

organization. The Bible is God's gift to his human family. It truly belongs to all of us and is addressed to all of us. It is not the property of any hierarchy or governing body upon whom we are dependent if we are to make heads or tails of it. No religious organization has a franchise on the moral principles set forth in the Bible. It is both inappropriate and unbecoming, therefore, for any religious system to boast of its morality.

The current prediction by the Watchtower Society that the "generation of 1914" must see the end of the present world and "since the 'generation' of 1914 is now well advanced in years, God's promise is really up-to-date news for young people today," may, indeed, produce certain moral uplift. Such 'uplift' would be an appropriate response to such a conviction but it (the response) does not validate the premise as true. It only validates the conviction. □

Daniel's Prophecy Regarding "The Time of The End"

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" Are We Living in the 'Time of the End?'" is the question put to the readers of *The Watchtower*, dated November 1, 1986. Featured prominently on the colorful masthead of this magazine is an hourglass running out of sand and a setting sun. These elements are used to dramatize the above question and silently answer, Yes, we are living in the last days. What is pictorially suggested on the masthead is confirmed by the journal's contents.

The theme text around which this subject is explored is Daniel 12:4 which, according to the Watchtower Society's *New World Translation* reads: " And as for you, O Daniel, make secret the words and seal up the book, until the time of the end. Many will rove about, and the true knowledge will become abundant." -Daniel 12:4 The words of Daniel are combined with those of Jesus in this presentation and used to establish what Jehovah's Witnesses already believe and are trying to convince others of, namely, that we are living at the *end* of the "time of the end. " Attention is drawn to the physical evidence that supposedly proves that the "time of the end" had its beginning in October, 1914 and then Daniel's prophecy is used to present the prophetic evidence that We are living in the "time of the end" that he spoke of. Nebuchadnezzar's dream (Daniel 4) is interpreted in such a way as to prove that a period of 2520 years ended in A. D .1914 called "The Seven Times" or "The Gentile Times. "

A summary of what all this means is set forth on page 7 under the subtitle: "How Late is the Hour?": Evidence that Jesus' sign is now undergoing fulfillment is as easily available as is newspaper or television news. And it offers conclusive proof that the chronological evidence in support of 1914 as revealed in Nebuchadnezzar's dream is correct. So today, in 1986, this means that we are already 72 years into 'the time of the end.' *Jesus promised that some members*

of the generation of people old enough to witness its beginning would still be alive when the great tribulation is brought to its completion.-Matthew 24:34." (Italics added)

This is a good example of the cavalier tone always present in Watchtower dogmatism. There are never any moderating statements that would validate any reservations or alternative explanations. It is pure, unadulterated dogmatism. Students of *The Watchtower* accept this dogmatism as their regular diet and never seem to have much trouble digesting it. Whatever is presented in *The Watchtower* is viewed as the truth-at least for the time being. Critical study of *The Watchtower* is forbidden by the Watchtower Society's governing body so that nothing they say can ever be challenged in an open forum. To approach *The Watchtower* critically is considered a sinful, disrespectful attitude toward God and the channel he has chosen to dispense spiritual food in these last days. And, lest anyone lose sight of that and begin to think the unthinkable the Watchtower Society is always there to remind them with intimidating statements like the following:

"How shall we view the spiritual food provided by this 'faithful and discreet slave',? Should it be viewed critically-'oh, well, it might be true but then again it might not be and so we have to scrutinize it very critically',? Some apparently have felt that way about it. To support their way of thinking they have quoted Acts 17: 11, which says of newly interested persons at Berea: 'Now the latter were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with the greatest eagerness of mind, carefully examining the Scriptures daily as to whether these things were so.' But does this mean that those Bereans were looking for flaws in the message they were hearing, or that their attitude was one of doubting? Does this set a precedent for regarding critically the publications

brought forth by the 'faithful and discreet slave,' with a view to finding fault? Not at all!"-The *Watchtower*, February 15, 1981, page 18.

Clearly, the above associates being critical with fault-finding. It does not allow for a rightly motivated critique of The *Watchtower*. In this way they do violence to the clear precedent set by the Bereans and commended to us by the apostle Paul and distort the very sense of what it means to be critical. It is said that the Bereans were "carefully examining the Scriptures daily." The English word "examining" translates the Greek word *anakrino* and has the sense of "to examine, investigate, is used (a) of searching inquiry, Acts 17: 11; 1 Cor. 9:3; 10:25,27 (b) of reaching a result of the inquiry, judging, 1 Cor.2:14,15; 4:3,4; 14:24 (c) forensically, of examining by torture, Luke 23: 14; Acts 4:9; 12: 19; 24:8; 28: 18." - *Vine's Expository Dictionary*. Obviously, the Bereans were well-motivated (noble-minded). Their critical examination of the Bible was in relation to what they were being orally taught by the Apostle but this did not alter their methodology. One cannot look for truth without, at the same time, looking for errors. Looking for flaws in argumentation is not wrong. It is a necessity. How could one arrive at truth without exercising the ability to discern error? At Hebrews 5: 11-14 we have this matter spelled out for us:

"Concerning him we have much to say and hard to be explained, since you have become dull in your hearing. For, indeed, although you ought to be teachers in view of the time, you again need someone to teach you from the beginning the elementary things of the sacred pronouncements of God; and you have become such as need milk, not solid food. For everyone that partakes of milk is unacquainted with the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. But solid food belongs to mature people, to those who through use have their perceptive powers trained to distinguish *both right and wrong*." -Hebrews 5. 11-14 *NWT*

Being able to distinguish or discern right from wrong means to be able to discriminate-to judge-something a baby cannot do. There is another factor worth noting here and that is the danger incumbent with the failure to grow in spiritual discernment. After urging his brothers to 'grow up,' as it were, the writer proceeds to spell out the danger in failing to do so: "Therefore let us leave the elementary teachings about Christ and go on to maturity, not laying again the foundation of repentance from acts that lead to death,

and faith in God, instruction about baptisms, the laying on of the hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment. And God permitting we will do so. It is impossible for those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, who have shared in the Holy Spirit, who have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the coming age, if they fall away, to be brought back to repentance, because to their loss they are crucifying the Son of God all over again and subjecting him to public disgrace. Land that drinks in the rain often falling on it and that produces a crop useful to those for whom it is farmed receives the blessing of God. But land that produces thorns and thistles is worthless and is in danger of being cursed. In the end it will be burned." - Hebrews 6:1-8 *NIV*.

What God is calling us to do is to mature spiritually and we cannot do that if we cannot discriminate or are forbidden to do so. The very fact that the Watchtower Society forbids individual discrimination of doctrinal matters should alert one to the danger of trusting them implicitly. They call for unquestioning acceptance of everything they teach under threat of excommunication for those who resist this overt subversion of one's God-given ability to think and reason. The writer of Hebrews clearly points out the danger of falling into apostasy for failure to develop spiritual discernment. (compare 1 Thess. 5 :21; 1 John 4: 1)

One ought not be too impressed with the arguments set forth by the Watchtower Society regarding its views concerning the "time of the end." Why? For one thing, they have been around this track a number of times before and each time have ridden a different horse (chronologically speaking). Another thing to remember is that our Lord said his return and subsequent judgment of the world-all part of events occurring in the Watchtower's "time of the end" ___ is said to overtake his disciples unawares. Jesus compared the days of Noah with his return and the sudden destruction that caught people by surprise. He then went on to drive home the lesson to be learned from this: "Then two men will be in the field: one will be taken along and the other be abandoned. Keep on the watch, therefore, because you do not know on what day your Lord is coming. But know one thing, that if the householder had known in what watch the thief was coming, he would have kept awake and not allowed his house to be broken into. On this account you, too, prove yourselves ready, because at an hour that you do not think to be it, the Son of man is

coming. "-Matthew 24:40-44 NWT.

The present position taken by the Watchtower Society is that A.D. 1914 is significant because it marked Christ's (invisible) return and the *start* of the "time of the end." They like to boast that they knew ahead of time how important that year would be. While that statement is not true, nevertheless they say things like the following: "For over three decades before 1914, Jehovah's Witnesses called attention to the significance of this date." -*The Watchtower*, Nov.1,1986, page 6. How does this claim and the one on the first page of this *Christian Respondent* regarding where we are in relation to the "time of the end, " square with what the Lord said? *The Watchtower* is saying that they knew the time of the Lord's arrival more than thirty years in advance and they also know that those alive at that time, or some of them, will still be alive when the final end arrives.

The Lord said you can't know that! He said his return in judgment would come at a time they (his true disciples) would not think it to be! It comes down to whom we choose to believe-the Watchtower Society or Jesus Christ, the Son of God. And, for the record, the '*significance*' of the 1914 date was far, far different in the pre-1914 period (and for about 15 years following 1914) than the '*significance*' is today in the minds of Jehovah's Witnesses. The statement is carefully worded in such a way as to misled those current readers of *The Watchtower* into thinking the Society was far-sighted in the pre-1914 period.

It was said above that the Watchtower Society has been around this track a number of times before. [data presented on pages 126, 127 document the Watchtower Society's pre-1914 time frame they postulated for the "time of the end."] It would be helpful to briefly review that track record. It is a proven fact that Charles T. Russell adopted his chronology regarding the "time of the end" from Nelson H. Barbour a second Adventist. Barbour had been associated with William Miller who had predicted the return of Jesus Christ in 1843 or 1844. Calculations drawn from the Bible book of Daniel figured prominently in that prediction. Miller was only one of many who espoused the conviction that the 2300 days mentioned at Daniel 8: 14 indicated a 2300-year period extending from 457 B.C. to 1843-44 A.D. Following the great disappointment that attended the 1843/1844 expectation, Barbour proceeded to structure new calculations while still holding to the 1843/1844 date as concluding the 2300-year prophecy of Daniel 8: 14. This, together

with his 2520-year "Gentile Times" time feature (Daniel 4) were all presented in the book *Three Worlds or Plan of Redemption*, published in Rochester, New York in 1877.

The official Watchtower version of their history says: "Of course, Russell's first book, *Three Worlds*, was written in collaboration with Barbour." -*Jehovah's Witnesses in the Divine Purpose* (1959) page 30. This is a misleading statement as it suggests that Russell collaborated in the *writing* of the book, which he did not. The original title-page merely identifies Russell as a *co-publisher* and subordinated to Barbour whose name appears in print twice as large as Russell's. The book is written in the first person and is obviously the work of Barbour. Russell's contribution was financial (see *Apocalypse Delayed The Story of Jehovah's Witnesses*, by M. James Penton for additional data regarding this early Russell-Barbour association and the derivation of Barbour's time feature calculations. (see also Carl Olof Jonsson's: *The Gentile Times Reconsidered*) As the Watchtower Society now does Russell argued that not only did the prophetic evidence prove the calculations correct but the physical evidence provided another indisputable witness to the truthfulness of his adopted chronology. For example, the words of Daniel 12:4 concerning the increase in knowledge were commented on as follows:

"Daniel, who had heard the long account of the strifes between the kingdoms of this world, and now finally of the triumph of God's Kingdom in the hands of Michael, the great Prince, was anxious to know *when* it would deliver the Lord's people. But he is told (verse 4): 'But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the Time of the End: (then) many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.' Not only does the general increase of knowledge experienced confirm the teaching of Daniel 11, that the Time of the End began in 1799, but the predicted running to and fro-much and rapid traveling also confirms it. These all belong to the Time of the End. The first steamboat was operated in 1807, the first steam car in 1831, the first telegraph in 1844, yet today thousands of mammoth cars and steamships are carrying multitudes hither and thither, 'to and fro.' Sir Isaac Newton, the celebrated astronomer of the seventeenth century, was greatly interested in this statement by the Prophet Daniel, and declared his belief that in fulfillment of it human knowledge would so increase that men would possibly travel at the rate of fifty miles an hour." -*Studies in the Scriptures*, Vol.3, 1917 edition, page 63.

While the above appears extremely naive today one must remember that in Russell's day such things were modern-day wonders. This points up the problem with measuring physical evidence and that is the relativity factor. A rock that is described as 'big' can only be so described if it is compared with a smaller rock. Drawing conclusions by measuring certain events by other events in relative fashion can be most misleading. For example, the Watchtower Society is forever touting 1914 and the Great War (as it was initially called) which began in Europe in August, 1914 as so outstanding that it has to mark the "beginning of pangs of distress" mentioned at Matthew 24:8. While there is no denying that the war of 1914-18 was *historically* significant for the twentieth century that does not prove it was *prophetically* significant. Yet they are always quoting its historical significance as 'proof' that it was prophetically significant. One does not necessarily follow the other. [see *The Sign of the Last Days-When?* by Carl Olaf Jonsson & Wolfgang Herbst which presents clear evidence of the Watchtower Society's misleading use of statistical evidence in relation to the events of 1914 and the post-1914 period.]

If there should be an all-out nuclear war in the closing years of the twentieth century how would World War I or World War II compare with it? There would be no comparison at all. The war of 1914-18 despite its horror would be very minor by comparison. It is all relative. And, it might be stated here that a careful reading of Matthew 24 shows that wars and other calamities are presented as non-signs of the Lord's return.

The time-frame speculation advanced by Barbour and made prominent by Russell was preached for fifty years. It was not until the end of the decade of the 1920's that the Society was forced to set it aside and replace it with a new chronological speculation and new dogmatism. The carefully structured interpretations of Daniel and Revelation, despite their fitting together so nicely and verified by the physical evidence, simply weren't true.

In 1917 the Watchtower Society published *The Finished Mystery* which was said to be the posthumous work of C.T. Russell but was actually written by others in the Society. [see *Apocalypse Delayed*] This book presented a verse by verse interpretation of Ezekiel and Revelation. Reasoning from the assumption that 1799 was a date fixed in biblical hermeneutics the Society proceeded to demonstrate the harmony of

these two books in relation to the Society's understanding of time and events and the ministry of Charles T. Russell.

It served to reinforce all of Barbour-Russell's misconceptions and added a number of others. It predicted that the year 1918 would see the destruction of the churches and churchgoers (p. 485) and international anarchy would swallow up the nations in 1920 (p.258). The publishers even argued that the book itself-*The Finished Mystery*-was fulfilling Bible prophecy! Referred to as "*The Seventh Volume*," they applied the fulfillment of Revelation 16:21 as being accomplished by what was written in *The Finished Mystery*: "And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great." - *KJV*. In its commentary on this verse the "great hail" was said to be "Truth, compacted, coming with crushing force. A concluding statement of how the seventh volume of *Scripture Studies* appears to the worshippers of the beast and his image." (p.258)

This book was more than fanciful, it was downright ridiculous. It is easy to understand why the Watchtower Society does not make it available to Jehovah's Witnesses today. Ignorance of the contents of this book enables the Society to write exaggerated claims about its value. The following is but one example: "But, just as foretold in Jesus' prophecy, those faithful to their service privileges were given work to do. Through the close of 1917 and into 1918 these servants of God, faithful to the work begun decades earlier by Pastor Russell, were energetically distributing *The Finished Mystery*. Within seven months after the new administration began, the Society's outside printers were busy on the 850,000 edition. As reported in *The Watch Tower* of 1917: 'The sale of the Seventh Volume is unparalleled by the sale of any other book known, in the same length of time, except the Bible.' This book proved to be a bone of contention, not only to those who were spiritually drowsy to opportunities of advanced Kingdom work, but also to those already serving as false spiritual guides to the people, the religious clergy of Christendom. The book was a stinging exposure of these false shepherds." - *Jehovah's Witnesses in the Divine Purpose*, page 73

In the above appraisal of *The Finished Mystery*, Jehovah's Witnesses are not made aware that this book was filled from start to finish with false prophecies and ridiculous applications. How men who claim to speak

for God can be so· deceitful is hard to comprehend. In presenting the book they slander those within their own ranks at the time who opposed its being published and they defame those against whom the book was targeted-the clergy. The Society always turns attention away from itself in these matters so as to point the finger of guilt at others. By focusing on the public opposition to this book they avoid discussing its contents.

In 1930 another attempt was made to interpret Revelation and part of Daniel in the two volume work titled: *Light*. By this time the starting point of the "Time of the End," had been moved up to October, 1914. All the errors of the past that misrepresented the meaning of Daniel, Ezekiel and Revelation were set aside as being of little importance. The readers of these two volumes were given assurance that God was not displeased with these earlier miscalculations and false predictions: "For many years those who have loved God have sought for an understanding of the prophecies, and particularly those written by Daniel and Ezekiel, and those in Revelation. God has never been displeased with this effort, as is indicated by the Scriptures; nor should it be expected that God will permit the true understanding of these prophecies to be had until his due time." ~*Light*, Vol.2, page 295.

While arguing that "God has never been displeased with this effort" (setting forth errors as truth in God's name) "as indicated by the Scriptures," he (J. F. Rutherford) fails to share with US those particular Scriptures that would establish the truth of that remarkable statement. Rutherford then introduces the time-worn argument that is always given when a new prediction is created to replace a failed one: *it wasn't time for it to be understood!* Now (whenever *now* is), we can understand it because *now* we have reached the time when it pleases God to reveal it to us! There is a maxim regarding understanding the Bible that seems appropriate to inject here: "If it's new it isn't true and if it's true it isn't new." After discounting the errors of the past and armed with the new understanding now possible because the time had arrived for it to be understood, Rutherford proceeds to discredit the historical truth that the four beasts of Daniel 2 represent in order: Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome. Not true, Rutherford argued. Why? Because none of this could be understood until the "coming of the Lord to his temple." The "latter days" (Daniel 2:30,28) must mean, according to Rutherford, the period of time following the installation of Christ as King. About this he wrote:

"These 'latter days' must refer to the 'day of the Lord,' which means the time beginning when God places his King on his holy hill of Zion. (Ps.2:6) That event occurred in 1914, and surely, then, the understanding could not be had until that time. It was after the Lord came to his temple in 1918 that his anointed people began to have a better understanding of the prophecies, because the temple in heaven was opened.(Rev.II:19)"-*Light*, Vol.2, pages 296,297

The image of Daniel 2 did not represent succeeding powers that would have an impact on the children of God, the Israelites, but rather it pictured "Satan's organization, both visible and invisible." -*Light*, Vol.2, page 298. The four different metals of the image did not represent succeeding powers but should be understood as follows: (1) "head of Gold" represents "Lucifer" (Satan); (2) "breasts and arms of silver" represents the "invisible princes or rulers" under Lucifer; (3) "belly and thighs of copper" represents "evil angels directed by Satan the head;" and (4) "legs of Iron" represents "the world powers, everyone of them, beginning with Egypt to the present day" The "feet partly of iron and clay" were said to be the mix of the "commercial, political, and religious" elements of Satan's organization. (see *Light*, Vol.2, pages 309-319).

In presenting this 'new light' Rutherford not only refuted his predecessor but, more seriously, he repudiated God's inspired interpretation as presented in Daniel! The simple fact is that we are not left in the dark as to what the various metals represent in chapter 2 of Daniel. To the king of Babylon, Daniel said, "you yourself are the head of gold. And after you there will rise another kingdom inferior to you; and another kingdom, a third one, of copper, that will rule over the whole earth. And as for the fourth kingdom, it will prove to be strong like iron." -Daniel 2:38-40 *NWF*.

The subsequent visions contained in Daniel's prophetic book enlarge upon and expand the meaning of Nebuchadnezzar's dream image and the influence these subsequent kingdoms would have over the people of God. All of the various days or periods of days are in harmony with the outworking of ancient historical events. The "little horn" of Daniel 7:8 is universally identified as Antiochus Epiphanes who emerged out of the kingdom of Greece after the death of Alexander the Great. It was Antiochus Epiphanes who desecrated the Temple of Jehovah in Jerusalem by offering swine's flesh on the sacred altar. It was he who took away the "daily sacrifice" and caused

"desolation and the surrender of the sanctuary and of the host that will be trampled underfoot." (Daniel 8: 13) The 2300 days mentioned in Daniel 8: 14 appear to apply to that period of time from when Antiochus profaned the temple until the rededication of the altar by the Jewish patriot Judas ben Mattathias (Gr. *Makkabaios* or *Maccabees*).

While commentators disagree as to which four kingdoms are identified, and there are variations in understanding certain specifics of Daniel's prophecy, it is fair to say that these differences do no violence to either history or the intent of Daniel's prophecies which show the ultimate triumph of God's sovereignty over the kingdoms of men. The "seventy weeks" of chapter 7 point to the coming of the messiah and fix that time in history as the "time of the end" in relation to Daniel's people. It must be remembered that with the overthrow of the commonwealth of Israel by Babylon there began a humiliating and oppressive succession of powers that trampled on the nation of Israel. Daniel's prophetic service pointed to the hope of deliverance for the nation and God's triumphant empowering of his only begotten son.

As the prophetic book of Revelation has served to comfort and strengthen the spiritual Israel of God through the gospel age so the book of Daniel comforted the children of Israel prior to the coming of Christ. The appearance of the messiah marked the "time of the end" of the Jewish system under the law. We do not need to look beyond that period to find fulfillment of all of Daniel's prophecies. Attempts of the past and present to read into Daniel's words fulfillments that go beyond the "time of the end" reached nearly 2000 years ago may produce certain similarities but one must be very cautious when saying that this is what the God of heaven had in mind when he gave these visions to Daniel.

For those who have a desire to better understand Daniel's writings I would urge them to obtain several good commentaries and compare these with one another. Most have valuable information to contribute and promote a scholarly approach to the matter. I have also found *Biblical Hermeneutics* by Milton S. Terry, published by Zondervan to be of much value in better understanding the whole approach to the subject of Bible interpretations. There are a number of excellent Christian book discount houses that offer a wide variety of study helps at reasonable prices.

One of the reasons the Watchtower Society comes

up with so many wrong understandings is that they violate sound principles of biblical exegesis. Their many errors compound themselves because not only do they set forth wrong views but they make null and void what the Bible is really saying to us. The damage that is done in this process is incalculable. Even those who break away from it often times find themselves adrift religiously because they take away with them much of the Society's wrong methodology. Their predisposition of thinking that all Bible commentaries and other Christian helps are satanic often prevents them from taking advantage of much good that can be found in them. At best such materials are only helps and should not be viewed as the definitive answer to everything. They do not always agree with one another. But this does not mean they are unworthy of study and consideration. Most display great reverence for the Word and are skilled in language, customs and biblical hermeneutics.

Each of us, of course, must assume personal responsibility for what we ultimately believe the Scriptures are telling us but we can benefit from the observations of others. The Watchtower Society has done a distinct disservice to Jehovah's Witnesses by poisoning their minds against any scholarship other than their own. The apostle Paul warned about being "tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching." - Eph. 4: 14 NIV. No group has been tossed around any more than Jehovah's Witnesses. The average shelf-life of Watchtower publications is very short.

In 1942 the Society published a book titled: *The New World*, which went into considerable detail in its interpretation of Daniel chapter 11 wherein a confrontation between the "king of the north" and the "king of the south" takes place. In this book the "king of the north" was identified as follows: "In 1914, history shows, 'the king of the north' included the Central Powers, or imperial Germany, Roman-Catholic Austria-Hungary, Roman-Catholic Italy, and the Vatican and its Hierarchy at Rome, which Hierarchy the war developments proved was working in collusion with Germany. In fear and for selfish gain Italy for a few years lined up with Britain in the fight, but after the setting up of a Catholic dictator in 1922 Italy returned to the 'king of the north' combine and till today it is one of the 'Axis Powers.' Japan has also entered the 'king of the north' combine by the side of Italy and Germany; and on March 28, 1942, the pope opened diplomatic relations with Fascist Japan, thereby rounding out his relationship with totalitarian Nazis and

Fascists. Therefore today 'the king of the north' is the religious-totalitarian world-power which claims the right to rule the earth in an absolute way. " - *The New World*, 1942, page 324.

The "king of the south" was also identified in this book: "In chapter eleven of Daniel's prophecy concerning the 'time of the end' the term 'king' does not mean the totalitarian dictator of Germany, the pope, or other individual. 'King' is the symbol of a world power, and this accounts for the fact that Daniel's prophecy shows that these two 'kings' would fight, for centuries, until the FINAL END in our day. During that time 'the king of the south' has been Egypt, the first world power, and her allies. In the nineteenth century the British Empire became involved in Egypt by reason of the Suez Canal and imperial matters. When the World War broke out Britain set up a Protectorate over Egypt, which protectorate has been replaced by a military alliance in 1936. The United States of America went into the World War on the side of Egypt and Britain. Therefore when the 'time of the end' began, in 1914, 'the king of the south' meant, . and still means, the world ruling-power that claims the right to rule and does rule in the name of democracy." -*The New World*, pages 322,323.

Repeatedly this book emphasized the point that we had reached (back there in 1942) the FINAL END of this centuries-long confrontation of these two "kings." The Blitzkrieg, or lightning war carried out by Germany against its European neighbors was viewed as fulfilling Daniel 11 :40: "At the time of the end the king of the South will engage him in battle, and the king of the North will storm out against him with chariots and cavalry and a great fleet of ships. He will invade many countries and sweep through them like a flood. "- Daniel 11:40 NIV.

Commenting on this application of the above scripture they said: "Blitzkrieg by 'the king of the north,' blood-chilling, nerve-shattering air-bombing attacks, mechanized mobile warfare, the Trojan-horse of the 'fifth column,' sea raiders, submarine prowlers, undeclared 'stab in the back' war moves, devilishly cunning co-ordination of all working parts, 'like a whirlwind, with chariots and with horsemen, and with many ships.' Poland crumples in eighteen days; Norway, Denmark, Luxembourg, succumb overnight; the dikes of the Dutch prove unavailing; republican France goes down and a devout religionist is put in as chief of state and the Vatican's representative for France declares it means the dawn of a new day for

France and of the whole world, yes, with democracy down and out!"-Ibid, pages 339,340.

The interpretation of Daniel chapter 11 presented in this book was set forth as taking place in the FINAL END and this was emphasized over and over again by capitalizing this expression. For years the Watchtower Society had argued that the world powers reached their LEGAL END in October, 1914. Now, in 1942, they were rapidly approaching their FINAL END! Already, at the international convention of Jehovah's Witnesses in St. Louis, Missouri (1941), Rutherford told his audience that soon all Jehovah's Witnesses would be locked up and then "they" could intone "peace and safety," and then the end would come. The resurrection of Daniel and the other Hebrew prophets was at hand and "may be expected back from the dead any day now ... shortly before Armageddon breaks." -*The New World*, page 104.

To "put their money where their mouth was," so to speak, a house was built in San Diego, California to house these resurrected ones. *The New World* continued: "In this expectation (the resurrection-any day now) the house at San Diego, California, which house has been much publicized with malicious intent by the religious enemy, was built in 1930, and named 'Beth-Sarim,' meaning 'House of the Princes.' It is now held in trust for the occupancy of those princes on their return." -Ibid, p .104. The "Princes" never showed up and the house was eventually quietly sold. This same book predicted that the Second World War then in progress would eventuate into a final world federation of totalitarian powers. After identifying the "two kings" of Daniel 11 they said: "'Be it noted that 'the king of the south' has disappeared from prophecy following verse forty. This is ominous. It suggests with other scriptures that *all nations go totalitarian before the FINAL END*, and the interests of 'the king of the north' and 'the king of the south' merge together, with religion on top as the binding tie. It means a federation of the world; and there are already published expressions and signs at hand that this shall take plac~ at the world peace conference, for which the Vatican's chieftain is grooming himself. Having merged, and both 'kings' having thereby gained their ends, then to knock out all danger of disturbing their scheme to dominate the world, there is only ONE THING, that is, to strike at the Kingdom of God, The Theocracy. How? Strike at its representatives and proclaimers, Jehovah's witnesses. Having so done, then the religious and political prophets and predictors shall cry, 'Peace and safety!' and shall trust in their federation idol, 'the abomination

of desolation,' their 'new order.'" - *The New World*, pages 343,344 (italics added)

So, again, Jehovah's Witnesses were being told that the immediate end was at hand and they could expect a great persecution when the "federation" was in place. only one "danger" would then remain to accomplish "their scheme to dominate the world." That "danger" was represented by the 115,000 Jehovah's Witnesses in the world at the time. This exaggerated view of their own importance is another facet of their world view. Of course, the outcome of the Second World War did not result in the scenario created by their private interpretation of Daniel 11.

Never deterred for long, however, they continued to utter their expectations based on their faulty premises: "As the days of this 'time of the end' move rapidly to their close, a promise to Daniel nears fulfillment. What? That he should be resurrected from his centuries-long rest of death in the tomb and should return to earth to be one of the King's visible princes under the heavenly kingdom. '" -*The Watchtower*, Nov. 1, 1949, page 334, par.8

Two paragraphs later this same magazine reminded its readers that there was no time to waste during these days when the tribulation against Satan's worldwide system was being held in abeyance: "May we, then appreciate that this means we are living in the 'time of the end.' We are already more than thirty-five years through it. The telic end of the Devil's system of things visible and invisible is steadily drawing closer." -*Ibid*, page 335, par. 10.

On and on it has gone over these many decades. Failed predictions are replaced by new speculations set forth as "new light. " The furor created over their 1975 speculation is but a punctuation mark in that record. Never willing to take responsibility for the seriousness and God-defaming nature of these errors they never learn from them and, unfortunately for them, they never repent. Even the slowdown of the growth of the international organization following the disappointment of 1975 is laid at the feet of "a small number of apostates": "Likely the presence of a small number of apostates had contributed to the slowing down of Jehovah's work during the last half of the 1970's -when the average yearly increase in the active ranks of Jehovah's Witnesses fell to less than 1 percent." -*The Watchtower*, December 15, 1986, page 20.

One would think they would have better sense than

to say what they say above. Everyone knows-if they choose to know-that the real reason for the slowing down of the work as well as the creation of the small number of so-called apostates rests squarely on their failed speculations backed up with strong arguments for their validity. But, as they have always done in the past, they direct attention away from themselves by singling out some scape-goat. The "Leopard" never changes its spots.

Four issues of *The Watchtower* (Oct.,1 & 15; Nov. 1 & 15, 1986) have delved yet once again in the prophecies of Daniel to reinforce their current interpretation of the image of chapter 2 and related matters. All such interpretations are set forth in the usual Watchtower mode-explicit and final-as were all the previous oracles. *The Watchtower* assures us that God's kingdom will triumph. They tell us we are living in troubled times. These things are true and we don't have to depend on their rhetoric in this regard. The Watchtower Society has created a religious system that exalts itself and misleads those who subscribe to it away from the simple gospel of Jesus Christ.

As believers we know that the Lord's return in judgment against the world is certain and could occur at any time. We join with aged John in saying: "come, Lord Jesus. '"-Rev. 22:20. We are comforted in the knowledge that God's promises are sure and the failure of men to fully understand them in no way invalidates the promises. Paul's ancient warning is as valid today as it was when it was first uttered when he said:

"Concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered to him, we ask you, brothers, not to become easily unsettled or alarmed by some prophecy, report or letter supposed to have come from us, saying the day of the Lord has already come. Don't let anyone deceive you in any way, for that day will not come until the rebellion occurs and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the man doomed to destruction." -2 Thess.2: 1-3 NIV.□