



STATEMENT DJ-550

WHITHER THE WATCHTOWER?: An Unfolding Crisis for Jehovah's Witnesses

by David A. Reed

Summary

Newly installed Watchtower president Milton G. Henschel, 73, has inherited two major problems from his predecessor, Frederick W. Franz. When Franz died on December 22, 1992 at age 99 he left in power a Governing Body mostly in their 80s and 90s, who, in turn, are dying off without eligible successors. Franz also left in place an official dating system that pointed Jehovah's Witnesses (JWs) to 1975 as the time Christ's millennial rule should have begun. Turning from these dead ends will require a major revision of JW beliefs. With new doctrine and new leadership up for grabs, Jehovah's Witnesses face the potential of severe internal upheaval.

Although it put him in charge of a corporation with real estate holdings in New York City alone valued at \$186 million,¹ and comparable properties elsewhere, the appointment of Milton G. Henschel as president of the Watchtower² Bible and Tract Society made few headlines. Even the Jehovah's Witness (JW) sect's principal magazine, *The Watchtower*, confined its mention of the new leader to a single sentence at the end of former president Frederick W. Franz's two-page obituary: "On December 30, 1992, Brother Milton G. Henschel was chosen as the Society's fifth president, to succeed Brother Franz."³ But the switch in leadership is of immense significance to Witnesses, as it portends convulsive changes for the 11.5-million-strong⁴ sect — namely, doctrinal reversals and organizational restructuring on a magnitude not seen since the shakeup which followed the death of Watchtower founder Charles Taze Russell in 1916.

CHARLES TAZE RUSSELL

Russell, born in Pittsburgh in 1852 and raised a Presbyterian, was 16 years old and a member of the Congregational church when he came under the influence of Advent Christian Church preacher Jonas Wendell in 1868. Nearly a generation had passed since the "Great Disappointment" of 1844 when Christ failed to return as predicted by Baptist lay preacher William Miller, and the successors of the Millerite movement had regrouped and regained respectability as Second Adventists (a family of denominations including the Seventh-Day Adventists and such Sunday-sabbath observing groups as the Advent Christian Church and the Life and Advent Union). Now certain Adventists were pointing forward to another date, 1874, with the same expectations. But that year, too, came and went without the promised Second Advent.

Russell was still sharing fellowship with disappointed Adventists in 1876 when he learned that a small Adventist magazine, *Herald of the Morning*, was affirming that Christ did indeed return in the autumn of 1874 — only *invisibly* — and that believers would be raptured three-and-one-half years later in the spring of 1878. With money from his successful men's clothing store, Russell at age 24 provided financial backing for the struggling magazine. In return, publisher and editor Nelson H. Barbour of Rochester, New York, appointed him an assistant editor.

When the expected Rapture failed to occur, Barbour came up with "new light" on this and other doctrines. Russell,

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however, began opposing Barbour. In the summer of 1879 he made a formal break, using his nearly three years of experience with *Herald of the Morning* — and a borrowed copy of Barbour's mailing list — to start his own magazine, *Zion's Watch Tower and Herald of Christ's Presence*.

Russell quickly repudiated the "Adventist" label and fashioned a distinct denomination of his own. Followers referred to themselves as "Bible Students" and named their organization the International Bible Students Association (IBSA), but outsiders called them "Russellites."

The Watch Tower and Russell's books retained much of Barbour's eschatological chronology, focusing on 1874 as the beginning of Christ's invisible "presence," and predicting other end-times events by calculating from that date. He also incorporated measurements of the Great Pyramid of Gizeh in his chronological calculations. Calling it "God's Stone Witness and Prophet, the Great Pyramid in Egypt," he figured a year for each inch of measurement in various internal passageways, and used these numbers to predict that believers would be raptured in 1910 and that the world would end in 1914.⁵

In 1882 Russell began leading Watch Tower readers away from orthodox theology. After Trinitarian assistant editor John Paton broke with Russell and ceased to be listed on the masthead, Russell openly rejected the doctrine of the Trinity as "totally unscriptural."⁶

The Bible Students viewed Russell himself as the "faithful and wise servant" of Matthew 24:45 and as "the Laodicean Messenger," God's seventh and final spokesman to the Christian church. But he lived to see the failure of various dates he had predicted for the Rapture, and finally died on October 31, 1916, more than two years after the world was supposed to have ended. Followers buried Russell beneath a headstone identifying him as "the Laodicean Messenger," and erected next to his grave a massive stone pyramid emblazoned with the cross and crown symbol he was fond of, and also with the name "Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society." (The pyramid still stands off Cemetery Lane in Ross, a northern Pittsburgh suburb, where it serves as a tourist attraction.)

JOSEPH FRANKLIN RUTHERFORD

According to instructions Russell left behind, his successor to the presidency would share power with the Watch Tower corporation's board of directors, whom Russell had appointed "for life." But former vice president Joseph Franklin ("Judge") Rutherford noted that the formality of re-electing the directors at an annual meeting of the corporation had been omitted, and he used this technically to unseat the majority of the Watch Tower directors without calling a membership vote. He even had a subordinate summon the police into the Society's Brooklyn headquarters offices to break up their board meeting and evict them from the premises.⁷

After securing the headquarters complex and the sect's corporate entities, Rutherford turned his attention to the rest of the organization. By gradually replacing locally elected elders with his own appointees, he managed to transform a loose collection of semiautonomous, democratically run congregations into a tight-knit organizational machine controlled from his office. Some local congregations broke away, forming such Russellite splinter groups as the Chicago Bible Students, the Dawn Bible Students, and the Laymen's Home Missionary Movement, all of which continue to this day. But most Bible Students remained under his control, and Rutherford renamed them "Jehovah's Witnesses" in 1931 to distinguish them from these other groups.

Meanwhile, he shifted the sect's emphasis from individual character development to public witnessing work. By 1927 door-to-door literature distribution had become an essential activity required of all members.⁸ The literature consisted primarily of attacks against government, Prohibition, "big business," and the Roman Catholic church. Rutherford also forged a huge radio network and took to the airwaves, exploiting populist and anti-Catholic sentiments to draw thousands of additional converts. His vitriolic attacks blaring from the loudspeakers of sound cars also drew down upon the Witnesses mob violence and government persecution in many parts of the world.

Rutherford largely avoided end-times prophecies after the failure of his prediction that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob would be resurrected in 1925.⁹ In fact, referring to that prophetic failure he later admitted, "I made an ass of myself."¹⁰

NATHAN HOMER KNORR

Vice President Nathan Homer Knorr inherited the presidency upon Rutherford's death in 1942. Doctrinal matters, however, were left largely in the hands of Frederick W. Franz, who joined the sect under Russell and had been serving at the Brooklyn headquarters since 1920. Lacking the personal magnetism and charisma of Russell and Rutherford, Knorr focused followers' devotion on the organization rather than on himself.

A superb administrator, he initiated training programs to transform members into effective recruiters. Instead of carrying a portable phonograph from house to house and playing recordings of "Judge" Rutherford's lectures, the average Jehovah's Witness began receiving instruction on how to give persuasive sermons at people's doorsteps.

Meanwhile Fred Franz worked to restore faith in the sect's eschatological teachings. His revised chronology moved Christ's invisible return from 1874 to 1914.¹¹ And, during the 1960s, the Society's publications began pointing to the year 1975 as the likely time for Armageddon and the end of the world.¹²

Knorr's training programs for proselytizing, plus Franz's apocalyptic projections for 1975, combined to produce rapid growth in membership, pushing meeting attendance at JW Kingdom Halls from around 100,000 in 1941 to just under 5 million in 1975.

During the 1970s changes took place at Watchtower headquarters in regard to presidential power. First, it became accepted *in theory* that the Christian church (which Jehovah's Witnesses see their organization as encompassing) should not be under one-man rule, but rather should be governed by a body similar to the twelve apostles. The seven-member board of directors of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania had previously been portrayed as fulfilling this role. But in 1971 an expanded Governing Body was created with a total of eleven members, including the seven directors.

This new Governing Body was displayed as further evidence of the sect's being the one true church, but in actuality Knorr continued to rule Jehovah's Witnesses much as Russell and Rutherford had done before him. This changed, however, in 1975 when Governing Body members began insisting on exercising the powers granted to them in theory that had never really been theirs in practice. Over the objections of Fred Franz the body he had been instrumental in creating actually began governing, so that when Knorr passed away in 1977 Franz inherited an emasculated presidency.

FREDRICK W. FRANZ

Franz also inherited an organization troubled by discontent over the obvious failure of his prophecies of the world's end in the autumn of 1975. Even at the Brooklyn headquarters little groups meeting privately for Bible study were beginning to question not only the 1914-based chronology that produced the 1975 deadline, but also the related teaching that the "heavenly calling" of the bride of Christ (identified as the "144,000" of Revelation 14) ended in 1935, with new converts after that date consigned to an earthly paradise for their eternal reward.

The hitherto fast-growing sect actually began losing members for the first time in decades, as people who had expected Armageddon in 1975 became disillusioned. When membership loss grew into the hundreds of thousands¹³ — a figure somewhat masked by new conversions — President Franz and the conservative majority in the Governing Body took action. In the spring of 1980 they initiated a crackdown on dissidents, breaking up the independent Bible study groups at headquarters, and forming "judicial committees" to have those seen as ringleaders put on trial for "disloyalty" and "apostasy."

By the time this purge culminated in the forced resignation and subsequent excommunication of the president's nephew and fellow Governing Body member Raymond V. Franz (a development *Time* magazine found worthy of a full-page article),¹⁴ a siege mentality took hold on the worldwide organization. Witnesses who left were denounced as disloyal and were ordered "shunned," with former friends forbidden to say as much as "a simple 'Hello'" to them.¹⁵ And those who remained were commanded to "avoid independent thinking...questioning the counsel that is provided by God's visible organization."¹⁶ Thus, although Frederick W. Franz served as the sect's chief theologian for some 50 years — from the start of Knorr's presidency in 1942 until his own death last year, he eventually found

himself resorting to a mini-Inquisition to keep his doctrines in force.

MILTON G. HENSCHEL: THE NEW PRESIDENT

Milton G. Henschel's selection as fifth Watchtower president on December 30, 1992, is truly significant for the Jehovah's Witnesses. At first glance the choice of a 72-year-old conservative for the post may seem to presage a continuation of the status quo, with little change in the offing. But a closer look reveals this appointment as the conservative old guard's last stand — an indication that radical change in the sect's leadership and doctrines is imminent.

At age 72 Henschel is the second-youngest member of the Governing Body, and he was selected to lead by men several years older than he is. The youngest on the Body is 69, two others are in their mid-70s, and the remainder are in their 80s and 90s. With members in their 80s known to sleep through meetings and to vote on matters on being awakened,¹⁷ the Body is losing its ability to provide purposeful and decisive leadership, and Henschel was no doubt chosen in part due to his having vitality others lacked.

Younger Replacements Disallowed

Recognizing their own infirmities, Governing Body members have recently arranged for younger men to assist with day-to-day work.¹⁸ But final decisions on major issues take place when the Body meets alone behind closed doors. Why not appoint some younger men to replace or supplement those who have grown too old to care for such responsibilities? Here lies the key to the Watchtower Society's present leadership crisis: *long-standing doctrine precludes appointment of younger men to the Governing Body.*

The reason for this is that Witnesses baptized after "Judge" Rutherford ended the "heavenly calling" of the 144,000 in 1935 are automatically assigned to the "great crowd," destined to live forever on earth. This is a secondary class of believers who receive salvation on the coattails of the above "body of Christ," but who are not born again or anointed and hence are not part of this "faithful and discreet slave class" from whom leaders must be selected. Since JW's generally baptize converts as adults or preteens, and leaders need to have been baptized before 1935, only men born during the early 1920s or before can be leaders — men who are currently around 70 years of age or older.

Changing the makeup of the Governing Body to include younger men would require abandoning the Watchtower's key teaching about the "faithful and discreet slave class" — the very foundation of the sect's claim to authority. The teaching is that after returning invisibly in 1914, Christ "came to inspect the spiritual temple in the spring of 1918."¹⁹ Among all the professed believers in all the churches of Christendom he found only those associated with the Watchtower Society serving him faithfully like the slave in the parable of Matthew 24:45-47. So, "in 1919 he" placed them in charge of "all the spiritual assets on earth that have become Christ's property in connection with his authority as heavenly King."²⁰

Since then those assets have mushroomed into a worldwide organization with 11.5 million people attending its worship services. And the doctrine concerning the faithful and discreet slave has served well to keep these millions in compliant subjection to the leadership class allegedly placed in charge by Christ himself. That class, however, has been decreasing in numbers since the "final ones of the anointed 144,000 were gathered in," before 1935.²¹ Today, fewer than 8,700 remain alive who claim²² to be among the living "remnant" of this number. Most of these are women, automatically barred from leadership roles, and the rest are men primarily of the same age as present Governing Body members. (A few younger individuals profess to be of the remnant — allowable under the understanding that God might appoint replacements for members who proved unfaithful after 1935 — but younger claimants are generally viewed with skepticism by fellow Witnesses.)

So, the pool of eligible candidates for the Governing Body is fast drying up, as male Witnesses baptized before 1935 die off or become incapacitated by age. Soon there will be none left. There is no provision in JW doctrine, however, for a switch to other leadership prior to Armageddon. New doctrine will have to be invented — not simply a minor adjustment, but a totally new basis for declaring certain individuals eligible to take control.

A Tangled Doctrinal Web

What makes this all the more complex is the fact that the current doctrine regarding leadership is tightly intertwined with the alleged fulfillment of all sorts of end-times prophecies. Together they form a closely-woven fabric of interdependent teachings — one or two of the teachings cannot be altered without destroying the pattern woven throughout the fabric.

As Jehovah's Witnesses see it, the 21-year period from 1914 through 1935 brought the following: Luke 21:24 was fulfilled with "the end of the Gentile times...in the autumn of 1914."²³ Then, "Christ was enthroned in heaven as King of the Kingdom in that same year, 1914."²⁴ His invisible "presence" on the earth immediately began,²⁵ as evidenced by "wars on an unprecedented scale," famines, earthquakes, and worldwide preaching by Jehovah's Witnesses.²⁶ Also in 1914 the fulfillment of Revelation 12:7-9 occurred with Jesus Christ, in his identity as Michael the Archangel, casting Satan down to the earth.²⁷

Next, the year 1918 marked "the start of the heavenly resurrection" with dead "anointed ones" of the "144,000 who belong to Christ" being made alive "with Christ Jesus in the spirit realm."²⁸ Also, Christ "came to inspect the spiritual temple in the spring of 1918," in fulfillment of Malachi 3:1-5 and 1 Peter 4:17.²⁹

Following that, "starting in 1919, angels under Jesus' direction separated the wheat class of spirit-begotten anointed ones on earth."³⁰ And here, "in 1919 he pronounced that faithful approved slave class happy," giving them "a promotion" to the position they now enjoy.³¹ Prophecies in Revelation concerning the opening of the seven seals and the sounding of the seven trumpets were fulfilled during the period that followed; for example, the "sequence of trumpet blasts" when "special resolutions were featured at seven conventions from 1922 to 1928."³² And then, by 1935, "the final ones of the anointed 144,000 were gathered in," and the gathering of a "great crowd" to live on earth was begun.³³

So, it is not a matter of simply replacing 1914 with another date. All of the related events and alleged prophetic fulfillments would also have to be reinterpreted and moved ahead to other dates. As the poet wrote, "Oh, what a tangled web we weave, When first we practice to deceive!"³⁴

"This Generation" Is Passing Away

The leadership eligibility doctrine is not the only JW teaching that is becoming outdated and thus forcing the organization toward a major revision. Besides losing to old age and death the men of the "slave class" responsible for giving them "their spiritual food at the proper time,"³⁵ Witnesses are also faced with the problem that some of that "food" itself has gone past its shelf life. A prime example is the prophecy the Watchtower Society is currently feeding its followers regarding the end of the world.

The masthead of *Awake!* magazine repeats this prophecy in each issue by proclaiming "the Creator's promise of a peaceful and secure new world before the generation that saw the events of 1914 passes away."³⁶ Simple arithmetic reveals that those events took place 79 years ago, and that people who saw them take place are fast dying off. *Awake!* of October 8, 1968, commented that "Jesus was obviously speaking about those who were old enough to witness *with understanding* what took place....Even if we presume that youngsters 15 years of age would be perceptive enough to realize the import of what happened in 1914, it would still make the youngest of 'this generation' nearly 70 years old today" (emphasis in original).³⁷ Adding the additional 25 years that have passed since those words were published in 1968 would make "this generation" nearly 95 years old now, in 1993.

While the predictions about 1975 were still being promoted, JW publications cited the reference in Psalm 90:10 to man's "threescore years and ten," or "fourscore" years for those with special strength, to show that "a reasonable time-length for a generation" was 70 or 80 years,³⁸ and that therefore "this generation" would "pass away" during the 1970s. According to that standard the prophecy still printed in each *Awake!* magazine has already failed. So, with its doctrinal framework built upon 1914 stretched to the breaking point, and with its irreplaceable elderly leaders dying off, the Watchtower Society will soon be forced to change both.

Convulsions and Chaos Imminent?

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Reminiscent of the crisis following Pastor Russell's death in 1916, the present situation holds the potential of throwing Jehovah's Witnesses into doctrinal convulsions and organizational chaos. As we saw above, Watchtower authority was originally based on the claim that Christ returned invisibly in 1874, appointed C. T. Russell as his "faithful and discreet slave," and would bring the end of the world in 1914. After Russell's prediction about 1914 failed and this "last messenger" himself died in 1916, there was no doctrinal basis for anyone to succeed him. An organizational free-for-all ensued in which new president J. F. Rutherford waged open warfare against the Watchtower corporation's board of directors. Rutherford's victory resulted in the reversal of a number of doctrines the Watchtower Society had taught under Russell, including Russell's posthumous removal as "faithful and discreet slave" and the pyramid Russell advertised as "God's stone Witness" being renamed "the Devil's Bible."

Since there is no doctrinal basis for a successor to today's aging Governing Body, the sect will soon face problems similar to those Rutherford encountered. Dying members of the Governing Body will have to be replaced with men not eligible under today's arrangement, and doctrines attached to expired dates will have to be replaced with new ideas that may prove unpalatable to large segments of the organization.

Henschel's Challenge

Will new president Milton Henschel be the one to initiate such drastic changes? Time alone will tell, but insiders portray him as a man much like Nathan Knorr — an administrator rather than a doctrinal innovator. No new visionary has yet appeared to take the place Fred Franz occupied during Knorr's administration and his own. Moreover, Governing Body member Raymond Franz reveals Henschel as one who routinely rejects change and upholds the status quo on administrative matters.³⁹

But Franz also observes that Henschel often admitted being too busy to read proposed drafts of *Watchtower* articles that came before his Publishing Committee for approval. In fact, Franz notes that Henschel had difficulty keeping up with published *Watchtower* articles and seldom bothered to read the *Awake!* magazine at all.⁴⁰ This leaves open the possibility of doctrinal changes initiated by others slipping by him unnoticed, even receiving his unwitting approval in materials he finds himself too busy to read.⁴¹

With leadership of a multi-billion dollar corporation up for grabs, as well as control over the lives of millions of followers, the stakes are high — comparable to rulership over a small-to-mid-size nation. With the obligation to redefine eligibility and appoint new leaders resting in the hands of stubbornly conservative yet increasingly frail old men, a struggle is possible among younger headquarters staffers who see themselves as potential heirs to power.

However the change occurs — whether Milton Henschel and his elderly associates act now voluntarily, or whether they postpone the inevitable until they become weak enough for others to force it upon them — the organizational and doctrinal upheaval will of necessity be drastic. Indeed, shock waves radiating from Brooklyn will no doubt cause turmoil in JW congregations worldwide.

These forebodings among Jehovah's Witnesses today, as well as the parallels they call to mind from earlier Watchtower history, highlight a number of scriptural caveats applying to the sect. For example, the psalmist warns, "Do not put your trust in princes, in mortal men, who cannot save. When their spirit departs, they return to the ground; on that very day their plans come to nothing" (Ps. 146:3-4 *NIV*). JWs have ignored this wisdom, diminishing Jesus Christ and attributing great authority to their organization, only to find now that their leaders' plans and teachings are passing away as the men themselves die off.

Shortly now, the Witnesses will once again find themselves with a host of "new truths" to accept, discarding as "old light" many of the beliefs their faith has been built on. As in the past, most of them will no doubt march off obediently in the new direction. But some among them, hopefully a large minority, will be shocked into wakefulness and a genuine quest for the truth by the coming organizational and doctrinal reversals.

Who Is the Faithful and Wise Servant?

The key doctrine Witnesses will be asked to change their minds about (again) is the identity of the faithful and wise servant of Matthew 24:45. In a rare review of back-and-forth doctrinal changes over the years, the *1975 Yearbook of*

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Jehovah's Witnesses comments that "in 1881...it was understood that the 'servant' God used to dispense spiritual food was a class." Later, it continues, the teaching was adopted "that C. T. Russell himself was the 'faithful and wise servant.'" And finally it concludes, "In February 1927 this erroneous thought that Russell himself was the 'faithful and wise servant' was cleared up" (p. 88). With Russell in the grave for a decade, the previously rejected "old light" was restored as "new light," and that "servant" was reinterpreted again to be a class of anointed believers. But that class is now dying off, just as Russell did, leaving followers with the need to find still another interpretation.

Outside observers, of course, recognize Jesus' words at Matthew 24:45 as neither an appointment of a special individual such as C. T. Russell, nor an appointment of a "class" of people such as the pre-1935 JW's from whom Watchtower leaders are currently selected. Rather than read into the verse a divine commission to any group or individual who would later pose problems by dying off the scene, unindoctrinated readers see in it the Lord's exhortation to *each* Christian to be "faithful" and "wise." And this exhortation especially applies in the matter He discussed in the same context, namely, avoiding "false prophets" who would mislead others with the claim that Christ had already returned unseen, out of sight in some hidden spot. "Believe it not," Jesus admonished (Matt. 24:23-26). And that should be the response of all informed Bible readers to the claim that Christ returned invisibly in 1914 and selected Watchtower leaders to rule the earthly realm of his kingdom.

Ex-Jehovah's Witness elder **David A. Reed** has authored several books on JW's and publishes the quarterly *Comments from the Friends* (P.O. Box 840, Stoughton, MA 02072), updating readers on Watchtower changes impacting apologetics and cult evangelism.

NOTES

¹ Mary B. W. Tabor, "Looking Beyond Brooklyn Heights toward Heaven," *New York Times*, 29 Nov. 1992, 46.

² "Watchtower" is written as a single word in the name of the sect's New York corporation, but as two words in the name of the Pennsylvania parent corporation. Similarly, the principal JW magazine originally featured "Watch Tower" as two words, but changed it to one word in 1931. JW's still use both forms, thus explaining the appearance of both in this article.

³ "Rewarded With 'the Crown of Life,'" *The Watchtower*, 15 March 1993, 31.

⁴ Peak 1992 meeting attendance reported in chart titled "1992 Service Year Report of Jehovah's Witnesses Worldwide," *The Watchtower*, 1 Jan. 1993, 15. Of these, about 4.5 million are considered full members — that is, baptized Witnesses actively engaging in door-to-door preaching.

⁵ *Studies in the Scriptures*, vol. 3 (Allegheny, Pennsylvania: Watch Tower, 1891) (1903 edition), 362-64.

⁶ C. T. Russell, "Hear, O Israel! Jehovah Our God Is One — Jehovah," *Zion's Watch Tower*, July 1882 (bound volume reprints, Pittsburgh: Watch Tower, 1919), 369.

⁷ A. H. Macmillan, *Faith on the March* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1957), 78-80.

⁸ *1975 Yearbook of Jehovah's Witnesses* (Brooklyn: Watch Tower, 1974), 165.

⁹ J. F. Rutherford, *Millions Now Living Will Never Die* (Brooklyn: International Bible Students Association, 1920), 89-90.

¹⁰ Karl F. Klein, "Jehovah Has Dealt Rewardingly with Me," *The Watchtower*, 1 Oct. 1984, 24n.

¹¹ In 1930 the sect's *Golden Age* magazine (p. 503) gave 1914 as the date of Christ's invisible return, but without any supporting argument. The new chronological formulas were first published in 1943 in the book *The Truth Shall Make You Free*, chapter 11, "The Count of Time."

¹² JW's today commonly believe the Society never predicted "the end" for 1975, but that some overzealous members mistakenly read this into the message. The official prediction, however, is well documented. See, for example, the article titled "Why Are You Looking Forward to 1975?" in *The Watchtower*, 15 Aug. 1968, 494-501, which says: "Are we to assume from this study that the battle of Armageddon will be all over by the autumn of 1975, and the long-looked-for thousand-year reign of Christ will begin by then? Possibly, but we wait to see how closely the seventh thousand-year period of man's existence coincides with the sabbathlike thousand-year reign of Christ....It may involve only a difference of weeks or months, not years" (499). For additional references, see my *Index of Watchtower Errors* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1990), 106-10.

¹³ John Dart, "Defectors Feel 'Witness' Wrath," *Los Angeles Times*, 30 Jan. 1982, 4-5.

¹⁴ Richard N. Ostling, "Witness under Prosecution," 22 Feb. 1982, 66.

¹⁵ "Disfellowshipping — how to view it," *The Watchtower*, 15 Sept. 1981, 24-26.

¹⁶ "Exposing the Devil's Subtle Designs," *The Watchtower*, 15 Jan. 1983, 22.

- ¹⁷ Raymond V. Franz, *Crisis of Conscience* (Atlanta: Commentary Press, 1982) (1992 Edition), 40.
- ¹⁸ "Assistance for Governing Body Committees," *The Watchtower*, 15 Apr. 1992, 31.
- ¹⁹ "Expanded Activities During Christ's Presence," *The Watchtower*, 1 May 1993, 15.
- ²⁰ *Ibid.*, 17.
- ²¹ *Ibid.*
- ²² This figure is based on the number of partakers at the annual JW communion service, the "Memorial," as reported in the chart cited above in *The Watchtower*, 1 Jan. 1993, 15. Since only those who believed themselves to be among the anointed class could take communion, 8,683 partook of the loaf and the cup while the rest of the 11.5 million in attendance merely observed.
- ²³ "Expanded Activities During Christ's Presence," 11.
- ²⁴ *Ibid.*
- ²⁵ *Ibid.*
- ²⁶ *Ibid.*, 12.
- ²⁷ *Ibid.*, 13.
- ²⁸ *Ibid.*
- ²⁹ *Ibid.*, 15.
- ³⁰ *Ibid.*, 13.
- ³¹ *Ibid.*, 17.
- ³² *Revelation: Its Grand Climax at Hand!* (Brooklyn: Watch Tower, 1988), 132-33.
- ³³ "Expanded Activities During Christ's Presence," 17.
- ³⁴ Sir Walter Scott, *Marmion*, Canto VI, Stanza 4, 1808, quoted in John Bartlett, *Familiar Quotations* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1955 ed.), 414b.
- ³⁵ "Expanded Activities During Christ's Presence," 17.
- ³⁶ *Awake!* 22 July 1993, is the most recent issue I consulted when writing this article, but the statement has appeared on page four of each issue since 8 March 1988.
- ³⁷ *Awake!* 8 Oct. 1968, 13-14.
- ³⁸ *Man's Salvation Out of World Distress at Hand!* (Brooklyn: Watch Tower, 1975), 7. Also, *The Truth that Leads to Eternal Life* (Brooklyn: Watch Tower, 1968), 95.
- ³⁹ Franz, 100-103, 130, 209, 228, 342.
- ⁴⁰ Raymond V. Franz, 73, 96, 344; *In Search of Christian Freedom* (Atlanta: Commentary Press, 1991), 400.
- ⁴¹ Recent examples of unauthorized teachings and illustrations finding their way into print to the embarrassment of the Governing Body are found in my new book, *Jehovah's Witness Literature: A Critical Guide to Watchtower Publications* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1993).