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**1968 EDITION, PAGES 88,89**

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"A fourth of the world is starving today. Tomorrow will even be worse. Famine over most of the world now is more terrible than most of us can imagine... There are now more people hunting desperately for food than at any other time in history."

More recently, the book entitled "Famine--1975!" said concerning today's food shortages:

"Hunger is rampant throughout country after country, continent after continent around the un. developed belt of the tropics and subtropics. Today's crisis can move in only one direction -toward catastrophe. Today hungry nations; tomorrow starving nations.

\* *Look*, June 11. 1946.

11. (a) To what extent have food shortages added to the distress, as Jesus foretold? (b) What does the book: entitled "Famine--1975!" say about the future?

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"By 1975 civil disorder, anarchy, military dictatorships, runaway inflation, transportation break-downs and chaotic unrest will be the order of the day in many of the hungry nations.""

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"A fourth of the world is starving today. Tomorrow will even be worse. Famine over most of the world now is more terrible than most of us. can imagine ... There are now more people hunting desperately for food than at any other time in history.

More recent reports have shown that a constant lack of adequate food, resulting in chronic malnutrition, has become the "major world hunger problem today." The London *Times* reported:

"There have always been famines, but the scale and ubiquity [presence everywhere] of hunger today is on a totally new scale .... Today mal-

\* *Look*, June 11, 1946,

% U.S.A. Presidential Commission on World Hunger (1980).

11. (a) To what extent have food shortages added to the distress, as Jesus foretold? (b) How do food shortages of our day differ from those previous?

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nutrition is said to affect more than a thousand million people; perhaps as many as 400 million live constantly on the brink of starvation." -June 3, 1980.

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***Maintaining an Open Mind-A Double Standard***

( Number 24, Originally published, April 20, 1986 )

"The importance of having an open mind so as to win God's approval is shown in the words recorded at Ephesians 5: 10, 17. There we read: '*Keep on making sure of what is acceptable to the Lord. on this account cease becoming unreasonable, but go on perceiving what the will of Jehovah is.* ', - *Awake!*, November 22, 1984, page 8. This quotation was taken from the opening paragraph of an article titled: "An open Mind Wins God's Approval." The publishers, The Watchtower Bible & Tract Society, saw fit to italicize, for emphasis,

those words which convey the need for open mindedness to be a continuous, on-going process. Several paragraphs later, on the following page, under the subheading: "How to Find Religious Truth," they add: "An open mind is willing to do what 1 John 4: 1 recommends. It says: "Beloved ones, do not believe every inspired expression, but test the inspired expressions to see whether they originate with God, because many false prophets have gone forth into the world." -Ibid. page 9.

The article from which the above was taken was preceded in this journal by the subject: "An Open or a Closed Mind-Which Do You Have?" To help its readers determine the answer to that question for themselves they said the following in paragraph three under the heading: "What Is An open Mind?, " An open mind is free from the fetters of prejudice, which by one dictionary is defined as follows: 'A judgment or opinion, favorable or unfavorable, formed beforehand or without due examination; a mental decision based on other grounds than reason or justice; especially, a premature or adversely biased opinion. ', -Ibid. page 3.

The above counsel is sound and in harmony with the written Word of God. The ability to reason on matters and make a judgment as to what we are to believe is an endowment from our Creator and one for which we must accept responsibility. Others may try to shape our decision-making process to make us conform to their notion of what is right but that does not ease us from the obligation to individually decide what we are willing to consider and conclude in our reasoning process. When we stand before the judgment seat of God it will do us little good to explain that we only believed and practiced what so-and-so told us to believe and practice. At that time each of us will be held individually responsible for our actions based on our decision-making process. Seeing that this is so, it would seem reasonable that we begin now to exercise that responsibility for ourselves. This takes into consideration the understanding that, at best, this is a difficult thing to do, that is, be open minded. We all bring a certain amount of prejudice and bias to certain issues because of our experience, training and personal feelings. Perhaps, the best we can hope for is to recognize this and try not to let them overly influence or dominate the process of decision-making. If we are defensive and unwilling to *really listen* to the other side of an issue we are not likely to benefit from an encounter with another point of view. To remain open-minded in the area of religious beliefs is especially difficult because this is an area where strong feelings are likely to be found. But this realization merely underscores how vital for spiritual growth the matter of remaining open-minded really is.

It is usually more comfortable and *safe* to ignore that which challenges our religious attitudes and beliefs. It may distress us to have certain views questioned and we would rather not deal with it. If we have this attitude we may find it easy to dismiss those who challenge us as being wicked or misinformed and

thus justify our refusal to give them a fair hearing. But would it not be better, in the long run, to *really* put our religious convictions to the test by allowing them to be challenged-if they are challenged? Consider what the Watchtower Society had to say about this matter in another one of its many books: "We need to examine, not only what we personally believe, but also what is taught by *any religious organization* with which we may be associated. Are *all its teachings in full harmony with God's Word*, or are they based on the traditions of men? If we are lovers of truth, there is nothing to fear from such an examination. It should be the sincere desire of everyone of us to learn what God's will is for us, and then do it." -*The Truth That Leads to Eternal Life*, (1968) page 13, par. 5 (italics added)

We are reminded in the Bible, "When anyone is replying to a matter before he hears it, that is foolishness on his part and a humiliation." -Proverbs 18: 13 *NW*. Hearing but one side of a matter is hardly hearing it fairly. Strong cases can be built in one-sided presentations and this reminds us of a court of law where two sides must be considered before a judge or jury can render a verdict. Proverbs 18: 17 addresses this "The first man to speak in court always seems right until his opponent begins to question him." -*Today's English Version*. If, after a fair hearing, we remain convinced we are correct in our view and the other fellow is wrong then we can take comfort in the fact that we had the moral courage to hear him out. If, on the other hand, there is some merit in his argument we can adjust our thinking accordingly. In proceeding this way we demonstrate that we are more interested in truth than in shielding some cherished view. Truth is enduring. The more it is put to the test the more brilliantly its light shines forth. (1 Peter 1 :24,25) To be willing to test one's faith and convictions demonstrates a noble faith. To be unwilling to do so shows a lack of faith.

Of course, the counsel offered in *The Truth That Leads to Eternal Life*, is directed towards those who are *not* under the influence of the Watchtower Society. They realize that many people view them and their literature as heretical and want nothing whatsoever to do with them or their literature. It is to this segment of the population that the appeal to be open-minded is addressed. One might be inclined to conclude that those who advocate being open-minded and objective in religious matters would welcome a critical examination of *their own* beliefs and practices. Such a conclusion would be a gross error. Once an individual becomes a Jehovah's Witness he is no longer

encouraged to remain open-minded. In fact, he is discouraged and even intimidated from doing so. An example of this can be found in the March 15, 1986 *Watchtower*, which presents a slanderous attack on any and all those whom they call "apostates." It is not so much that they come out strongly against their critics as it is the *method* they employ in the process- which is to revile them, impugn their motives and brand them as satanic in nature. In doing this they not only violate their own counsel but they also violate the principle contained in Jesus' teaching recorded at Matthew 7: 12:

"So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the law and the Prophets." -Matthew 7: 12 *NIV*.

This has come to be called "The Golden Rule" which negates a double-standard for those claiming to be Christ's disciples. That Jesus would say it represents the sum and substance of the "law and the prophets," illustrates how central and vital it is both as to teaching and practice. For this reason the articles contained in the March 15, 1986 *Watchtower* take on an even greater significance. The manner used by the Watchtower Society to direct Jehovah's Witnesses regarding materials written by those whom they call apostates betrays their unwillingness to do what they challenge others to do, namely, put their religious convictions to the test of critical examination. What is even more reprehensible is the use of the Bible to lend support to this arbitrary position. For example, the first article: "Do Not Be Quickly Shaken From Your Reason," drawn from 2 Thessalonians 2: 1,2, is applied to anything suspected as coming from the so-called apostates. Concerning this they write: "But the Devil and other opposers of true worship are skilled in deception. we should never forget that they stand ever ready to break our integrity if they can. Their propaganda is *designed* to weaken our faith, to cool our love for God, to sow doubts in, our minds-yes, to make our spiritual paradise appear to be no paradise at *all*."-*Watchtower*, March 15, 1986, page 11, (*Italics added*) This slanderous charge is not supported by any evidence to give credence to the truthfulness of the vicious accusations they make.

Actually, the text from 2 Thessalonians warns *against* the very thing they are doing-proclaiming "the day of Jehovah is here!" On page 11 they cast themselves in the role of the ones receiving a "beating" at the hands of apostates who "beat one's fellow slaves with slander and half-truths." (para) Unfortunately,

Jehovah's Witnesses accept and parrot these accusations. And it is not uncommon for them to say a certain book is full of "slander and half-truths" when, in fact, they have never read the book in question! It is clear that the Society is afraid to have Jehovah's Witnesses read such literature because their position cannot endure critical examination in certain areas. Rather than leave the matter up to the individual Witness to determine whether they choose to read something or not they poison the process by saying:

"Will curiosity cause you to read it, just to see what he has to say? You may even reason: 'It won't affect me; I'm too strong in the truth. And besides, if we have the truth, we have nothing to fear. The truth will stand the test.' In thinking this way, some have fed their minds upon apostate reasoning and have fallen prey to serious questioning and doubt. (Compare James 1: 5~8) So remember the warning at 1 Corinthians 10: 12: 'Let him that thinks he is standing beware that he does not fall.'" -*Ibid.* page 12, par. 7.

Compare, if you will, the above statement with what was quoted from earlier in *The Truth That Leads to Eternal Life*, where they tell others: "if we are lovers of truth, there is nothing to fear from such an examination." Why is it appropriate for others to do what they refuse to do? What is it, exactly, that they are afraid of? Is their position so shaky and biblically unsound that the slightest amount of argument against it leads to questions and doubts? In the more than thirty years that I was active as one of Jehovah's Witnesses I was many times challenged about my beliefs. I often read literature that was clearly intended to tear down my convictions. I did not refuse to read such material because I wanted to know what others were saying about us. How else could I defend my beliefs and refute their arguments unless I knew what they were saying? For the record, it was not what *others wrote* that led to my own questions and doubts about certain matters but, rather, *what the Watchtower Society wrote* that triggered questions and doubts! If they think their writings do not contribute to questions and doubts they are sadly mistaken. Usually, individuals arrive at questions and doubts from their own personal observations, research and study using just the Bible and Watchtower publications: After they reach this point on their own they may then read something written by someone who has had a similar experience. The Society knows they cannot biblically defend many of their basic teachings and must poison any fair-minded examination of such teachings.

Consider, also, the two scriptures mentioned in the above quotation. Do they really support the Society's application of them? What is James speaking about at James 1 :5-8? Is he not discussing the need for wisdom and the need to ask God for wisdom not doubting that God will hear and answer his prayer? Is he not condemning a lack of faith in connection with prayer and warning that such lack of faith would hinder God's answering his prayers? The Watchtower Society has many times used this scripture in relation to doubting or questioning THEM, which is an entirely different matter! We have a right to question and doubt *men* but not God. Also, the text from 1 Corinthians 10: 12 is discussing the history of the nation of Israel in relation to idolatry and immorality which serves as a warning for Christian believers to avoid such things. It was in connection with temptation to engage in these things that Paul offers his cautionary advise. But the *Watchtower* twists this scripture to appear to support their position that to read something written by an 'opposer' is courting spiritual disaster. This would only be so if one held views that were so weak in structure they could not endure the wind of examination. A faith structured on obedience to the commands of the Lord Jesus Christ can endure test. A faith structured on obedience to an organization will not endure: "Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rains came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash." Matthew 7: 24-27 NIV

If we are to genuinely "test the inspired expressions to see if they originate with God," how can it be considered wrong to read another point of view or consider reasons raised against a certain belief we might hold? Does God disapprove of those who are willing to do this? This is what the Watchtower Society is telling Jehovah's Witnesses. The Society says they are not the ones telling the Witnesses not to read such things but, rather, it is God telling them not to do so through the Scriptures. The problem with that reasoning is that any religious organization can use those same scriptures to prevent people from reading Watchtower literature. Let us say Witnesses calls on a Catholic family they are trying to get to read *The*

*Watchtower* magazine. The Catholic family realizes that *The Watchtower* is critical of Catholic teaching although they may not know to what degree this is so. Let us further assume that this family goes to their local priest to inquire about the propriety of reading *The Watchtower* with its anti-Catholic message. Could he not use the very scriptures the Society uses in arguing against such reading material? Could he not take his Catholic Bible and read to them from Romans where Paul says: "I implore you, brothers, be on your guard against anybody who encourages trouble or puts difficulties in the way of the doctrine you have been taught. Avoid them. People like that are not slaves of Jesus Christ, they are slaves of their own appetites, confusing the simple-minded with their pious and persuasive arguments." ~Romans 16: 17, 18 *Jerusalem Bible*. Let us say that after discussing this with their priest and considering scriptures like the above, they decide that it would be unwise to read *The Watchtower*. So when the Witnesses return they are informed that they do not want to read or even discuss religious matters with them any further. Could this family not say that it wasn't the priest who told them not to read *The Watchtower*, but rather, God who did so through the Scriptures?

How would Witnesses react to this argument and rejection? How would they feel to be labeled apostates and a threat to genuine Christians? The point is that *anyone* can use the Bible in this manner but it does not necessarily mean that the Bible is used appropriately. From its start the Watchtower Society has argued against church authority in matters of religion because it had no history of its own-no credentials. To overcome this disadvantage they have constantly repudiated religious authority and organization until they obtained religious authority and organization. Now the "shoe is on the other foot," as they say. Now *they* speak as the very religious authorities they put down and ridicule. The end result is that they now deny freedom of individual investigation to their own people while continuing to extol the virtue of individual examination to those outside of their camp. It is clearly a double-standard.

Given the perception that the average Jehovah's Witness has of the Watchtower Society and its governing body as representing "the faithful and discreet slave," it is relatively easy for the Society to manipulate their attitudes-attitudes not based on personal experience and individual examination but, rather, attitudes superimposed by the Society through its many publications and representatives. Using this

overpowering influence on the thinking of the Witnesses the Society has succumbed to the temptation to use fear and intimidation as a means to prevent any fair hearing of critical information. Note how they do this in the following statement presented in the current magazine under consideration regarding the reading, for any reason, of literature produced by a "known apostate": "If, out of curiosity, we were to read the literature of a known apostate would that not be the same as inviting this enemy of true worship right into our home to sit down with us and relate his apostate ideas?" (page 13, par. 10)

Such counsel coming from the Watchtower Society virtually paralyzes the thinking ability of Jehovah's Witnesses. It eliminates any real challenge raised against it. One has to have been in this mind-set environment to appreciate the crippling effect it has on one's ability to reason clearly and fairly. Those with courage enough to go against this kind of irrational "counsel" run the risk of being declared apostates just for reading such material! This diatribe goes on to compare such material to *pornography* and argues that just as a concerned parent would not consent to their minor child reading pornographic material neither does God consent to our reading religious pornography: "Well, if we would act so decisively to protect our children from exposure to pornography, should we not expect that our loving heavenly Father would similarly warn us and protect us from spiritual fornication, including apostasy? He says, Keep away from it." (Page 13, par. 12)

It is true that we ought not feed our minds on that which is either untrue or not up-building, religiously speaking. But how can an accurate judgment in this matter be made apart from individual, personal investigation? Are we to conclude that our heavenly Father will become upset and angry with us if we follow his advise and put to the test some religious teaching or practice? If this be the case then why does he tell us to "test the inspired expressions to see whether they originate with god?" (1 John 4:1; 1 Thess. 5:21. To the contrary, Jehovah God *challenges us* to grow up and take responsibility for our Christian beliefs and actions-not depending on others to assume that responsibility for us: "For everyone that partakes of milk is unacquainted with the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. But solid food belongs to those who through use have their perceptive powers trained to distinguish both right and wrong." -Hebrews 5: 13,14 *NW*)

The Greek word rendered "distinguish" in the

above translation is *Diakrisis* and means "a distinguishing, a clear discrimination, discerning, judging ... In Heb. 5: 14 the phrase consisting of pros, with this noun, lit., 'towards a discerning,' is translated 'to discern,' said of those who are capable of discriminating between good and evil." - *Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*.

On one hand, the Watchtower Society speaks of a "spiritual paradise" which suggests an abundance of nourishing spiritual food prepared for digestive systems that are supposedly developed enough to assimilate this strong 'meat in due season.' But in practice it appears that the Society views Jehovah's Witnesses as infants and incapable of making mature judgments on their own. This is a contradiction. But more importantly, this is a violation of what Jehovah God is really saying to us in Scripture. When ever the Society is taken to task for failed predictions they like to excuse themselves by saying "we don't claim to be inspired." Obviously, they are not inspired. That being the case, there is even *more reason* to put their declarations to the test! But, what if they did claim to be inspired? Would that make any difference about the need to "test the *inspired* expressions to see if they are from God?" According to the Bible we are obligated to continue to test what we have come to believe and hold on to only those things that withstand such a test. It is not a matter of blindly following along year after year with whatever is dished out by a religious organization boasting about its authority and speaking as if it were inspired!

In an oblique response to its critics the Watchtower Society trivializes its many prophetic failures by admitting that they have had to "*revise their expectations*" from time to time. In this there is a failure to take responsibility for the gravity of their errors in this regard. We are not talking about an organization that has merely offered comment on the Bible and its teachings. We are talking about an organization that, from its inception has claimed divine direction-a divine direction purported to be the *only divine direction available on earth*. It began with Charles T. Russell, who taught in his six-volume *Studies In The Scriptures*, that 1799 marked the beginning of the "time of the end;" that 1874 marked the "invisible return" of Jesus Christ to oversee a 40-year "harvest" or judgment period that would end in 1914 and mark the end of the world and glorification of the Church. (Earlier, Russell had predicted that the church would be glorified in the spring of 1881-seven years after Christ returned in 1874) Concerning his

chronology and date-fixing formula Russell wrote: "In this volume we offer a chain of testimony on the subject of God's appointed times and seasons, each link of which we consider Scripturally strong, while the whole of it when viewed together, in relationship which one part bears to another, gives evidence of a plan so broad and comprehensive, a design so deep, and a harmony so perfect, as to clearly manifest to the studious and reverent inquirer that it is beyond the breath and depth of human thought, and *therefore cannot be of human origin.*" -*The Time Is At Hand*, (1889) Page 15 (Italics added). When you argue that your date-fixing doctrines are not, and could not be, of "human origin" then you are teaching unequivocally that they are *divine in origin*. When this is the case one cannot simply say, when events do not substantiate these dates, that it was merely a miscalculation or supposition due to human error. Obviously, human error was the cause but the more serious error was the attributing of these miscalculations to God in the first place! Consider the religious arrogance it would take to make such a statement in the first place! It is one thing to assert that a certain view seems scriptural and reasonable but quite another thing to insist that a teaching is beyond "human origin." When it is said that such data presented as truth will be "clearly manifest to the studious and reverent inquirer," you are clearly implying that those who do not agree with you must not be studious or are lacking in reverence-or both! This pattern of arrogance and intimidation has been ever present in Watchtower literature. Their teachings are always presented as being from God. Notice how this typical pattern is presented in the following quotation: "As Jehovah revealed his truths by means of the first-century Christian congregation so he does today by means of the present-day Christian congregation. Through this agency he is having carried out prophesying on an intensified and unparalleled scale. All of this activity is not an accident. *Jehovah is the one behind all of it.*" -*The Watchtower*, June 15, 1964, page 365, par.22 (Italics added)

For more than a hundred years the Watchtower Society has had to repeatedly "adjust" their expectations due to prophetic failures. When the expected event or happening does not materialize they simply set forth some new explanation and pretend that nothing serious was involved in the failure. Sometimes they don't even bother to point out that what they are now saying about a subject refutes what they've been saying up to that point. It is like they feel Jehovah's Witnesses have no right to an explanation.

As a result they have been progressively striped of the various lines of argument that were originally viewed as "a harmony so perfect" that it was "beyond the breath and depth of human thought." Today, the only chronology and date-fixing that remains (in a form far removed from its original significance) is the 2520-year "Gentile Times" speculation that supposedly ended in October 1914. This year, they now say marked the *beginning* of the "time of the end," whereas Russell taught that it was to be the *conclusion* of the time of the end. Concerning this the Watch Tower said: "CAN IT BE DELAYED UNTIL 1914? Seventeen years ago people said, concerning the time features presented in MILLENNIAL DAWN, They seem reasonable in many respects, but surely no such radical changes could occur between now and the close of 1914: if you had proved that they would come about in a ~century or two, it would seem much more probable. What changes have since occurred, and what velocity is gained daily? 'The old is quickly passing and the new is coming in.' 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 say that 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 *the end* of the time of trouble. We see no reason for changing from our opinion expressed in the view presented in the WATCH TOWER of January 15, 1892. We advise that it be read again. "*~Zion's Watch Tower* (Italics in original) Photo copy on file.

Note how clearly the terminal date, 1914, is presented in the above. Also, note that it is presented with other unspecified dates as being "God's dates." In the same manner, the current doctrine that the generation of 1914 must live to see the end of the world (at least a portion of that generation) is couched in the same kind of language: "Just as surely as the generation living and hearing Jesus' warning in the first century was the generation that experienced a fulfillment of his words, just as surely will this generation-the generation seeing the major fulfillment of his 'sign' identifying the last days of this system of things-be the generation to experience the global tribulation due to come." -*The Watchtower*, July 15, 1976, page 435, par. 15.

Is there any allowance for error or adjustment in the above declaration? Is it not presented in the most forceful manner possible? When you say that the

generation of 1914, will "experience the global tribulation due to come," *"just as surely"* as did the generation of Jesus' day see a fulfillment of his words, you are taking it out of the realm of chance. In effect, you are equating your interpretation as being on a par with the inspired statements of the Son of God! Could anything be more arrogant?

In view of this dogmatism the following apologetic offered by the Watchtower Society falls far short of addressing the real issue: "Yes, Jehovah's people have had to revise expectations from time to time. Because of our eagerness, we have hoped for the new system earlier than Jehovah's timetable has called for it. But we display our faith in God's Word and its sure promises by declaring its message to others. Moreover, the need to revise our understanding somewhat does not make us false prophets or change the fact that we *are* living in 'the last days,' soon to experience the 'great tribulation' that will pave the way for the earthly Paradise. How foolish to take the view that expectations needing some adjustment should call into question the whole body of truth! The evidence is clear that Jehovah has used and is continuing to use his one organization, with 'the faithful and discreet slave' taking the lead. Hence, we feel like Peter, who said: 'Lord, whom shall we go away to? You have sayings of everlasting life.'" - *The Watchtower*, March 15, 1986, page 19, par. 15 (Italics in original)

Saying we have needed to "revise our understanding somewhat," does not fairly hardly describes the reality. An entire structure of end-times doctrine created by Charles T. Russell and his associates crumbled with the failure of 1914 to produce the end of the world. Following Russell's death in 1916, Joseph F. Rutherford, Russell's successor as president of the Watchtower Society, authorized the publication of *The Finished Mystery* in 1917 which postulated that the churches of Christendom would all be destroyed in 1918 (page 485) and the overthrow of the nations in worldwide anarchy would occur in 1920 (page 542, original edition) In 1918 Rutherford began to preach that millions then living would never die. In 1920 the book *Millions Now Living Will Never Die*, set forth the teaching that the ancient Hebrew "worthies" (prophets) would be resurrected in 1925 and rule as princes in Jerusalem and direct a worldwide "reconstruction" which would bring about the new earth. Like all of the predictions of the past, this one, too, fell to the ground unfulfilled.

Commenting on these failures the *Vindication* book

(1931) confessed: "God's faithful people on the earth emphasized the importance of the dates 1914 and 1918 and 1925. They had much to say about these dates and what would come to pass, but *all they predicted* did not come to pass." -Page 146 (Italics added) On the following page the book added: "God's kingdom has begun to operate. His day of vengeance is here, and *Armageddon is at hand and certain to fall upon Christendom, and that within an early date.* God's judgment is upon Christendom and must shortly be executed." -Page 147 (Italics added). The nearness of the end, heralded by the *Vindication* book in 1931 joined the previous speculations as untrue. The expectations created by the Watchtower Society regarding 1975 as the probable year Armageddon would break out can also be added to this long list of consistent false prophecies.

The Society argues that none of these predictions and their accompanying failures make them false prophets, but what else is it? When you preach in God's name that he will do such-and-such on a certain date or in a certain year and the thing predicted does not take place have you not fulfilled the definition offered at Deuteronomy 18:20-22 regarding false prophets? When the apostle Paul argued for the resurrection hope and set forth the resurrection of Jesus Christ as surety for this hope did he not say:

"Now if Christ is being preached that he has been raised up from the dead, how is it some among you say there is no resurrection of the dead? If, indeed, there is no resurrection of the dead, neither has Christ been raised up. But if Christ has not been raised up, our preaching is certainly in vain, and our faith is in vain. *Moreover, we are also found false witnesses of God, because we have borne witness against God that he raised up the Christ, but whom he did not raise up if the dead are really not to be raised up.*" -1 Corinthians 15: 12-15 NW. If the dead Christ was not really resurrected then those who said so were false witnesses of God and guilty of bearing witness against God! What could be more serious than that! To excuse it, as the Society does, and even make a certain virtue out of it because it represented "our eagerness for the new system," constitutes the sanctification of error. Their comment that such failures constitute no valid basis for calling "into question the whole body of truth," ignores the fact that it is not the Bible's body of truth that is in question as a result, but, rather the body of so-called truth built on speculative time features that is in question! Instead of courageously facing these issues the Watchtower Society chooses to

defame those who raise the issues and impugn their motives for demanding an answer of them.

"Some opposers claim that Jehovah's Witnesses are false prophets. These opponents say that dates have been set, but nothing has happened. Again we ask, What is the motive of these critics? Are they encouraging wakefulness on the part of God's people, or are they, rather, trying to justify themselves for falling back into sleepy inactivity?" -*The Watchtower*, March 15, 1986, (page 19, par. 14) Notice how casually they imply wrong motives to their critics and

turn attention away from the valid arguments raised by these critics. Self-justification always comes first with them. I believe this corporate failure to openly and frankly admit to the seriousness of their many prophetic failures only adds to the weight of guilt they have accumulated before God. No doubt the material presented in the current magazine will deepen and widen the crevice of fear and animosity of Jehovah's Witnesses against their former brothers now called apostates. I think it also deepens and widens the crevice of reprehensibility excavated by the Society's own testimony .□