



# The Reflector

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## THE JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES AND 1914 A. D.

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It would be difficult to overstate the importance of the year 1914 A. D. in the thinking of a Jehovah's Witness. To him it is by far the most important year of all years. It is the year around which his entire life and religion revolves. Take away the significance of 1914 and you take away his reason for being a Witness. In a word, the Jehovah's Witnesses Movement stands or falls with the significance of 1914 A. D.

The 'Witness' sees all the signs of Christ's coming (they say "His presence") of Matthew 24th chapter fulfilled in world events since 1914.

The "Witness" sees Satan cast out of heaven to the earth (and started World War I) in 1914. "When Christ hurled the Devil down to the earth, it was certain to mean 'woe for the earth,' (Rev. 12:12). So during the 'time of the end' the world can never be the same as before 1914. Never again will the world be normal and peaceful. We know this must be true, Jesus said so. For Jesus called World War I and the woes that came with it by a special name. What is that name? Jesus called it 'a beginning of pangs of distress' (Matt. 24:8)." – *Paradise Lost to Paradise Regained*, p. 180.

The "Witness" sees 1914 A. D. as a marked year in the Bible. "In the first year of its publication it (*Watch Tower* – EOB) pointed to the date 1914 as marked in the Bible." – *What Has Religion Done for Mankind?* p. 308.

The "Witness" sees the establishment of the kingdom of God in 1914 and God's bringing forth the final remnant of spiritual Israelites in that kingdom since 1914. "The remnant of spiritual Israelites have proclaimed worldwide the establishment of God's

kingdom in 1914." – *Let God Be True*, p. 218. "After giving birth to the royal Ruler in 1914 God's woman brought forth the final remnant of her seed." – *What Has Religion Done for Mankind?*, p. 302. "God's kingdom was born in 1914." – *Ibid.*, p. 304.

### Why 1914?

Charles Taze Russell, the founder of the Movement, first conceived the idea that 1914 was an important year in God's plan. He first predicted the Lord would return in 1874. He arrived at this date as follows: He said the establishment of the papacy was in 539 A. D. He then said the 1,335 days of Daniel 12:12 were significant. Using a day for a year he made the 1,335 days equal as many years. Add this to 539 and it brings one to 1874 A. D., the year Christ was to return. He then added, later, 40 years to bring it to 1914. This 40 years were years of "Gentile harvest" to correspond to 40 years of Jewish harvest. To explain why Christ did not come visibly in 1874 or 1914 the idea was inserted that He came and is present, but invisibly. In fairness to modern "Witnesses," I have read no evidence that they use Russell's method of computing the year 1914.

The modern "Witness" uses the year, 607 B. C., as his starting date. "Since the overthrow of the kingdom of Judah by Babylon in 607 B. C., no king of David's line had sat upon the 'throne of Jehovah' at Jerusalem. No one was to sit upon the divine throne in the everlasting kingdom until the 'appointed time of the nations' which began that year, were fulfilled 2,520 years later, in 1914 A. D." – *What Has Religion Done for Mankind?*, p. 227. "Because 2,520 years before that

date, (1914) namely in 607 B. C., Jehovah God used Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon as his executional servant to destroy Jerusalem..." *Ibid.* p. 209

Various of their writings show that they correctly consider Zedekiah as last king of Judah.

The modern "Witness" then adds his 2,520 years to 607 B. C. as follows: "Seven times to pass until God gives the kingdom 'to whom he wants to' (Dan. 4:31, 32)" – *Make Sure of All Things*, p. 90. Next, from Rev. 12:6, 14; 11:2,3, he establishes "time, times and a half time" (3. 5 times) to be 1, 260 days. Then, "seven times" (twice 3. 5 times) of Daniel must be 2, 520 days. Then, "each prophetic day counted as a year, make 2, 520 years." – *Make Sure of All Things*, p. 90.

Thus, to the "Witness," the kingdom came in 1914 A. D. "2, 520 years from autumn 607 B. C. E. runs to autumn of 1914." – *Make Sure of All Things*, p. 90.

### **Nothing plus nothing equals nothing!**

The "Witness" has no basis for his starting figure. The overthrow of the kingdom of Judah (with its last king, Zedekiah) was in 586 B. C. and not in 607 B. C. "When the little Hebrew kingdom of Judah rebelled against his rule, the Chaldean King destroyed Jerusalem (586 B. C. ) and carried several thousand Hebrews captive to Babylon." – *Civilization past and Present*, published by Scott, Foresman and Co., p. 75. "Zedekiah, original name Mattaniah, last king of of Judah (597-586 B. C.) and final ruler of the line of David." – *Funk & Wagnalls Standard Reference Encyclopedia*, Vol. 25, p. 946). Other references: *Encyclopedia Britannica*, p. 157; *Britannica Junior*, Index, Vol. 10, p. 153.

The "Witness" has no basis for his adding figure of 2, 520 years. He bases it on the "seven times" of Dan 4:31,32. The best "interpretation" as to when verse 32 was fulfilled that I have ever read begins with verse 33. "At that moment the word itself was fulfilled upon Nabuchadnezzar, and from mankind he was being driven away and vegetation he began to eat just like bulls, and with the dew of heaven his own body got to be wet, until his very hair grew long just like eagles' (feathers) and his nails like birds' (claws).' And at the

end of the days I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted up to the heavens my eyes, and my own understanding began to return to me; and blessed the Most High himself, and the One living to time indefinite I praised and glorified because his rulership is a rulership to time indefinite and his kingdom is from generation after generation... At the same time my understanding itself began to return to me, and for the dignity of my kingdom my majesty and my brightness themselves began to return to me;... and I was reestablished upon my own kingdom, and greatness extraordinary was added to me." – Dan. 4:33,34,36. *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures* as "rendered from the Original languages by the New World Bible Translation Committee" and Copyright, 1961 by *Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania*. "(All Emphasis mine – EOB). Verse 33 in the King James Version starts: "The same hour was the thing fulfilled upon Nebuchadnezzar..." But even the Watch Tower's translation clearly spells out the fulfillment!

When the "Witnesses" starting date is viewed in the light of historical fact it is of no value. When the interpretation of the "seven times" which is added to the starting date is viewed in the light of the very next verse, it comes to naught. Friend, when you add nothing to nothing you get nothing – not 1914 A. D.

### **What about Jeremiah's 70 years?**

To arrive at 607 B. C. as a starting point, the "Witness" begins with a well established historical date – the fall of Babylon in 539 B. C. He then correctly notes that two years later (2nd year of Cyrus) the return of Jews to their land began in 537 B. C. He then notices that Jeremiah prophesied of "seventy years of desolation" in Jer. 25:10, 11. He goes back 70 years from the restoration to the destruction, putting it at 607 B. C. as the year the last king of Judah (Zedekiah) was overthrown. He then enlists the testimony of Josephus, the well known Jewish historian: "I will now relate what hath been written concerning us in the Chaldean histories, which records have a great agreement with our books... (Berosus (Babylonian priest and historian of the

third century B. C. E. ) shall be witness of what I say... relating the acts of (Nabopolassar), he describes to us, – ‘How he sent his son Nabuchodonosor (Nebuchadnezzar)... against our land... and how... he... set our temple that was at Jerusalem on fire; nay, and removed our people entirely out of the country, and transferred them to Babylon; when it so happened, that our city was desolate during the interval of seventy years, until the days of Cyrus king of Persia. – ‘Josephus Against Apion,’ Book 1, Section 19;’ (All the above information is from the *Watch Tower* published book: *Make All Things Sure*, p. 85.

The “Witness” is wrong about the time involved in Jeremiah’s seventy years. Jeremiah’s 70 years date from Nebuchadnezzar’s first siege of Jerusalem (some 19 or 20 years) before the siege that overthrew Zedekiah, the last king to sit on “Jehovah’s throne” in Jerusalem. Nebuchadnezzar laid siege to Jerusalem three times: (1) in the days of King Jehoiakim – 2 Kings 24:1; Jer. 25; (2) In the days of King Jehoiachin – 2 Kings 24:11; and (3) In the days of King Zedekiah – 2 Kings 25. It was the first of these and not the last that Jeremiah’s seventy years date from.

A careful reading of Josephus confirms this fact. The passage from this historian quoted by the *Watch Tower* publication shows the 70 years he refers to dates from the first rather than last siege. Just two sections later, Josephus says: “These accounts (those of Berosus and others) agree with the true histories of our books for in them it is written that Nebuchadnezzar in the eighteenth (a footnote says, “nineteenth”) year of his reign, laid our temple desolate, and so it lay in the state of obscurity for fifty years; but that in the second year of the reign of Cyrus its foundations were laid, and it was finished again the second year of Darius.” – *Josephus Against Apion*, Book 1, Section 21. Thus, the siege described two sections earlier (Section 19) was the first siege and his 70 years date from it until the 2nd year of Cyrus in 537 B. C.

Dating 50 years back from the return from Babylon (537 B. C.) puts the overthrow of the last king to sit on “Jehovah’s throne in Jerusalem” at about 587 B. C. – agreeing with all recognized historical sources who give

it around 586 B. C. or 587 B. C. There is simply no way to get Zedekiah’s overthrow at 607 B. C.

This throws a damper on the “Witnesses” entire timetable. It destroys the 1914 date, since it based on the assumption that the last king of David’s line (Zedekiah) was overthrown in 607 B. C., when it was really in 586 B. C. or 587 at the earliest. It throws a damper on his prediction that the millennium is to begin in 1975 (a prediction made in the 1966 *Watch Tower* book, *Life Everlasting in Freedom of the Sons of God*). He thinks the millennium is to begin at the end of 6,000 years of man’s existence on earth. But with about 20 years adding in his chronology, it throws that date all out of kilter too. That sure does make date setting awfully complicated, besides being unnecessary, presumptuous and foolish.

Friend, the kingdom of God was in existence in the first century – long before 1914. “And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power.” (Mark 9:1). If it didn’t come until 1914 then there were people around that year that would have made Methuselah look like a teenager! Paul wrote: ‘Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son.’ (Col. 1:13). Thus, sometime between the Lord’s words in Mark and Paul’s words in Colossians, the kingdom was established. Read carefully the second chapter of Acts for the account of its establishment.

If you are studying with the Jehovah’s Witnesses, think about these things before you give your allegiance to a system based on so faulty a foundation.

(Note: “*Paradise Lost To Paradise Regained*”; “*What Has Religion Done For Mankind?*”; “*Let God Be True*”; “*Make Sure Of All Things*”; “*New World Translation Of The Holy Scriptures*”; and “*Life Everlasting In Freedom Of The Sons Of God*” are all books published sold by *Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society*.)

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# THE SECOND COMING OF JESUS

Bryan Gibson

Here's the mistake many make when studying this subject, in particular the events surrounding His second coming. They start with highly figurative passages, like those in the Book of Revelation, propose some theory heavily based on speculation, and then try to fit every other passage in the New Testament into their theory. There is a better way. Start with the plain statements of Scripture, get a clear understanding of them, and then proceed to the more difficult passages. Make sure then that your understanding of the more difficult passages does not conflict with the plain statements.

Here's what we find when we study those plain statements:

It is foolish to make predictions about the time of His return, because He will come as "a thief in the night" (1 Thessalonians 5:2; 2 Peter 3:10). Understanding that a thief does not warn us ahead of time (Luke 12:39), we need to heed the following admonition: "Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming" (Matthew 25:13).

His coming, or appearance in the clouds, will be obvious to everyone, because it will be signaled by a shout, the voice of the archangel, and the trumpet of God (1 Thessalonians 4:16; 1 Corinthians 15:51-52).

At the time of His return, which is described as the "last day," there will be a resurrection of the dead, both of the righteous and the unrighteous (Acts 24:15; John 6:39-40, 44, 54; 12:48). Jesus will speak and "ALL who are in the graves will hear His voice and come forth..." (John 5:28-29).

The righteous who have died will meet Jesus in the air, followed by the righteous who are still alive (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17). This will of course involve a separation of the righteous from the unrighteous (Matthew 25:32-33; 13:49).

The righteous, who will be given spiritual or incorruptible bodies (1 Corinthians 15:35-54), will then go to heaven to "always be with the Lord" (1 Thessalonians 4:17; see also John 12:16; 14:3; 17:24).

The unrighteous, on the other hand, will be cast into the lake which burns with fire and brimstone (Revelation 21:8), an eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels (Matthew 25:41). They will be "punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and

from the glory of His power" (2 Thessalonians 1:9).

"The heavens will pass away with a great noise...both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up" (2 Peter 3:10). The saved will dwell in a "new heaven and a new earth" (2 Peter 3:13; Revelation 21:1).

Via <http://www.southeastcofc.com/>

## "FOR LACK OF KNOWLEDGE"

Don Alexander

For lack of knowledge:

Faith is forgotten,  
 Hope is hindered,  
 Desire is destroyed,  
 Responsibility is restricted,  
 Workers are weakened,  
 Laborers are lessened,  
 Holiness is halted,  
 Immorality is enthroned.

Self is sanctified,  
 Error is honored,  
 Pride is praised,  
 Doctrine is despised,  
 Truth is taunted,  
 Lasciviousness is loved,  
 Salvation is spurned,  
 Saints are splintered.

Souls are neglected,  
 The Lord is rejected,  
 His grace is detracted,  
 His cause is destroyed.

**Torch**, 1974, Volume 9.