their writers. And yet these are the men Jehovah’s Witnesses depend on for their entire spiritual “food at the proper time.”

#2 “We Are Not Your Faithful & Discreet Slave.”

Today the Governing Body teaches that Charles Taze

Russell (by himself alone) never was “the faithful and discreet slave” of Matthew 24:45. But the *Proclaimers* book points out that there was a critical period of time in the Society’s history when *they taught that he was*. 44

On page 142 it explains that in 1881 Russell originally taught the he was *not* that “slave” – just as they teach today.

But on page 143 it acknowledges the extremely important point that a few years later he changed his mind...

Over a decade [after 1881] Brother Russell’s wife publicly expressed the idea that Russell himself was the faithful and [discreet slave]. The view that she voiced concerning the identity of the “faithful [and discreet slave]” came to be generally held by (Jehovah’s Witnesses) for some 30 years.⁴⁵ Brother Russell did not reject their view...[After those 30 years] the understanding expressed by Brother Russell in 1881 [that he was not that “slave”] was reaffirmed in The Watch Tower of February 15, 1927.

What this is saying is very important. It is saying that from about 1897 to February 1927 (30 years) the Society was teaching that Russell was “the faithful and discreet slave” and therefore that the Society was not that slave.

What this means is even more important...The first thing this means is that if they are correct today

when they teach that Charles Russell was not Jesus’ “faithful and discreet slave,” then what they were teaching from 1897 down till 1919 was not true. It had been based on Russell’s wife’s “human wisdom.” It also means that according to their interpretation of Matthew 24:45-47, in the spring of 1919 Jesus was saying

to those associated with the Society...

***You are** my faithful and discreet slave.*

But according to their history, they were saying...

***We are not** your faithful and discreet slave!*

They believed Charles Russell was Jesus' "slave." And

since he died in 1916 they taught that he was in heaven with

Jesus. Therefore they were teaching that the Society was not

the "faithful and discreet slave." If Jesus did in fact try to

appoint them in 1919 they rejected it.⁴⁷ And they continued to reject his offer every day for the next eight years until

February of 1927.

If in 1919 Jesus (or anyone else) had asked the question

in Matthew 24:45, "Who really is the faithful and discreet

slave?" they would have answered according to what they

believed – "Charles Taze Russell." There wasn't anyone on

earth or in heaven who could change Rutherford's mind until

he himself changed it in 1927. But that was too late.

Why It Matters

This is another case where the Society's history does not fit their interpretation of Matthew 24:45-47. There is no suggestion in Jesus' illustration or the Society's interpretation of it that this slave didn't know who he was and therefore would mistakenly refuse to accept Jesus' appointment for even one day let alone almost three thousand days (eight years). Surely this was not "proper and timely spiritual food" relative to the identity of the most important slave on earth. **How The Governing Body Explains It**

They don't even try to explain it in the *Proclaimers*

book. They simply treat this matter as if it doesn't matter.

But when they *do* try to explain it they often misrepresent what the Society was teaching at that time, as they do on page 16 of the January 15, 1994 *Watchtower* where they say, “In **1919** that slave was identified as the remnant of anointed Christians.” But that’s not true. They didn’t identify that slave this way until **1927**. In 1919 that slave was still identified as Charles Russell.

3 The Sewing Machine & Christ’s Thousand-year Reign—1873

Today Jehovah’s Witnesses are looking forward to the beginning of the one thousand-year Reign of Jesus Christ.

But the ‘food’ that Russell had provided right up to his death was that his Reign had *already* begun. In his *Foreword*

to the 1916 Edition of *The Time Is At Hand* he said...

The Bible chronology 49 herein presented shows that the six great thousand-year Days, beginning with Adam are ended,50 and that the great Seventh Day, the thousand years of Christ’s Reign, began in 1873.

Russell placed great emphasis on the modern inventions that had come into existence since 1873 as proof that Christ’s thousand-year Reign had begun in that year. The very first invention he offered as proof was...

The sewing machine, one of the first, began to reach its perfection 43 years agoThe Governing Body again treats this incorrect teaching as having no significance other than the fact that Russell was mistaken. They are unable to allow themselves (or the rest of Jehovah’s Witnesses) to think in terms of what Jesus would have thought about it when deciding if the Society had been truly faithful and discreet about what they had

been teaching about his thousand-year Reign.

4 “Millions Now Living

Will Never Die!” 52

In February of 1918 (just when they say Jesus began his examination) President Rutherford began a worldwide public lecture campaign with the above dramatic title. In 1920 he published a booklet with the same name. The reason why millions of people then living would never die was because Jesus was going to begin his one thousand year Reign in 1925. He also assured everyone...

We may confidently expect that 1925 will mark the return of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and the prophets of old.. They and many other “faithful men of old” would then become “Princes” in all the earth to help in the administration of Christ’s Kingdom on earth. Then just as confidently he concluded...

Based upon the promises set forth in the divine Word, we must reach the positive and indisputable conclusion that million now living will never die.⁵⁴

*But as it turned out, millions then living did die. Jesus didn’t begin his thousand-year Reign and he didn’t resurrect anyone in 1925. **Why It Matters***

Jesus’ illustration doesn’t allow for his “faithful and discreet slave” to be proclaiming a false teaching or prophecy at any time, especially not all during the time he was examining them.

How the Governing Body Explains It

In this case the Proclaimers book does refer to Rutherford’s

“Millions Campaign” at least eight times and even points some of the above things out. On page 632 it says...

In the lecture “Millions Now Living Will Never Die,” delivered by J.F. Rutherford ... attention was directed to the year 1925... On the basis of what was said... this year was associated with expectations of resurrections of faithful pre-Christian servants of God with a view to their serving on earth as princely representatives of the heavenly Kingdom.

The book doesn't tell us “what was said” but does admit that Rutherford was “mistaken.” As with all their other teachings that were not true, this one is also treated as if it didn't matter that Rutherford's message was false. Note their following comments on page 425 ... What an exciting message they proclaimed! ... Newspaper

notices and billboards were used to advertise the lectures. The subject was intriguing.⁵⁶

What they are saying here is all true. The only problem with Rutherford's “exciting message” was that it wasn't true. The Governing Body presents this matter as if it didn't matter that Rutherford's message was false. On page 632 they go on to mention some of the wonderful blessings it would have meant for mankind if that message had been true. They then conclude with a very positive...

What a happy prospect! Though mistaken, they eagerly shared [Rutherford's false message] with others.

For seven years Rutherford had said that millions then living were never going to die, and that Jesus' thousand year

Reign would begin in 1925, and that he was going to

resurrect Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in that same year. Although none of these things happened the Governing Body appears to be proud of the fact that they eagerly shared that false message with others. It is difficult to picture Jesus finding anything worth sharing in Rutherford's message.⁵⁷ Even worse, if that's possible, on page 698 of the November 15, 1955 Watchtower President Knorr went so far as to say that God was the One who was responsible for the preaching of Rutherford's message! Under the heading, "Jehovah Is In His Holy Temple" it says...

*Stirring up increasing interest in them, **Jehovah caused to be preached** from 1918 the startling public message, "Millions Now Living Will Never Die."*

This is amazing. How can anyone say such a thing? And how can Jehovah's Witnesses read what they are saying and not notice anything wrong with it? The answer to both questions must be that it is one of the consequences of believing what they want or need to believe so deeply that such things can be said and read without bothering those who write and read them.

*There was still much more that Jesus would have noticed during a 1918-1919 examination. Both Russell and Rutherford had set numerous dates for specific events that they said were arrived at by understanding "Bible chronology" and "Bible prophecy." Most of them are contained in a series of seven books called *Studies in the Scriptures*. Russell wrote the first six and Rutherford was responsible for the seventh.⁵⁸ Those books were the primary source of*

“food at the proper time” until several years after Jesus’ inspection was over. The following is a partial list of other dates and events associated with them that the Society eventually acknowledged were not true. Of course, Jesus would have known they were not true the moment they started teaching them...

38 Other Dates/Events That Didn’t Happen

In the July 1894 *Watch Tower* Russell stated, “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.” Rutherford said that his date of 1925 was “indisputable.”

All of the above dates/events were said to be in fulfillment of *Bible* prophecies. But they all turned out to be unfulfilled *Watchtower* prophecies.

59 Keep in mind that all of the teachings considered in this study are ones that *the Society* now acknowledges were not true.

59 The references to all the above can be found at <http://www.freeminds.org/history/part1.htm> under the heading,

“Spiritual Food at the Proper Time.” Russell’s *Studies In The Scriptures* and Rutherford’s *The Finished*

Mystery are available at <http://www.freeminds.org/sales/tempsale.htm>

#5: 1799: The beginning of “the last days” or “time of the end” RUSSELL

#6: 1829: The beginning of an understanding of the mysteries of prophecy

#7: 1844: Wise virgins went forth to meet the Bridegroom

#8: 1846: God’s sanctuary was cleansed

#9: 1873: End of 6000 years of human existence

#10: 1874: The return of Christ to begin his Second Coming

#11: 1874: The beginning of the 40-year Harvest or preaching work

#12: 1874: Second cry, “Behold the Bridegroom.”

#13: 1874: The beginning of the Battle of Armageddon

#14: 1878: God’s Kingdom was “set up” in heaven

#15: 1878: Beginning of Christ’s Kingdom Rule

- #16: 1878: The fall of “Babylon the Great” (false religion)**
- #17: 1878: Beginning of “Times of Restitution.”**
- #18: 1881: Close of “the heavenly calling” (spiritual Israel)**
- #19: 1881: Resurrection of all the “dead in Christ”**
- #20: 1914: The anointed Christians would be taken to heaven before 1914**
- #21: 1914: The end of the “Harvest” or preaching work**
- #22: 1914: God’s Kingdom would be firmly established in the earth**
- #23: 1914: Jesus would be present as earth’s new Ruler**
- #24: 1914: All Gentile nations would be destroyed by God by the end of 1914**
- #25: 1914: Jerusalem would begin to rise from the dust of divine disfavor to honor**
- #26: 1914: Israel’s blindness would begin to be turned away**
- #27: 1914: This year would be the farthest limit of the rule of imperfect man**
- #28: 1914: Battle of Armageddon would end**
- #29: 1914: Peaceful blessings would begin to be recognized on earth**
- #30: 1914: Complete destruction of “Babylon the Great” (all other religions)**
- #31: 1914: The “last days” would end in 1914**
- #32: 1915: God’s Kingdom will be fully established near the end of 1915**
- #33: 1915: Anointed Christians would be taken to heaven soon after 1914**
- #34: 1918: God’s ‘fire’ from heaven would fall on Christendom RUTHERFORD**
- #35: 1918: Millions of church members of Christendom would be destroyed by God**
- #36: 1918: Christendom would go down to oblivion as a system.**
- #37: 1918: God will destroy the churches wholesale**
- #38: 1920: There would be worldwide all-embracing anarchy.**
- #39: 1920: All earthly governments will pass away.**
- #40: 1920: All republics will disappear in the fall of 1920**
- #41: 1925: Anointed Christians would be taken to heaven.**
- #42: 2914: End of the thousand-year Reign of Christ**

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Why It Matters

Although the Governing Body (and therefore the rest of the Witnesses) treats all this *wrong* food at the *wrong* time as having no importance today, these teachings would have been very important to Jesus in 1919 if he was examining them to make sure they were serving the *right* food at the *right* time.

On pages 200 and 201 the *Proclaimers* book specifically mentions four other “Practices That Have Been Abandoned” sometime *after* 1919...

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43 Christmas

They didn't stop celebrating Christmas until more than seven years after Jesus' inspection was completed.

44 Birthdays

They didn't stop celebrating birthdays until several years after 1919.

45 The Cross

Today the cross is said to be of pagan origin. But it was predominantly displayed on the front cover of every issue

of the *Watch Tower* magazine up to October 15, 1931.

46 The Great Pyramid of Gizeh

On page 201 the *Proclaimers* book explains...

*For some 35 years Pastor Russell taught that the Great
Pyramid of Gizeh was God's stone witness, corroborating Biblical Time Periods.*
