DICTIONARY of JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES

I

Uploaded the first time: 2014
Latest update: 2026

I AM (John 8:58)
The WTS is anti-Trinitarian and has attempted at least three non-Trinitarian interpretations of Jesus' statement "Before Abraham was I am."

Russell wrote: "'I AM' expresses his continuous existence…" (wr1888 August, 1059)

In the 1950s Franz rendered "I am" as "I have been". He claimed that John was using the historical present which is the style whereby past events are narrated in the present tense. Certain literal Bible translations, for example, read:

> "…an angel of the Lord appears in a dream to Joseph". (Matthew 1:13);
>
> "…in those days comes John the Baptist…" (3:1);
>
> "…the Devil takes him to a very high mountain…" (4:8).

"I am", in Franz's 1950s interpretation, is the historical present, and therefore equivalent to "I was" or "I have been".

Franz's next interpretation was, "Jesus was saying merely that he had a pre-human existence in heaven with his Father and that his pre-human existence began before Abraham was born." (The Word—Who Is He? According to John 1962, 38)

IBSA
Abbreviation for "International Bible Students Association" the name of the original British Branch of the Watch Tower Society

ICELAND
Publishers and Memorial attendance and their ratio to the population:

	Peak	Ratio 1 to	Memorial	Ratio 1 to
1970	132	1,541		
1975	157	1,380		
1980	118	1,902	279	804
1985	167	1,440	374	643
1990	246	1,032	486	522
1995	309	863	572	466
2000	324	860	518	538
2005	289	1,016	572	513
2010	362	878	703	452
2013	379	839	654	486
2015	382	861	692	475
2018	387	900	713	488
	Ave			
2019	373	957	741	482
2020	371	989	658	558
2021	382	969	793	467
2022	391	964	686	550
2023	400	970	728	533
2024	440	895	724	544
2025	445	879	749	522

ICONOGRAPHY
Iconography is the study, description and cataloguing of portraits, pictures and illustrations.

Many pictures in WTS publications portray the international scope of the Organization, its wide variety of nationalities, and their unity. Black & white photos with this theme were common in the assembly reports of the 1950s and 1960s and color photos in publications of the 1980s and beyond.

The photos imply in pictures what is often said in words — that only this one Organization is preaching the "kingdom" world wide.

Recent decades have produced many gaudy scenes of paradise including bright flowers, fruitful fields, baskets of fruit, a peaceful stream or river, everyone smiling or laughing, and kids near lions and other beasts.

Predictions that failed in reality are made to seem attainable and of imminent fulfillment by repeated vivid portrayals. The pictures support verbal promises that people who follow God the WTS way will "live forever in paradise on earth". The pictures foment desire for the war of Armageddon to come quickly and sweep away suffering, death and "opposers of God" so that the Edenic paradise that Adam and Eve forfeited can be restored.

Illustrations of Armageddon appeared from time to time until the 1960s but have become less frequent perhaps due to criticism of them being unsuitable for children.

JWs believe that their Organization is the governmental and physical foundation of the coming "new world". It is the "new world society in action", a "theocracy" or rule by God with Jehovah at the top.

This theme is emphasized with photos of JWs branch offices and of JWs of many nationalities working together, studying together,

preaching together, singing together, and meeting together.

The suggestion is that all the great problems such as racism, war, crime, prejudice, tribalism, inequality, etc, are solved by submission to God's Organization.

Another set of pictures show human governments and all other religions as corrupt, riddled with evil, set up by Satan for ultimate failure.

The books of C.T. Russell did not have many pictures. Photos, however, were common in the early assembly reports and showed many of the speakers and sometimes groups of people who attended, these being mainly white Americans.

In the Rutherford era the pictures of groups of people in his booklets and books showed the occasional Asian and Indian but Blacks rarely. Multiethnic pictures, interracial scenes, became common in the 1970s.

There is a tension between displaying the Organization as a united "new world" that has transcended political and religious barriers and portraying the Organization as culturally diverse and welcoming. Pictures used to portray male JWs looking like American office and bank managers — wearing business suits when preaching, counseling or attending meetings,. Nowadays pictures and photos of JWs include people in native dress.

WTS pictures illustrating other religions nearly always portray the negative. We see nothing of the hundreds of hospitals, millions of ministries, thousands of schools, or the Christian origins of modern science hence modern prosperity. (Stark 2005) JWs pictures illustrating other religions nearly always show alleged corruption, paganism, war, disunity, sadness, crime.

Since the 1980s the WTS has put out 32-page brochures on a variety of topics, promoting the Governing Body viewpoint in bright pictures accompanied by fewer of words.

During the 20th century with the development of color printing, color photography, movies and computer graphics the world became more visual and the WTS adapted and increasingly marketed its ideology in pictures.

IDENTITY CARD
A card printed by the WTS for JWs (including children) to prevent then receiving blood transfusion.

The front of one printed in 1999 has space to fill out the names of the child and parents, their address and telephone, and says at the bottom "Important Information On Other Side".

The back of the card has space for signatures and date and says:

> We are Jehovah's Witnesses and hold strong religious convictions. Hence, we do not accept blood transfusions. It is widely known that allogenic transfusions carry risks of hepatitis, HIV, and other health hazards. Our informed decision is to avoid these risks. We do accept non-blood expanders and pharmaceuticals that control hemorrhage and stimulate the production of red blood cells. If our child suffers an accident or becomes seriously ill, please contact us immediately. We know physicians who respect our religious convictions and are available for consultation on the use of modern, acceptable non-blood alternatives.

IDOLATRY
JWs don't worship idols or use images as aids to worship. (The Truth that leads to Eternal Life 1968/1981, 144; Insight I 1988, 1168)

However, another sort of idolatry is:

> To follow a human leader as "Lord" or God, or trust in them for salvation, is idolatry: We cannot take part in any modern version of idolatry—be it worshipful gestures toward an image or symbol or the imputing of salvation to a person or an organization. (w1990 11/1 26)

Compare the preceding underlined words with:

> And while now the witness yet includes the invitation to come to Jehovah's organization for salvation, the time no doubt will come when the message takes on a harder tone… (w1981 11/15 21)

> …identifying themselves with Jehovah's organization is essential to their salvation. (Our Kingdom Ministry 1990 November, p.1)

> Make haste to identify the visible theocratic organization of God that represents his king, Jesus Christ. It is essential for life. Do so, be complete in accepting its every aspect. (w1967 10/1 591)

> Every aspect [of doctrine] must be accepted. (w1967 10/1 587)

Numerous interpretations and prophecies that JWs formerly attributed to "the Lord" or to

"angels" or to the "holy spirit" were later discarded. JWs follow whatever their leaders proclaim, trusting in them for salvation, "following a human leader as 'Lord'". By their own definition JWs are idolaters.

For example, the interpretation that the 2,300 days (Daniel 8:14) extend from 1926 to 1932 was stated to be from "the Lord":

> Within the past few months the Lord has made clear the meaning of the cleansing of his sanctuary. (Daniel 8:13, 14) He has shown his people how the time of the cleansing was specially marked out by him as 2,300 literal days from the date when two things existed together, to wit, the taking away of the continual sacrifice and the transgression that maketh desolate. The desolating abomination was first set up, and on the 25th day of May, 1926, the Lord caused his people, without their understanding at the time, to give notice, which marks the transgression of desolation. The 2,300 days began to count from that time and ended on October 15, 1932, which latter date marks the cleansing of the sanctuary. That means that it was then that the Lord showed his people that the office of "elective elder", and therefore human teachers, have no part in his capital organization. (World Recovery 1934, 55; w1933 7/1 202; 7/15 214-215)

This interpretation that the 2300 days ran from 1926 to 1932 was changed in 1971 and they then ran from 1938 to 1944. The "Lord" who previously "made clear the meaning" but gave a false interpretation was J.F. Rutherford.

WTS publications have many such occurrences where Rutherford, Russell or the Governing Body are equated with God or Jesus. The logical conclusion derived from these facts is that JWs "follow a human leader as Lord or God" and worship such idols under the name "Jehovah" and trust in them for everlasting life.

IGLESIAS NE CHRISTO (CHURCH OF CHRIST)
A continuation of Russellism that began in the Philippines in 1919.

IMAGE (Daniel 2:34)
To Russell the symbolic statue described in Daniel 2 represented the Gentile powers that would be crushed by 1914. (Studies II 1889, 77-78)

In *Your Will* (1958 p.124) the feet of the statue represented the Holy Roman Empire and the "Anglo-American due world power." The ten toes of the image represent modern remnants of the Roman Empire plus other modern governments that vie with Anglo-America. (Your Will 1958, 124)

IMAGE OF THE BEAST (Revelation 15:14)
In 1917 the WTS interpreted the "image of the beast" as the Evangelical Alliance of 1846. (The Finished Mystery 1917, 206-208)

In 1926 this was changed to the League of Nations (Deliverance 1926, 277) Rutherford prophesied that the League would destroy all the Churches. (Light II 1930, 106-114) This prediction failed when the League became defunct in the 1940s and was replace by the United Nations.

Therefore "image" again required re-interpretation, and was re-interpreted to refer to both the League and the UN. (Then is Finished the Mystery of God 1969, chapter 23)

IMMINENT
A word that the JWs leaders use to emphasize Armageddon's nearness so as to:
1. Discourage defection from their sect;
2. Excite anticipation;
3. Incite JWs to zealous door-to-door effort;
4. Drive home criticisms of other religions by adding that their destruction is "imminent":

> But now, by occurrence of every detail of the great sign Jesus gave, we know that we face the imminent end of the present world system. (w1952 12/1 709)

> Popular evangelists, in spite of all their Bible quoting and eloquence know nothing ... about God's kingdom being at hand and Armageddon being imminent.
> (w1959 11/15 703)

> Learn what steps to take to flee from Great Babylon and act at once, for her destruction is alarmingly imminent.
> (w1967 4/15 249)

> It is a fact, not only are the religions of Christendom nearing their end, but also this entire system of things faces imminent destruction at God's hand... That destruction is near! Therefore, do not hesitate! Heed God's counsel: "Get out of her [Babylon the Great], my people... (g1969 4/22 18-19)

> Even though more than 70 years have gone by since 1914, there are still individuals around who lived through that era. According to *The American Legion Magazine* for December 1984, in the United States some 272,000 World War I veterans are still alive, and it is similar in other countries... And the Bible describes future events that will signal

the imminent apocalypse. (w1986 2/15 5-6)

Likewise today, most of the generation of 1914 has passed away. However, there are still millions on earth who were born in that year or prior to it. And although their numbers are dwindling, Jesus' words will come true, "this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened." This is yet another reason for believing that Jehovah's thief-like day is imminent. (g1988 4/8 14)

In their anger Satan and his minions are intent on causing as much woe as possible before their imminent end. (w1994 2/1 7)

Well, the judgment of all mankind is imminent. (w1998 3/1 7)

What must a person do in order to survive the imminent destruction of this world that is lying in Satan's power? (w2006 5/15 23)

IMMORTALITY

Russell applied the phrase "who only has immortality" (II Timothy 6:15-16) to Jesus. (Studies V 1899, 78)

Rutherford applied it to Jehovah. (Deliverance 1926, 11-12) Franz reapplied it to Jesus.

JWs today regard God, Christ and the 144,000 as "immortal". "Immortal" implies eternal and indestructible and therefore does not describe the life of those who live on Earth after the resurrection since they can still be destroyed if they rebel against God.

JWs believe the doctrine of the immortality of the soul is of pagan origin and entered Judaism and Christendom through Greek philosophy.

The JWs definition of "soul" as a living person or animal, however, suggests that the 144,000 living "souls" will, when resurrected to live in heaven, become "immortal souls". This looks like a doctrine of the "immortality of the soul".

IMPALEMENT

JWs speak of Jesus' "impalement" rather than crucifixion and Jesus being "impaled" rather than crucified.

The dictionary definition of "impale" is to drive a stake or other pointed object through the body. JWs, however, use the word differently — i.e. to refer to a person being nailed to an upright post or stake.

Until the 1920s the WTS taught that Jesus died on a cross. This was changed in 1926. *Deliverance* (1926) has a picture of Jesus on a post and his hands nailed above his head. (p.169) Page 155 speaks of him "hanging upon the tree…"

Insight (1988) refers to "impalement" by Assyrians, Persians, Greeks and Romans. (Volume 1, 1190-1191) It adds, "As in the case of Jesus, nailing the hands (and likely the feet also) of the accused to a stake was customary among the Romans."

Insight continues: "*Stauros* in both the classical Greek and Koine carries no thought of a cross made of two timbers. It means only an upright stake, pale, pile or pole, as might be used for a fence, stockade, or palisade." (p.1191)

Insight fails to mention that the Romans often nailed or tied criminals to a crosspiece mounted on a stake. The arms were wrapped over the crosspiece so that the arms largely supported the body when the hands were nailed.

Critics pointed out that nailing the hands vertically above the head could result in the body's weight tearing the nails through the hands. The WTS therefore published pictures of one nail through both wrists which are superimposed as that would better support the weight. The Bible says "nails" plural (John 20:25), but whether one nail or two, such a position would hinder breathing and cause suffocation.

Vine's Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words says:

> In order to increase the prestige of the apostate ecclesiastical systems pagans … were permitted to retain their pagan signs and symbols. Hence the Tau or T, in its most frequent form, with the cross-piece lowered, was adopted to stand for the cross of Christ…
> The method of execution was borrowed by the Greeks and Romans from the Phoenicians. The *stauros* denotes (a) the cross, or stake itself, e.g., Matt. 27:32; (b) the crucifixion suffered, e.g., 1 Cor. 1:17, 18…" (Vine 1981)

Insight quotes Vine as well as *The Non-Christian Cross* (1896) which says there is no evidence Jesus died on a cross. Vine, however, was an elder in the anti-Catholic Plymouth Brethren and his comment that the pagan "T" was adopted with the crosspiece lowered to represent the cross reflects his personal belief.

Ancient Greek apparently lacked a word that meant "cross" only, i.e. a vertical post with a crossbeam. "Stauros" was therefore the Greek

equivalent of the Latin "crux" or cross. The Romans used a range of structures including T-shaped, cross-shaped and X-shaped, and often with a second smaller crossbeam as seating to support the weight and prevent rapid asphyxiation. "Stauros" being the equivalent of "crux" would likewise refer to a range of "stakes" with or without the one or two horizontal timbers. Recent evidence suggests the "X" shape was the most common.

The biblical emphasis is on Christ's suffering and death as God's means of salvation and not on the precise structure of the cross. Rutherford probably started the argument about structure as a distraction from his failed prophecies.

In doorstep arguments JWs often ridicule people who wear silver crosses by asking, "If someone in your family is killed with a gun would you wear a replica of the gun around your neck?"

A biblical answer would be, "If the killing meant salvation for the world, then yes; the replica would show acceptance of salvation." Such JWs ridiculers need to remember: "For the message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing…" (I Corinthians 1:18-25)

(See also: *CRUCIFIXION*)

IMPENDING

Another word the JWs leaders use to make Armageddon seem threateningly close and thereby motivate their followers to more door to door effort. Armageddon is never decades away but always "impending":

> The impending war is not and will not be a battle merely of men. It is the battle of the great day of God Almighty… (The Final War 1932, 48)

Watchtower Library (2007) lists "impending" 473 times — some contexts are Noah's flood or 70 CE but most refer to Armageddon:

- "impending war of Armageddon" (w1951 5/15 305)
- "impending destruction at Armageddon" (1951 6/1 339)
- Surely the evidence of the impending end of this system grows daily, as we see the deepening breakdown of institutions such as marriage, family, government and worldly religion, as well as increasing crime and violence, and growing disrespect for God. (w1979 7/1 29)
- "impending great tribulation" (w1986 9/1 24)
- "impending global catastrophe" (w2000 2/15 4)

w1953 5/1 265 asks for more donations because "sounding the warning of impending destruction at the battle of Armageddon" is expensive.

The majority of JWs who awaited "impending" Armageddon followed by everlasting life in paradise on Earth in the 1950s and earlier have died and remain dead. Armageddon was not "impending" after all. What was "impending" was betrayal by their leaders and death.

IMPRESSED WITH HIS OWN IMPORTANCE

A phrase Rutherford sometimes used to denigrate persons who disagreed with his doctrinal changes — they were "impressed with their own importance".

IN OUR DAY

A phrase in WTS publications employed to remind JWs to expect Armageddon and paradise on Earth in their lifetime or the lifetime of most of them:

> In fact, if you will think back to the year 1914, or read the history of that year when World War I started, you will see that what Jesus said in prophecy is what has come to pass in our day. (w1968 1/1 7)

> In our day, Jehovah's time has again arrived for "removing kings and setting up kings." Having now 'set up' the King of his choice, God will soon remove all of this world's rulers, as well as the entire system of things that they dominate. (w1986 4/15 15)

The *Watchtower Library* (2007) CD lists 996 occurrences of "in our day" (but this includes other contexts besides the coming of Armageddon).

IN UNION WITH

The *New World Translation* (and some other Bible translations) translates the New Testament phrase "en Christo", literally "in Christ", as "in union with Christ".

INACTIVE

Former publishers who have not reported any ministry for six or more consecutive months are considered "inactive".

INCONSISTENCY

A Roman Catholic converted to JWs reasoned:

> Now certain inconsistencies became ever more evident to me. For example, at one

time eating meat on Friday was forbidden. When this church teaching was changed, I thought: 'According to that teaching, those who ate meat on Friday committed a mortal sin. For a mortal sin, one can be punished with hellfire—an irreversible punishment. But if in hell there are some who did not repent for eating meat on Friday, what will they think now?' (w1984 4/1 23)

Similar inconsistency in theology causing "irreversible punishment", but on a greater and more perverse scale occurs among JWs. Many "apostates" left JWs because of unfulfilled prophecies and because so-called "Bible truth" was repeatedly-revised or even totally discarded. According to JW teaching such "apostates" will get "irreversible" everlasting punishment.

If, however, the so-called "apostates" had stayed they would have had to preach official doctrine, which would have made them liars. And liars according to the Bible get everlasting punishment. (Revelation 21:8)

In the JWs sect, therefore, informed people have no escape! The sacrifice of Jesus by which "God so loved the world" (John 3:16) becomes worthless.

INCREASE

To JWs the increase in "publishers" and circulation of WTS publications and acquisition of new buildings are proof of God's blessing and the success of God's purposes:

> The evidence of the outworking of Jehovah's purpose can be seen in the continued expansion and growth of the New World Society. (w1961 4/1 205)
>
> This expansion comes because the 'Prince of Peace' is directing the affairs of God's people on earth. (w1988 1/15 17)
>
> …the historic developments demonstrate Jehovah to be in charge of the work. (w1982 12/1 25)
>
> The rapid increase in the number of true worshippers in this 20th century bespeaks the blessing of Jehovah. (w1995 9/1 16)

Increase prove JWs are "God's true ministers" (w1984 2/1 12) with "Jehovah's rich blessing". (Yearbook 1985 14; w1985 1/1 19)

The *Watchtower Library* (2007) CD lists the following number of occurrences:

- Increase 7869;
- Increased 4516;
- Increases 1348.

About half the occurrences are in contexts other than JWs ministry such as increase in crime, divorce, population, or cost of living. This still leaves thousands of references to JWs and their ministry, and suggests an obsessive, life-controlling, concern with "increase".

If "increase" in religious followers proves "Jehovah's rich blessing" then many religions are experiencing "Jehovah's rich blessing" more than the JWs — for example Seventh Day Adventists and Assemblies of God.

Ingathering about over in 1967

When baptisms declined in the 1960s, the JWs leaders suggested the slowdown meant the ingathering was about over:

> Perhaps year by year there will be fewer and fewer coming into the organization. But should we not, as we come nearer the end of the harvest, expect the ingathering to be smaller? (Yearbook 1967, 317)
>
> But the time for the "great tribulation" grows rapidly nearer… In the meantime, the last ones of the "sheep" must be gathered. (w1978 1/1 28)

Such claims stimulated extra door-to-door effort because they implied the extra effort will be brief and rewarded by survival at Armageddon.

But extra effort also produces faster "increase". With increases recommenced the suggestions of slow-down were forgotten and the leaders predicted even more increase: "…there is yet vast work to be completed." (w1984 5/15 23)

Much work

For country after country the Governing Body forecast that much work" remained. (See: Yearbook 1978 77, 256; Yearbook 1983 23; w1978 15/1 23; 1/4 9; 1/6 20; w1980 6/1 6; Yearbook 1983 256; Yearbook 1984 206; Yearbook 1985 56, 57; w1984 2/1 15; 3/15 18; 6/15 30; w1985 1/1 26; w1985 15/1 22-28; g1985 1/22 23)

The "much work" forecasts made JWs again more zealous because although Armageddon in 1975 failed they still had other deadlines — "this generation" and "within our twentieth century".

The WTS regularly prints articles about new buildings acquired by the Organization:

> To keep pace with the expanding preaching activity, Jehovah's Witnesses, in just the past two years, have either completed or begun construction of some

twenty new factories for printing Bible literature. (w1982 12/1 23)

Predicted increases and requests for greater door-to-door activity are stimulated with phrases like:

- …these closing days of Christendom
- …the death of a system draws near
- …it is about to end
- Armageddon draws ever nearer.
  (Yearbook 1982, 16 and Texts for 29/12, 19/5, 11/5)

And there are regular reminders that "Jehovah gives the increase" (w1984 1/1 17) and "Jehovah has continued to give the increase". (w1983 12/15 13)

The increase in 1984 was an "outstanding modern day … miracle." (w1985 1/1 16) The increases in the 1980s were "grand", "wonderful", "thrilling", "outstanding", "wondrous", "explosive", "exciting", and "marvelous". (Yearbook 1985, 3-61; w1985 3/1 12-22)

Increase proves God is behind it

The increases proved that "Jehovah is speeding up the increase" (Yearbook 1985 8, 45) and fulfilled Isaiah 60:22 "I am the Lord; in its time I will hasten it." (w1985 1/15 22-23)

Besides proving JWs to be the true religion, the increases justify the tight autocratic control exercised by the JWs hierarchy:

> No individual and no unorganized, scattered groups of individuals could preach in over 190 languages and in 205 lands, conduct regularly more than two and a quarter million home Bible studies, and baptize annually some 190,000 new ministers of the good news of the Kingdom. (w1986 6/1 25)

Source of increase

JWs expand best in countries that are poor, politically unstable and with a large Catholic or Protestant population. JWs increase is therefore parasitic on the work of Christian missionaries of recent centuries. JWs have little success in Muslim communities where their converts come mainly from the minority Christian community. Most converts to JWs are nominal Christians who rarely attended church.

(See also: *SPEEDING IT UP*)

INCREASING LIGHT

See: *LIGHT GETS BRIGHTER*

INDEPENDENT THINKING

The Governing Body opposes "independent thinking":

> Yet there are some who point out that the organization has to make adjustments before, and so they argue: "This shows that we have to make up our own mind on what to believe." <u>This is independent thinking. Why is it so dangerous?</u>
>
> Such thinking is an evidence of pride. And the Bible says: "Pride goes before a crash, and a haughty spirit before stumbling." (Proverbs 16:19) If we get to thinking that we know better than the organization, we should ask ourselves: "Where did we learn Bible truth in the first place? Would we know the way of the truth if it had not been for guidance from the organization" Really, can we get along without the direction of God's organization?" No, we cannot!—Compare Acts 15:2, 28, 29; 16:4, 5.
>
> When we consider the mighty spirit forces who are fighting against us, we must acknowledge that on our own we could not possibly win. Yet with God's backing, and with the help and support of his organization … we cannot lose. (w1983 1/15 27).

JWs regard "independent thinking" as the prelude to apostasy. JWs therefore have to eradicate independent thought in themselves as part of their subjection to "the faithful and discreet slave". (w1987 11/1 19-20) Criticizing the Governing Body constitutes "independent thinking". (w1983 1/15 27)

JWs leaders do not even "endorse independent groups of Witnesses who meet together to engage in Scriptural research or debate". (Our Kingdom Ministry, Australia, 2007, September, p.3) Their reason is:

> Throughout the earth, Jehovah's people are receiving ample spiritual instruction and encouragement at congregation meetings, assemblies, as well as through the publications of Jehovah's organization. Under the guidance of the holy spirit and on the basis of his Word of truth, Jehovah provides what is needed so that all of God's people may be "fitly united in the same mind and in the same line of thought" and remain "stabilized in the faith." … Surely we are grateful for Jehovah's spiritual provisions in these last days. Thus, "the faithful and discreet slave" does not endorse any literature, meetings, or Web sites that are not produced or organized under its oversight. (ibid p.3)

Note the repetition of words that imply JWs are right such as "Jehovah's people", "ample

spiritual instruction", "guidance of the holy spirit", "Word of truth", "Jehovah provides", "god's people" and "Jehovah's spiritual provisions".

Then comes the phrase "in these last days". This phrase is an implied death-threat because at the completion of the "last days" everyone not obedient to the Organization is predicted to die. Indoctrination by repetition followed by an implied death-threat is routine procedure for the JWs leaders. The aim is to discourage use of any religious information not produced under Governing Body oversight since without independent information "independent thinking" is minimized:

> For those who wish to do extra Bible study and research, we recommend that they explore *Insight on the Scriptures* … and our other publications… These provide abundant material for Bible study and meditation, whereby we can be "filled with the accurate knowledge of God's will in all wisdom and spiritual comprehension…" (ibid p.8)

The WTS's background of thousands of changed interpretations, and false prophecies for dozens of dates, means that much of the so-called "ample spiritual instruction" and "accurate knowledge" in WTS books was really ample spiritual blindness and led to:

> ...always learning but never able to acknowledge the truth. (II Timothy 3:5-7)

"Independent thinking" led some JWs to conclude that the official interpretation regarding "this generation of 1914" is false. Such JWs had to choose between:

1. Continue to promote the error and be a liar although liars merit eternal punishment (Revelation 21:8);
2. Voluntarily leave JWs, be ostracized, and supposedly die at Armageddon;
3. Criticize the error and be disfellowshipped and ostracized and supposedly die at Armageddon.

With only bad outcomes as alternatives most JWs decide not to think independently about doctrine or the Bible.

Although the Governing Body criticizes "independent thinking" they themselves think independently as proved by their many doctrinal revisions. It's a case of "Don't do as we do but do as we say." (Matthew 23:1-3)

Tight hierarchical control that suppresses "independent thought" is, however, effective in what it can achieve. Hitler's Nazi Germany, Stalin's Russia, and Mao's China all produced stunning results!

INDEPENDENT WATCHTOWER CHURCH

An offshoot from JWs in Zambia founded by Jeremiah Gondwe in 1940. Claimed membership was 4,000 in 1971 and 19,000 in 1976. (Cross, 1978)

INDIA

Publishers and memorial attendance in India and their ratio to India's population:

	Peak	Ratio 1 to	Memorial	Ratio 1 to
1950	401			
1960	1,595	251,000		
1970	3,347	164,000		
1980	4,880	135,000	14,104	46,800
1985	7,410	105,000	18,930	40,900
1990	10,272	98,200	25,837	35,400
1995	15,414	62,200	39,300	24,387
2000	22,217	45,457	49,100	20,560
2005	26,333	41,100	62,100	17,450
2010	33,100	35,100	87,500	13,263
2013	37,900	32,900	108,467	11,513
2015	42,600	30,500	120,600	10,773
2018	48,600	27,853	136,900	9,890
	Ave.			
2019	49,200	27,752	137,400	9,942
2020	51,484	26,805	151,300	9,122
2021	54,529	25,554	183,800	7,581
2022	56,200	25,038	152,000	9,253
2023	57,400	24,739	166,500	8,525
2024	58,300	24,716	158,800	9,800
2025	60,300	24,275	156,500	9,353

Bomb blasts (October 2023) at a three-day convention, in the port city of Kochi in the southern state of Kerala, killed eight and injured 50 of the 2,500 people attending. A self-identified former member, Dominic Martin, claimed responsibility and was arrested by police.
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2023_kerala_bombing

INDIA BIBLE STUDENTS ASSOCIATION

S.P. Devasahayam ("Davey") of Nagercoil (at India's southern tip) introduced Russellism to India in 1912. He translated *Studies in the Scriptures* Volume I, into Tamil and Malayalam.

Davey became ill in 1920 and inactive in preaching until his death in 1936. As in other countries many Indian Russellites left WTS control in the 1920s and joined the Pastoral Bible Institute or other splinter groups.

Davey appointed V. Devasandosham in 1920 as successor; the latter remained in charge until 1944. Devasandosham organized the Associated Bible Students (later renamed India Bible Students Association) and centered the work in Madras. He brought out publications in Tamil such as *Babylon and her Daughters*; *Is*

Saturday the Sabbath of the Christians?; and *The True Bible Catechism*. To the year 1914 he added 30 and anticipated the end in 1944. Many followers sold up in order to preach — the same mistake as Russell's and Rutherford's people — and faced serious problems after 1944.

T.C. Devakannu headed the India Bible Students Association 1944-1970, followed by S. Rathansami of Tiruchirippalli in 1967-1975.

The India Bible Students Association [Tamil language] has held an annual convention since 1921. It goes for three days, attracts about 100 people, and rotates among several cities. Total membership in India is under 500 and mainly in the south.

In 1947 the India Bible Students began getting foreign support from the Northwest Committee for India, a Russellite group in the USA and Canada. The South India Bible Students Committee was formed in 1965 to publish literature in Hindi, Bengali, Urdu, Telugu, Canarese, Malayalam, Marathi, Gujarati, and Oriya.

The India Bible Students cooperate with the Dawn Bible Students Association which is possibly the largest American split-off from the Russell/Rutherford cult.

INDIVIDUAL DECISION/CHOICE

JWs who reject blood transfusion, or non-combatant duties in the military, or refuse to vote, are trained to state that it is their individual, personal decision based on their study of the Bible.

This is done to avoid legal complications for the WTS. In reality JWs follow the Governing Body's interpretations and instructions as published by the WTS and enforced by the threats of disfellowshipping and ostracism.

JWs do not make individual choices based on personal Bible study. This is seen whenever millions of JWs promote identical false beliefs but simultaneously discard them when told to do so, and even simultaneously jump back to a previous belief when told to do so — and the Bible when these flip-flops occur does not change.

See: *FLIP FLOPS*)

INDOCTRINATION

See: *PROPAGANDA*

INDOCTRINATION AND CONVERSION PROCESS

Leon Festinger's *cognitive dissonance* theory (Festinger 1957) is based on the premise that people need to resolve inconsistencies in their lives.

Some commentators refer to "cognitive dissonance" theory to explain the conversion process of people who join JWs. Cognitive Dissonance is:

> An emotional state set up when two simultaneously held attitudes or cognitions are inconsistent or when there is conflict between belief and overt behavior. The resolution of the conflict is assumed to serve as a basis for attitude change in that belief patterns are generally modified so as to be consistent with behavior. (Reber 1985)

Rubin & McNeil (1981) similarly explain:

> Leon Festinger (1957) coined the phrase *cognitive dissonance* to refer to our internal state of unease when we perceive inconsistencies between our attitudes or between our attitudes and our actions… Just as hunger motivates us to eat, thus reducing the hunger drive, cognitive dissonance motivates us to change our opinions or behavior in such as way as to restore consistency, thus reducing the dissonance.

From doorstep to book-study

A householder may be impressed by the commitment he sees in the doorstep evangelist before him and the well-mannered child with him. The householder may feel inept or uneducated compared to the articulate sermon he hears and the visitor's skill with Bible passages. To feel impressed and yet dismiss the visitor is inconsistent and produces "cognitive dissonance".

After several visits and having accepted some WTS publications the householder is offered a "home Bible study". He is told it is similar to what he has already been doing at his front door. Again, to reject what he has already accepted produces "cognitive dissonance".

The "Bible study" is really a book study of a WTS book, usually one hour per week, and amounts to a well-rehearsed program of indoctrination.

During the "Bible study" the JW asks questions printed at the bottom of the page of the study book and the "student" replies by quoting from the corresponding paragraph. The JW regularly praises the student for correct answers.

Praise is a potent social reward capable of altering attitudes and beliefs. The student will hear that he is perceptive, open minded, wise, and quick to understand and that these are

Christian qualities. If the student resists any information the JW will avoid confrontation by offering to find out more about the topic and return to it another time.

The householder enjoys his weekly praise but starts to notice in himself what a psychologist might call "attitude-discrepant behavior".

Attitude-Discrepant Behavior

The prospective convert has doubts about JWs — their anti blood stance, non-voting, their claim to be the only "true Christians". Or he imagines the embarrassment of going door to door. Yet he allows the JW tutor into his home for socially rewarding discussions. Since his behavior is out of line with his doubts his attitudes are inconsistent or "discrepant" with it.

He may also face warnings from family and friends. But he is curious about JWs and during the book study he continues to answer the printed questions — maybe even without believing the answers. This is inconsistent and feels unpleasant. The JW tutor will prod him with questions that expose his inconsistency — creating more "dissonance". Perhaps the student also encounters critical literature about JWs. His life is now one of ongoing *dissonance*. His unpleasant state forces him to make decisions — either for JWs in which case his tutor praises his "progress", or against.

Dissonance theory also suggests that people value choices they have suffered for. When the householder experiences negative consequences such as embarrassment or disapproval from friends he thinks, "It must be the truth since I'm suffering for it."

By this time the student may have attended meetings where other JWs who seem knowledgeable, caring and sincere welcome him and give him attention.

His positive and negative feelings are at odds and cause him stress which forces his hand. His small pro-JWs decisions lead to bigger decisions, and greater commitment.

At some point back-tracking becomes as difficult as going on and then further pro-JWs decisions become the path of least-resistance.

He may make half-hearted attempts to investigate JWs using other sources but his tutor can easily answer his amateur attempts and also warns him that "false religions" and "apostates" tell lies just as the Pharisees lied about Jesus.

The student for his own peace of mind dismisses counter-cult ministries and other critics and this "don't listen to them" approach gets support from *The Watchtower*:

> For example, what will you do if you receive a letter or some literature, open it, and see right away that it is from an apostate? 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. (w1986 3/15 12)

The requirement to dismiss contrary views without consideration ought to put prospective converts to JWs into full alert since this was also a central strategy by which totalitarian regimes such as Nazism and Communism controlled their people.

The JWs leadership goes even further than political dictatorships and orders JWs to "Fight Against Independent Thinking". (w1983 1/15 27)

The student may realize he should be objective and listen to both sides but his "cognitive dissonance" will by this time motivate closed-mindedness so as to ease his mental distress.

Predisposing factors

Dissonance theory is probably not the full story. There are, for example, predisposing factors why people accept a "home Bible study". These include a Christian background, indulging one's curiosity, pleasing a friend, or accepting the challenge to "try it for yourself and stop if we tell you any lies."

Meeting with JWs can satisfy a range of needs. Perhaps the householder is worried about the future and finds out that JWs have much to say about the future.

James Beckford (1975) found that socially isolated people are more vulnerable to JWs. This includes housewives, mothers alone at home, employed people, and people in jobs with few co-workers. Limited social contacts mean less access to information and therefore minimal anti-JWs feedback.

Beckford writes:

> Lack of enduring ties with social groups outside the family and work place implies that prospective converts have very little social support for their own ideas or for any resistance that they may wish to present to the arguments and blandishments of evangelists [JWs]. Social isolation may also have the direct consequence of heightening the pleasure

to be derived from the opportunity of having regular home visits from publishers who appear to be genuinely concerned for one's personal welfare.

Prompt action

To counteract JWs influence on prospective converts prompt action to provide objective information is vital.

The new JW who discovers discrepancies in his beliefs after his baptism will likely ignore them since to abandon his faith would be inconsistent with the effort and loss it cost him. The Governing Body also argues: "Wait on Jehovah for clarification."

Not brainwashed

Brainwashing of American captives by Chinese during the Korean War included sleep deprivation, endless hours of interrogation, poor food, constant criticism, possible use of drugs, no opportunity to reaffirm prior attitudes, and constant affirmation of the attitudes and beliefs the captors wanted to instill.

In the above sense JWs are not brainwashed. What they experienced is indoctrination reinforced by social influence, constant affirmation, repetition, disparagement of other viewpoints, slander of opponents, and restrictions on access to information.

Psychological advantages

Joining JWs satisfies various needs.

Social needs are met in the congregation. The new convert feels a sense of security and stability and purpose. Allegiance to the Organization and its us-versus-the-world attitude substitutes for nationalism and patriotism. The fear of death is reduced because Armageddon and "survival into a new Earth" are always "very near", so near that most JWs expect never to have to die. WTS publications supply quick and simple answers to most questions of right and wrong, therefore personal struggles on ethical questions are minimal.

Renewed Challenge

At some stage many JWs face challenges to their faith when failed prophecies and "Bible truth" get revised. Their sense of security and certainty takes a hit and *cognitive dissonance* returns.

INDONESIA
Publishers and Memorial attendance in Indonesia and their ratio to the population:

	Peak	Ratio 1 to	Memorial	Ratio 1 to
1970	2,563			
1980	4,108			
2005	18,576	11,838	44,200	4,980
2010	22,495	10,447	50,900	4,613
2013	24,521	9,690	55,453	4,285
2015	26,238	9,757	55,900	4,583
2018	28,283	9,492	58,700	4,577
	Ave.			
2019	28,177	9,605	58,900	4,596
2020	28,909	9,462	50,900	5,376
2021	29,595	9,338	66,000	4,185
2022	29,869	9,345	60,100	4,641
2023	30,400	9,275	61,100	4,616
2024	31,400	9,958	61,100	4,606
2025	32,400	8,787	61,800	4,606

INFALLIBLE
When accused of false prophecy and revisions in doctrine JWs leaders argue that the changes were minor and no claim to infallibility was made:

Our friends reply that the Society has never made any claim to infallibility; that its publications are not written in that style. (wr1909 10/1 4482)

We have never claimed our calculations to be infallibly correct. (w1907 10/1 4069)

The Society does not claim infallibility or inspiration. (w1954 10/15 638-639)

The care of God's organization today is not in the hands of men who are inspired by God. They can make mistakes as any imperfect man can. (w1962 12/15 762)

Jehovah's witnesses do not claim infallibility. They are being *taught* by God. (Isa. 54:13) Never will they know all things, but they will continually be learning from the inexhaustible wisdom of God as they walk in his truth. (w1972 8/15 501)

…the 'faithful and discreet slave' has alerted all of God's people to the sign of the times indicating the nearness of God's Kingdom rule. In this regard, however, it must be observed that this 'faithful and discreet slave' was never inspired, never perfect. Those writings by certain members of the 'slave' class that came to form the Christian part of God's word were inspired and infallible, but that is not true of other writings since. Things were not perfect in the days of Charles Taze Russell, first president of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society; nor were they perfect in the days of J.F. Rutherford, the succeeding president. The increasing

light on God's Word as well as the facts of history have repeatedly required adjustments of one kind or another be made down to the present time. (w1979 3/1 23-24)

True, the brothers preparing these publications are not infallible. (w1981 2/15 19)

Jehovah's Witnesses, in their eagerness for Jesus' second coming, have suggested dates that turned out to be incorrect. Because of this, some have called them false prophets. Never in these instances, however, did they presume to originate prediction 'in the name of Jehovah.' Never did they say, 'These are the words of Jehovah.' *The Watchtower*, the official journal of Jehovah's Witnesses, has said: "We have not the gift of prophecy." (January 1883, page 425) "nor would we have our writings reverenced or regarded as infallible." (December 15, 1896, page 306) *The Watchtower* has also said that the fact that some have Jehovah's spirit "does not mean those now serving as Jehovah's witnesses are inspired. It does not mean that the writings in this magazine *The Watchtower* are inspired and infallible and without mistakes." (May 15, 1947, page 157) "*The Watchtower* does not claim to be inspired in its utterances, nor is it dogmatic." (August 15, 1950, page 263) "The brothers preparing these publications are not infallible. Their writings are not inspired as are those of Paul and the other Bible writers. (2 Tim. 3:16) And so, at times, it has been necessary, as understanding became clearer, to correct views. (Prov.4:18)"—February 15, 1981, page 19. (g1993 3/22 4)

INFALIBLE 2

Although JWs leaders deny being infallible and "inspired by God", they nevertheless imply they're infallibility in different words.

Russell implied he is infallible

Russell implied infallibility by arguing that changes in theology are increases in detail and not rejections of earlier "truth":

A new view of truth never can contradict a former truth. *"New light"* never contradicts older *"light"* but adds to it. If you were lighting up a building containing seven gas jets you would not extinguish one every time you lighted another, but would add one light to another and they would be in harmony and thus give increase of light. So it is with the light of truth; the true increase is by adding to, not by substituting one for another. (wr1881 February, p.188)

If the Bible is truth from an "infinitely wise" and "all-wise" God then anyone who harmonizes "every statement of the Bible", which Russell his theology:

And be it known that no other system of theology even claims, or has ever attempted, to harmonize in itself *every* statement of the Bible; yet nothing short of this we claim for these views… It is marvelous indeed, yet just what se should expect of the TRUTH, and of God's infinitely wise and beneficient plan. (Studies I 1886, 348)

Russell claimed to present teachings of the "all-wise one":

The Jubilee cycles prove that our Lord Jesus was due to be present and begin the restitution work in the fall of 1874 A.D. and the parallelism above referred to shows that date (1874) to correspond exactly with the anointing of Jesus as the Messiah, at the beginning of the Jewish "harvest," at the first advent. The "Gentile Times" prove that the present governments must all be overturned about the close of A.D. 1915; and the parallelism above shows that this period corresponds exactly with the year A.D. 70, which witnessed the completion of the downfall of the Jewish polity. A reasonable question, then, in view of all this, is, Are these time-correspondencies mere accidents…?

No, they are not accidental: undoubtedly the same all-wise One who taught us through the Chronology that six thousand years from Adam's creation ended with A.D. 1872, and that the seventh thousand, the Millennial age, began there; who through the Jubilee cycles taught us that the Lord would be present and the Times of Restitution begin in the fall of 1874; and who through the Times of the Gentiles showed us that we must not expect these things to be done in haste, but by seemingly natural means covering a period of forty years, has in these Parallel Dispensations marked by Israel's "double" given us evidence which not only itself teaches clearly the Lord's presence… (Studies II 1889, 242)

In 1906 Russell claimed he presented "truths" as "God's mouthpiece". (w1906 7/15 229) In 1909 he claimed that his books harmonized "every part of God's Word" and "are practically the Bible itself in an arranged systematic form":

> They [Russell's supporters] point out … that thousands of books have been published on these subjects, some of them centuries ago; but they also point out that none of these subjects was ever presented as now in the Society's publications; that these presentations of the past, instead of being enlightening, darken the understanding and confuse the head and heart and contradict each other, and that, on the contrary, all of these subjects in the Society's publications, are harmonized and unified as none would ever have supposed to be possible.
>
> They point out that to attribute this harmony to human wisdom or to accident would be absurd; that it would be giving too much honor to any human being to suppose that after eighteen centuries of Christian conflict, passion and persecution because of inharmonies of understanding, any human being without special divine aid should now arise who could at one moving of the wand, as it were, bring harmony and reason, beauty and light out of and into every part of God's Word. (wr 1909 10/1 4482)
>
> They point out that the "Dawn Scripture Study" volumes are practically the Bible itself in an arranged, systematic form; and that it is this very systematization of the Bible which brought them to their present enlightenment and joy in the holy spirit … they prefer to study the Bible in the light and under the leading of the "Berean Studies" and the "Studies in the Scriptures," and to look for further light in the same direction and without expecting special revelations to their own brains or from a variety of directions. They declare that there are no other writings or teachings which can compare with the Society's in loyalty to the Bible… (ibid 4483)

In 1910 Russell claimed: "the six volumes of SCRIPTURE STUDIES are practically the bible topically arranged". This should make Russell's writings as accurate as the Bible is supposed to be.

Note further that Russell's writings are superior to the Bible because people who study the Bible without his books go "into darkness" and direct Bible reading is "a … waste of time":

> If the six volumes of SCRIPTURE STUDIES are practically the Bible topically arranged, with the Bible proof-texts given, we might not improperly name the volumes—the Bible in an arranged form. That is to say, they are not merely *comments* on the Bible, but they are practically the Bible itself…
>
> Furthermore, not only do we find that people cannot see the Divine Plan in studying the Bible by itself, but we see, also, that if anyone lays the SRIPTURE STUDIES aside, even after he has used them, after he has become familiar with them, after he has read them for ten years—if he then lays them aside and ignores them and goes to the Bible alone, though he has understood his Bible for ten years, our experience shows that within two years he goes into darkness. On the other hand, if he had merely read the SCRIPTURE STUDIES with their references, and not read a page of the Bible, as such, he would be in the light at the end of the two years, because he would have the light of the Scriptures.
>
> We would conclude, practically, that we could not understand anything about the Bible except as it was revealed. We would, therefore, not waste a great deal of time doing what we know some people do, reading chapter after chapter, to no profit. We would not think of doing it. We would not think we were studying the Scriptures at all. (w1910, 9/15 298)

Similar later claims

Note the similarly of Russell's "goes into darkness" with similar later claims:

> Reviling the pattern of the pure language" that Jehovah has so graciously taught his people over the past century, these haughty ones try to draw the "sheep" away from the one international "flock" that Jesus has gathered in the earth… They say that it is sufficient to read the Bible exclusively, either alone or in small groups at home. But, strangely, through such 'Bible reading,' they have reverted right back to the apostate doctrines that commentaries by Christendom's clergy were teaching 100 years ago… (w1981 8/15 28-29)
>
> Unless we are in touch with this channel of communication that God is using, we will not progress along the road to life, no matter how much Bible reading we do. (w1981 12/1 27)

Direct from God; No opinions of man

Russell paid "no attention to … opinions of man". He taught Bible truths "direct from the mouth of God", and "It all came from God":

> In 1878 the stewardship of the things of God, the teaching of Bible truths, was taken from the clergy, unfaithful to their age-long stewardship, and given to Pastor Russell. In the interim, until 1881,

the new steward was setting the things in order, getting the truths of the Bible in logical and Scriptural form for presentation, until the last great item of the Hebrew Tabernacle types, was ready. Then, in 1881, he became God's watchman for all Christendom, and began his gigantic work of witness… Pastor Russell paid no attention to the words or opinions of man, however learned or pious, whether men of modern days or the "early fathers" of post-apocalyptic times. He listened to the word direct from the mouth of God, spoken by holy men of old by the Holy Spirit… Pastor Russell's warning to Christendom, coming direct from God, has been of the imminent collapse of the present "Christian" civilization in a welter of war, revolution and anarchy, to be succeeded by the early establishment of the Kingdom of God. In all his warnings he claimed no originality. He said he could never have written his books himself. It all came from God, through the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit. (The Finished Mystery 1917, 386-387)

God responsible but not perfect

In 1917, Rutherford had it both ways — that "the Lord assumes … responsibility for STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES" but the result is not perfect:

The Lord assumes an interest in and responsibility for the complete series of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, the last one of which especially represents the winepress feature (Rev. 14:18-20), but it would be unreasonable to expect that the Lord would miraculously use imperfect tools to do an absolutely perfect work and each must use his judgment as to the value of the interpretations in this book. (The Finished Mystery 1917, 295)

Bible replaced with WTS Books

Rutherford copied Russell in replacing the Bible with WTS books. At meetings it was Rutherford's books that were studied paragraph after paragraph. Rutherford went further and made it mandatory to sell his books door to door to survive Armageddon.

Rutherford — No human opinion

The Foreword of *Reconciliation* (1928) says: "The writer does not give his opinion. No human interpretation of Scripture is advanced."

Similar assertions recurred regularly. For example:

The Watchtower is not the instrument of any man or set of any of men, nor is it published according to the whims of men. No man's opinion is expressed in *The Watchtower*. (w1931 11/1 327)

The Watchtower is not the teacher of God's people. The *Watchtower* merely brings to the attention of God's people that which he has revealed… (w1934 5/1 131)

The Watchtower would not and does not give any man's opinion, but, guided by the Lord and used by him, sets forth to the remnant information which Jehovah and the Lord Jesus Christ give them concerning the Scriptures and concerning things brought to pass which are in fulfillment of the prophecies. (w1936 3/15 85)

The Lord has graciously provided for the publication of his message in the form of books, that the people may be informed of the truth… Those books do not contain the opinion of any man. They merely enable you to locate the words of the Lord... (Riches 1936, 353-354)

It should be expected that the Lord would have a means of communication to his people on the earth, and he has clearly shown that the magazine called *The Watchtower* is used for that purpose. (Yearbook 1939, 85)

From God and conveyed by angels

Rutherford's publications are from "almighty God" and the information conveyed by angels:

The resolutions adopted by conventions of God's anointed people, booklets, magazines, and books published by them contain the message of God's truth and are from the almighty God, Jehovah, and provided by him through Jesus Christ and his underofficers... Jehovah … provides all material for the purpose of preparing his fiery message… (w1938 5/1 143)

But it seems certain that when Jesus came to his temple and began his work of judgment he would direct his holy angels to take the necessary action to cause the separation of the disapproved from approved ones, and would use his angels to bear messages to them to direct the approved ones as to what to do. (w1930 9/1 203)

These angels are invisible to human eyes and are there to carry out the orders of the Lord. No doubt they first hear the instructions which the Lord issues to his

remnant and then these invisible messengers pass such instructions on to the remnant. The facts show that the angels of the Lord with Him at His temple have been thus rendering service unto the remnant since 1919. (Vindication III 1931, 250)

This is proof that the interpretation of prophecy does not proceed from man, but that the Lord Jesus, the chief one in Jehovah's organization, sends the necessary information to his people by and through his holy angels. (Preparation 1933, 28)

Certain duties and kingdom interests have been committed by the Lord to his angels, which include the transmission of information to God's anointed people on the earth for their aid and comfort. (Preparation 1933, 36-37)

Again Zechariah talked with the angel of the Lord, which shows that the remnant are instructed by the angels of the Lord. The remnant do not hear audible sounds, because such is not necessary. Jehovah has provided his own good way to convey thoughts to the minds of his anointed ones. (Preparation 1933, 64)

Without doubt these angels are delegated by the Lord to convey his instructions to the members of his organization on earth. (World Recovery 1934, 54)

God is the source and the interpreter; the WTS the channel

The Watch Tower is the channel which Jehovah, our God, is using at this time to instruct the faithful remnant who are keeping the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ. (w1930 8/1 239)

Today the children of Zion need no extraneous proof that the spiritual food and understanding of the prophecies they have comes from God**.** They know that no man or men could provide such food. (w1931 10/1 328)

The expression "the word", therefore, includes every revelation of truth down to and including the book *Vindication* and whatsoever shall be revealed and published, by the Lord's grace, as long as the remnant is on earth. (w1932 4/1 101)

Jehovah's prophecies cannot be interpreted by men, but interpretation is from Jehovah and he gives it in due time to those who love and serve him. Christ Jesus at the temple is Jehovah's great Servant and Interpreter**,** and by God's permission and direction he gives to the faithful ones an understanding of God's prophecies and his coming to the temple. (w1937 2/15 52)

No man is given credit for the wonderful truths which the Lord has revealed to his people through the Watchtower publications … instead of listening to the views of some man, why not have a study of some of the wonderful things which Jehovah has brought to the attention of his people and taught them through his chosen means of teaching? Since the building up of Zion Jehovah has revealed the meaning of many of his prophecies. Some who are wise in their own conceits attempt even in this day to give their private interpretation of prophecy. But let us bear in mind that the Lord is the Teacher and he will reveal the true meaning of prophecy in his own appointed way. (w1933 12/1 363)

God has revealed the meaning of these prophecies to his people... Therefore he furnishes them meat in due season by revealing the meaning of his prophecies written long ago**… (**w1937 11/15 349)

The resolutions adopted by conventions of God's anointed people, booklets, magazines, and books published by them, contain the message of God's truth and are from the almighty God, Jehovah, and provided by him through Christ Jesus and his under officers… The interpretation of prophecy, therefore is not from man, but is from Jehovah**…** **(**w1938 5/1 143)

Particularly since the revealment of the Jonadab picture in 1932, and still more since 1935, when the "great multitude" mystery was solved, Christ Jesus has caused the understanding of the prophetic dramas and pictures to be made clear and set forth in the Watchtower publications. (w1942 12/15 376)

Interpretations revealed by Jesus

The new leaders who succeeded Rutherford claimed Jehovah interprets Scripture and reveals the interpretation through Jesus. In 1943 F.W. Franz was asked under oath in court, "Who became the editor of The Watch Tower when this man [Rutherford] discontinued?" Franz answered: "Jehovah God." (Court Transcript of Watchtower Attorney Olin R. Moyle Sues Watchtower President Joseph F. Rutherford, 1943, p.795)

Since "Jehovah" is accepted as all-knowing and infallible Franz's court-statement implies infallibility for the contents of *The Watchtower*.

Here is more of the same:

> Jehovah's prophecies cannot be interpreted by men, but interpretation is from Jehovah and he gives it in due time to those who love and serve him. Christ Jesus at the temple is Jehovah's great Servant and Interpreter, and by God's permission and direction he gives to the faithful ones an understanding of God's prophecies and his coming to the temple. (w1937 2/15 52)
>
> *The Watchtower* is a magazine without equal in the earth... This is not giving any credit to the magazine's publishers, but is due to the great author of the Bible with its truths and prophecies, and who now interprets its prophecies. (w1943 4/15 127**)**
>
> Jehovah God is therefore the only Supreme Court of interpretation of His inspired word…
> To such remnant of faithful servants of Jehovah God Christ Jesus has entrusted "his goods", or earthly interests of the Kingdom. This does not signify that the faithful remnant or society of Jehovah's anointed witnesses are an earthly tribunal of interpretation, delegated to interpret the Scriptures and its prophecies. No; Christ Jesus the King has not entrusted that office to them. THE SUPREME COURT STILL INTERPRETS, thank God; and Christ Jesus, the Court's official mouthpiece of interpretation, reserves to himself that office as head of Jehovah's "faithful and wise servant" class. He merely uses the "servant" class to publish the interpretation after the Supreme Court by Christ Jesus reveals it**.** (w1943 7/1 202-203)
>
> As the Lord God by Christ Jesus interprets his prophecies to his witnesses, they discern that Babylon has been dislodged from heaven and that the lofty religious organization of modern Moab has been rejected of him, its religion has been exposed as being demonism, and the city of "Christendom" is doomed to utter destruction at Armageddon. (w1943 10/1 293)
>
> His remnant of faithful followers catch the glory light from the unfolding of the Holy Scriptures, which were written for our day and which Jehovah's appointed interpreter Christ Jesus explains to us. (w1944 5/1 138)
>
> Jehovah's Word is not of private human interpretation. He is his own Interpreter. He causes light to be shed on one Scripture text by others elsewhere in the Bible bearing on the same subject. He also brings to pass the fulfillment of Bible prophecies by definite events and then he calls the attention of his witnesses to such fulfillments in clarification of prophecy. He has appointed Christ Jesus the Head of his visible organization and his associate interpreter for the organization, "an interpreter, one among a thousand." (Job 33:23) So Jehovah's visible organization under Christ is a channel for bringing the divine interpretation of his Word to his devoted people. What then? An organizational instrument must be provided to help all lovers of truth and life to gain a progressive understanding of God's Word and for freeing themselves from all the confusing, faith-destroying religious doctrines and creeds of Christendom. Such an educational instrument this journal *The Watchtower* was meant to be and has proved to be. Not fettered by any man-made religious creed, it has been free to advance in the truth as the divine Interpreter has led the way by Jesus Christ. (w1950 7/15 214)

Revealment of truths; God the provider

> It is good, wholesome and nourishing, and the steady revealment of truths has made the household happy and contented**…** Jehovah, and the Lord Jesus Christ … are the ones supplying the food… Why be concerned with the meager dishes of those outside of God's faithful household when there is so much to digest in the Lord's house? Those who are without are not cooperating with the Watch Tower Bible & Tract Society and therefore cannot help you, for they do not have the Lord's blessing, and you will be dishonoring God the provider. (w1950 8/1 231)

The *Douglas Walsh Trial* (Scotland 1954) court transcript of Walsh's cross-examination says:

> Q. Were you taught as to how the Scriptures were interpreted by Jehovah's Witnesses?
> A. Yes.
> Q. What were you taught in that regard?
> A. I was taught that interpretation came from the Most High God himself through Christ Jesus and by means of his Holy Spirit, and his organization of earth would make known the truths of God's word…
> Q. Yes, but through which body of men did that Holy Spirit operate?
> A. Through the Board of Directors of the Society.

Q. And I take it through the publications of the Society interpreting the Scriptures?
A. Yes (pp 702-703)

In 1943 Frederick Franz and Nathan Knorr, testified in court that the content of *The Watchtower* comes from God:

Cross-examination of Frederick W Franz:
Q. At any rate, Jehovah God is now the editor of the paper [The Watchtower], is that right?
A. He is today the editor of the paper.
Q. How long has He been editor of the paper?
A. Since its inception he has been guiding it. (p.866)

Cross-examination of Nathan H. Knorr:
Q. In fact, it [The Watchtower] is set forth directly as God's Word, isn't it?
A. Yes, as His word.
Q. Without any qualification whatsoever?
A. That is right. (p.1474)

God's progressive revealing

As Jehovah revealed his truths by means of the first-century Christian congregation so he does today by the present-day Christian congregation. Through this agency he is having carried out prophesying on an intensified scale. All this activity is not an accident. Jehovah is the one behind it all. The abundance of spiritual food and the amazing details of Jehovah's purposes that have been revealed to Jehovah's anointed witnesses are clear evidence that they are the ones mentioned by Jesus when he foretold a "faithful and discreet slave" class that would be used to dispense God's progressive revelations in these last days. (w1964 6/15 365)

God's channel

Jesus foretold that among his people there would be a "faithful and discreet slave" class who would be providing the spiritual food to God's family of devoted servants on earth, acting as his channel of communication and overseeing the carrying out of the Kingdom interests world wide. (Matt. 24:45-47) These anointed overseers serve as though being guided in their activities by the right hand of Christ. They take the same viewpoint as Jesus had when he said to Jehovah, "Let, not my will, but yours take place." (w1969 1/15 51)

Understands deep things of God

Only this organization functions for Jehovah's purposes and to his praise. To it alone God's Sacred Word, the Bible, is not a sealed book… How very much true Christians appreciate associating with the only organization that understands the "deep things of God"! (w1973 7/1 402)

Agrees with Bible in all details

…the religion that is approved by God must agree in all its details with the Bible. (The Truth That Leads to Eternal Life 1968 14)

Jehovah's visible organization is a tremendously dependable source. Never once has it misled me in any way. (w1984 6/1 12)

For over a century, delightful correct words of truth covering every aspect of life have been presented in the Watch Tower Society's publications… (w1990 12/15 26)

All who want to understand the Bible should appreciate that the "greatly diversified wisdom of God" can become known only through Jehovah's channel of communication, the faithful and discreet slave. (w1994 10/1 8)

God provides the message

Jehovah commissioned this … class of servants to speak to all the nations in His name. (The Nations Shall Know That I am Jehovah"—How? 1971, 66)

He [God] has put his word, his message of this hour, into the mouth of the spiritual remnant. (Holy Spirit—The Force behind the coming New Order 1976, 176)

He [God] put his "words", his message, into the mouth of his servants for them to proclaim earth wide. (Survival into a New Earth 1984, 109)

WTS publications "the best"

With the infallibility of the WTS writers being regularly implied since the 1880s we would expect the WTS's publications to be the world's best, most accurate writings on the Bible — and that is what JWs believe:

In the preparation of the Bible study helps issued by the Watchtower, all available other aids to Bible study have been consulted. The Society's publications have gleaned from these other sources the best they have to offer, and in this compiling work Jehovah's spirit has directed those of his "faithful and wise servant" body. Hence, the Watchtower Bible helps are the best

available today. (Theocratic Aid to Kingdom Publishers 1945, 227)

WTS publications routinely label JWs theology "the truth", "Bible truth", "scriptural", "Bible education", "light", "accurate knowledge", "Jehovah's word", etc. Such terms imply infallibility.

In short, the claims the JWs leaders make about God's involvement in preparing the publications amount to stating, "We and our teachings are infallible."

Need Organization to understand

If the JWs leaders are infallible and inspired which in the above quotes they imply, then their input would be necessary to understand the Bible. And anyone who disagrees with them would be wrong. Such claims they do indeed make:

> We should eat and digest and assimilate what is set before us, without shying away from parts of the food because it may not suit the fancy of our mental taste... We should meekly go along with the Lord's theocratic organization and wait for further clarification, rather than balk at the first mention of a thought unpalatable to us and proceed to quibble and mouth our criticisms and opinions as though they were worth more than the slave's provision of spiritual food. Theocratic ones will appreciate the Lord's visible organization and not be so foolish as to put against Jehovah's channel their own human reasoning and sentiment and personal feelings. (w1952 2/1 79-80)

> Yes, besides having God's spirit of illumination, a Christian needs Jehovah's theocratic organization in order to understand the Bible. (w1951 6/15 375)

> God has not arranged for that Word to speak independently or to shine forth life giving truths by itself. It is through his organization God provides this light. (w1957 5/1 274)

> The world is full of Bibles… Why then do the people not know which way to go? Because they do not also have the teaching of the mother, which is light. (w1957 5/1 274)

> He wants his earthly servants united, and so he has made understanding the Bible today dependent upon associating with his organization. (w1961 11/1 668)

> He does not impart his holy spirit and an understanding and appreciation of his Word apart from his visible organization. (w1965 7/1 391)

> The Bible is an organizational book… For this reason the Bible cannot be properly understood without Jehovah's visible organization in mind. (w1967 10/1 587)

> How very much true Christians appreciate associating with the only organization on earth that understands the 'deep things of God'! (w1973 7/1 402)

> We all need help to understand the Bible, and we cannot find the Scriptural guidance we need outside the 'faithful and discreet slave' organization. (w1981 2/15 19)

Conclusion

When confronted with their errors the JWs leaders argue "we do not claim to be infallible". However, the truth is that they do claim to be infallible but express this in other words.

INFIRM SPECIAL PIONEER LIST
Some circuit and district overseers who leave full-time preaching due to sickness or age, continue to get the WTS allowance (c. $175 monthly in 1980) without being required to meet the full quota of hours.

INFORMAL WITNESSING
Informal witnessing is preaching to people encountered by chance i.e. not during organized door to door work. This may be more effective time-wise than going door to door. Of one sample of 238 JWs, 40% got involved after being approached informally. (w1984 6/1 23)

INFORMANT
Published until 8/1956 *Informant* was the forerunner of *Our Kingdom Ministry*, the guide to midweek meetings published monthly.

INFORMATION BOARD
JWs associate the term "Bulletin Board" with false religion. Therefore Kingdom Halls have an "Information Board" for official notices and documents.

INFORMATION CONTROL
To maintain power and control over their followers the Governing Body restricts their access to information so that JWs and prospective converts consider only the Governing Body's views.

JWs who study other religious material, including direct Bible study, often leave the JW sect or become inactive. Therefore the

Internet with its easy access to information is a threat as are writings of theologians, former JWs, and other religions.

JWs are:

- Forbidden to read mail that quotes the Bible but is not of JW origin;
- Forbidden to criticize any teaching of their Organization;
- Forbidden to think independently;
- Forbidden to visit websites of other religions — they may visit only the official JW site.

Rely only on WTBS publications

JWs have to rely solely on WTS publications:

> If the six volumes of SCRIPTURE STUDIES are practically the Bible topically arranged, with Bible proof-texts given, we might not improperly name the volumes—the Bible in an arranged form. That is to say, they are not merely comments on the Bible, but they are practically the Bible itself... Furthermore, not only do we find that people cannot see the divine plan in studying the Bible itself, but we see, also, that if anyone lays the Scripture Studies aside ... after he has read them for ten years—if he then lays them aside and ignores them and goes to the Bible alone, though he has understood his Bible for ten years, our experience shows that within two years he goes into darkness. (wr1910 9/15 4685)

> …a Christian needs Jehovah's theocratic organization in order to understand the Bible. (w1951 6/15 375)

> But God has not arranged for that Word to speak independently or to shine forth life-giving truths by itself. His Word says: "Light is sown for the righteous." (Ps. 97:11) It is through his organization that God provides this light that the proverb says is the teaching or law of the mother. If we are to walk in the light of truth we must recognize not only Jehovah God as our Father but his organization as our mother. (w1957 5/1 274)

> He does not impart his holy spirit and an understanding and appreciation of his Word apart from his visible organization. (w1965 7/1 391)

> Only this organization functions for Jehovah's purpose and to his praise. To it alone God's Sacred Word, the Bible, is not a sealed book. (w1973 7/1 402)

> We all need help to understand the Bible, and we cannot find the Scriptural guidance we need outside the "faithful and discreet slave" organization. (w1981 2/15 19)

> They say that it is sufficient to read the Bible exclusively, either alone or in small groups at home. But, strangely, through such 'Bible reading,' they have reverted right back to the apostate doctrines that commentaries by Christendom's clergy were teaching 100 years ago… (w1981 8/15 29)

> All who want to understand the Bible should appreciate that the "greatly diversified wisdom of God" can become known only through Jehovah's channel of communication, the faithful and discreet slave. (w1994 10/1 8)

Avoid other religious material

JWs are forbidden from reading non-JWs religious information regardless of the source since it is all "apostate":

> Have No Dealings With Apostates ... For example, what will you do if you receive a letter or some literature, open it, and see right away that it is from an apostate? Will curiosity cause you to read it, just to see what he has to say? … In thinking this way, some have fed their minds upon apostate reasoning and have fallen prey to serious questioning and doubt." (w1986 3/15 12)

Death threats

To enforce their ban on consulting alternative religious information the JWs leaders regularly state that only people in their Organization and loyal to it will survive Armageddon:

> ... there is but one place of safety, and that is to be in and to abide in the organization of Jehovah God. (Riches 1936, 101)

> Make haste to identify the visible theocratic organization of God that represents his king, Jesus Christ. It is essential for life. Doing so, be complete in accepting its every aspect. (w1967 10/1 591)

> Unless we are in touch with this channel of communication that God is using, we will not progress along the road to life, no matter how much Bible reading we do. (w1981 12/1 27)

> To receive everlasting life in the earthly Paradise we must identify that organization and serve God as part of it... (w1983 2/15 12)

JWs must not think for themselves

> Avoid independent thinking ... questioning the counsel that is provided by God's visible organization. (w1983 1/15 22)

> Fight against independent thinking. (w1983 1/15 27)

Internet-use restricted

JWs have to restrict their Internet-use in matters of religion to what the Organization can control:

> As outlined on page 17 of the August 1, 1993, issue of *The Watchtower,* connecting a computer to an electronic bulletin board can open the way to serious spiritual dangers. Just as an unscrupulous individual can place on a bulletin board a virus—a program designed to corrupt and destroy computer files—apostates, clergymen, and persons seeking to corrupt others morally or otherwise can freely place their poisonous ideas on bulletin boards. Unless a bulletin board, even one labeled "JWs Only," is properly supervised, with its use being limited to those who are mature, faithful servants of Jehovah, it could expose Christian users to "bad associations." (1 Cor. 15:33) The Society has received reports that such so-called private networks have been used not only to speculate regarding spiritual matters but also to give bad advice, spread gossip and false information, plant negative ideas, raise questions and doubts that subvert the faith of some, and disseminate private interpretations of Scripture. On the surface, some information may appear to be interesting and informative, and yet it may be laced with poisonous elements. Christians look to "the faithful and discreet slave" for timely spiritual food and for clarifications. (Kingdom Ministry 1995 September, p.6)

INSIGHT ON THE SCRIPTURES VOLUME I & 11 (1988)
Two-volume Bible Dictionary each with over 1,270 pages.

Much of *Insight*'s content is from its predecessor *Aid to Bible Understanding* (1971) but *Insight* has:

- Larger print
- Color illustrations
- An index at the end of Volume II
- Updated arguments and quotes supporting JWs theology.

INSPECTION BY JESUS IN 1918/1919
A central dogma since the 1920s is that the WTS is "Jehovah's organization" or "God's organization". Rutherford introduced the phrase "God's organization" in 1922.

The WTS allegedly became God's Organization because Jesus inspected all churches in 1919 and chose it as the best:

> TIME OF INSPECTION BY THE SLAVE'S MASTER
>
> Without a question of doubt, it was a real time for inspection of the Master's "slave" class. All the facts of the case argue that the Master came for the work of inspection at the time. Such a thing was to be expected according to the prophecy of Malachi 3:1-5. Of course, the sectarian churches of Christendom had made a wartime record for themselves, an open record that had a heavy bearing on their claim to be disciples and slaves of Jesus Christ. Could they, by even their latest record down till 1919, prove that they themselves were the composite "faithful and discreet slave" class of the heavenly Lord and Master, Jesus Christ? He as Judge would indicate what his findings were by the way he thereafter dealt with the hundreds of religious sects of Christendom.
> (God's Kingdom of a Thousand Years Has Approached 1973, 349)

This inspection coincides with Christ's coming (erkomai) to check the use of the "talents" (Matthew 24:19) in 1918. (w2004 3/1 16) paragraphs 15-19)

If "the Master came for the work of inspection…" and judged the churches on their "record" down to 1919, this would have included the Russellites because: "judgment begins with the house of God." (1 Peter 4:17)

What did Jesus in 1919 see? Jesus would have seen that all of Russell's prophecies had failed and the entire chronology involving the dates 1799, 1874, 1878, 1881, 1910, 1914, 1915, and 1918 was a fiasco. (See: *DATES*)

During the inspection, Jesus must have read *The Finished Mystery* (1917), the book that split the Russellites into numerous bickering cults:

> This volume … was the focal point around which the opposition party arose within the society. (Convention Report, 1950, Day 3)

The Finished Mystery had false predictions for five dates – 1918, 1920, 1921, 1925 and 1932 – and over 1000 interpretations (of Bible verses) that JWs later changed. (See: *FINISHED MYSTERY, THE*) Jesus therefore chose as

"faithful and discreet" the cult with over 1000 false interpretations!

Jesus would have learned that he himself was responsible for the book:

> The Lord assumes an interest in and responsibility for the complete series of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES… (The Finished Mystery 1917, 295)

Another sensational claim in *The Finished Mystery* is that Russell continued in charge of the "harvest work" after his death:

> This verse [Revelation 8:3] shows that, though Pastor Russell has passed beyond the veil, he is still managing every feature of the Harvest work. (p.144)

Contact with the dead is spiritualism — something JWs officially abhor.

JWs today believe that Michael the Archangel is Jesus, and that in 1914 there was "war in heaven", and Jesus threw the Devil (or "dragon") and the Devil's angels down to the Earth. (Revelation 12)

In 1917 the same verses in Revelation 12 were explained differently. The war in heaven meant the conflict "Between the two ecclesiastical powers, Pagan Rome and Papal Rome." Michael meant "the Pope", Michael's angels meant "The Bishops", and the dragon meant "Imperial Rome". (The Finished Mystery 1917, 188-189)

During his inspection Jesus would have heard the sermon *Millions Now Living Will Never Die*, first delivered in 1918, and published as a book in 1920. Therein Rutherford stated:

> Therefore we may confidently expect that 1925 will mark the return of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and the faithful prophets of old, particularly those named by the Apostle in Hebrews 11, to the condition of human perfection. (Millions 1920, 89)

Having done the inspection and chosen Russell's followers as his "channel of communication", the "spirit" was poured on them and they preached the kingdom:

> Particularly in 1919 and 1922 were there modern outpourings of Jehovah's spirit, especially in connection with the two conventions of Jehovah's dedicated people at Cedar Point, Ohio. (w1981 6/1 30)

> There would, however, be a further application of Joel 2:28-32. Indeed, this prophecy has had remarkable fulfillment since September 1919. At that time a memorable convention of Jehovah's people was held in Cedar Point, Ohio, U.S.A. God's spirit was clearly manifest, and his anointed servants were stimulated to embark on the global witnessing campaign that extends into the present day. (w1992 5/1 13)

> But Jehovah raised them up by his spirit and word of truth. Shortly thereafter, at their 1922 convention in Cedar Point, Ohio, they loyally determined to advertise the King and Kingdom. Jehovah has been guiding them since then, so that his name and kingdom have become known worldwide. (w1980 12/15 19)

Although the two Cedar Point conventions were "memorable" we get almost no details. This is because the main message at that time was still the "Millions" message which focused on 1925:

> The period must end in 1925. The type ending, the anti type must begin; and therefore 1925 is definitely fixed in the scriptures. Every thinking person can see that a great climax is at hand. The Scriptures clearly indicate that the climax is the fall of Satan's empire and the full establishment of the Messianic kingdom. This climax being reached by 1925, and that marking the beginning of the fulfillment of the long promised blessings of life to the people, millions now living on earth will be living then and those who obey the righteous laws of the new arrangement will live forever. Therefore it can be confidently said at this time that millions now living will never die. (g1922 1/4 217)

> It was on this line of reckoning that the dates 1874, 1914, and 1918 were located; and the Lord has placed the stamp of his seal upon 1914 and 1918 beyond any possibility of erasure. What further evidence do we need? Using this same measuring line … it is an easy matter to locate 1925, probably the fall, for the beginning of the anti typical jubilee. There can be no more question about 1925 than there was about 1914. (w1922 5/15 150)

> This chronology is not of man, but of God. Being of divine origin and divinely corroborated, present-truth chronology stands in a class by itself, absolutely and unqualifiedly correct... (w1922 7/15 217)

> 1914 ended the Gentile Times... The date 1925 is even more distinctly indicated by the Scriptures... by then the great crisis will be reached and probably passed. (w1922 9/1 262)

Another reason Jesus chose the WTS in 1919 is:

> The historical facts show that 1919 was the year when the remnant on earth of the 144,000 Kingdom heirs began to be freed from Great Babylon. In that year the message of God's established kingdom began to be preached from house to house and publicly by Jehovah's Christian witnesses in a fearless way. This preaching of the Kingdom as established in 1914 was in fulfillment of Jesus' prophecy in Matthew 24:14…" (Babylon the Great Has Fallen!, 1963, p.515)

Elsewhere, however, it says that the Kingdom of 1914 was not known about until 1925:

> …in 1925, for the first time it was seen and understood that the kingdom was actually born in 1914 that it was a fact. (w1951 7/15 435. See also: New Heavens and A New Earth 1953 p.225; w1984 2/1 23; 5/1 7)

The kingdom preached in 1922 was still the fake, imaginary kingdom of 1878 — which Jesus in the 1919 inspection failed to notice.

In summary: Jesus inspected all the churches in 1919 and decided that the cult with the most false prophecies best represented him. Jesus poured on them his "spirit" and launched them on a feverish campaign of preaching more false prophecies this time for 1925!

No other religion recognizes as Christian teaching the imaginary kingdoms, failed predictions, revised theology of the WTS, or Jesus' approval of it in 1919.

Revision

w2013 7/15 23 places the inspection period of 1918-1919 to 1914-1919. (Paragraph 12) Apparently another revision in theology.

INSPIRATION
JWs belief, or claim to, in the inspiration of the Bible which is the special influence of God through which the writers of the Bible presented infallibly accurate information.

INSPIRED
The Governing Body claims that the "remnant" of the "slave class" (which includes themselves) is not inspired "…the slave is not divinely inspired." (w1981 3/1 29)

Russell wrote:

> We are all in danger of going to extremes, and all should remember the Apostle's words, "Let your moderation be known unto all." At one place we found that a spirit of antagonism had been aroused by means of immoderate statements on the part of a few. They had suggested that Brother Russell and his writings are divinely inspired, as were the Apostles of old. What a great mistake! No wonder such statements were resented! When asked if such were our opinion, we promptly assured the dear friends to the contrary. (wr1913 7/15, 5280)

Rutherford quoted others who considered his writings inspired:

> DEAR BROTHER RUTHERFORD:
> Have read and studied the books *Light*... I am fully convinced that this is of the Lord and not of man. No man unless inspired of the Lord could collect his thoughts and make this book so plain that he who reads may run. Surely, dear brother, the Lord is good. He satisfies the
> hungry and gives them their meat in due season... (w1931 9/15 287).

> Dear Judge:
> I want to say that I am deeply appreciative of the wonderful work that you are doing in the interest of the coming kingdom, and I am convinced from your writings, which I am sure are inspired by the flashes from the temple, that Armageddon is near at hand, and I rejoice to know that the evil reign of Satan over the people of this earth is about to be brought to a close. (w1935 12/1 367)

> Please accept my thanks for *Vindication*, Books One, Two and Three, and for the precious *Preservation* book. It is most wonderful... how much we enjoy the blessed truths that are coming from Jehovah by your pen... (w1933 2/1 45)

After Rutherford's death the Governing Body sometimes used words and phrases other than "inspired" or "infallible" to suggest that that is what their writings are. For example:

> Christ Jesus … uses the servant class to publish the interpretation after the Supreme Court by Christ Jesus reveals it. (w1943 7/1 203)

[See: *INFALLIBLE 2*]

INSTRUCTION TALK
A quarter-hour talk delivered at the beginning of the Theocratic Ministry School meeting by an elder or ministerial servant.

INTEGRITY
Integrity is an important concept among JWs who are often reminded to "maintain your

integrity", which means faithful compliance with all Governing Body teachings, rules, requirements and instructions.

INTEGRITY KEEPERS
One of many positive descriptions the Governing Body applies to active, loyal JWs. They are "integrity keepers". The phrase appears over 300 times on the *Watchtower Library* CD (2007).

INTERESTED PERSON
A householder who accepts publications and/or invites JWs back for further discussion.

INTERFAITH
A movement for promoting dialogue between religions to enhance understanding and emphasize what they have in common.

A major impetus to Interfaith was the World Parliament of Religions in Chicago in 1893 attended by 7,000 delegates.

JWs reject efforts at mutual acceptance between religions because:

- Jehovah is a "jealous God" (Exodus 34:14);
- Christians should not to be "unevenly yoked with unbelievers" (II Corinthians 6:14);
- Light and darkness are opposites (II Corinthians 6:14) and JWs already have the "light" i.e. the truth.

However, it is inconsistent for JWs to regard other religionists as unbelievers because of differences in doctrine when the JW leaders have changed hundreds of their own doctrines. In total they have revised thousands of their interpretations of Bible verses.

INTERLINEAR
"Interlinear" refers to versions of the New Testament that have the original Greek text under each row of English text.

The WTS has published three interlinear versions:

1. The Emphatic Diaglott (1902)
2. The Kingdom Interlinear (1969)
3. The Kingdom Interlinear (1985)

INTERNATIONAL BIBLE STUDENTS ASSOCIATION (ISBA)
The corporation founded in London in 1914 to disseminate Russell's publications in Britain and arrange and publicize meetings of his cult.

The IBSA remained loyal to the directors of the WBTS of Pennsylvania during the defections and squabbles of 1917-1918 and afterwards.

(See: *CORPORATIONS*)

INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF PEACE
The United Nations declared 1986 the International Year of Peace. To JWs this was significant because they predicted that a global "cry of peace" precedes Armageddon within the lifetime of the generation living in1914:

> The fulfillment of the "sign" shows that we have been living in the time of Jesus' presence for 71 years since 1914… Hence the "great tribulation" must be very close… Nevertheless, Christians cannot say in advance exactly when the great tribulation will strike…
> Thus when, for example, the United Nations declares the year 1986 an "International Year of Peace," Christians watch the event with interest. But they cannot say in advance whether this will prove to be the fulfillment of Paul's words… (w1985 10/1 18)

(See: *PEACE AND SECURITY*)

INTERNET
Hundreds of Internet websites share information about JW doctrines, doctrinal changes, failed prophecies, and aspects of their Organization.

Variety of websites

Some websites are set up by other religions, a few by skeptics/atheists, and many by ex JWs. They can be found with "search engines" by typing in:

- The names of ministries (eg Watchman Fellowship; Bethel Ministries);
- The names of prominent JWs or ex JWs (e.g. Fred Franz; Raymond Franz);
- "Jehovah's Witnesses" or "Watchtower Society";
- Phrases in WTS literature such as "this generation", "Jehovah's prophet", "faithful slave", "Mordecai class", and "within our twentieth century".

Internet for Bible research discouraged

JWs leaders saw the looming threat and in 1993 discouraged use of the Internet:

> Modern computers have opened other avenues to bad association. Some commercial firms enable subscribers using a computer and a telephone to send a message to electronic bulletin boards; a person can thus post on the

> bulletin board a message that is open to all subscribers. This has led to so-called electronic debates on religious matters. A Christian might be drawn into such debates and may spend many hours with an apostate thinker who may even have been disfellowshipped from the congregation. (w1993 8/1 17)

WTS website 1997

Nevertheless in 1997 the WBTS opened its official website to advertise current publications and explain current doctrines.

The number of visitors increased as follows:

2000	1,000,000	2007	18,000,000
2003	4,000,000	2009	24,000,000
2005	9,500,000		

The WTS site initially hosted the defunct interpretation (revised in 1995) that the generation living in 1914 would survive until Armageddon. Under the heading "God's Purpose Soon to Be Realized" the site had the following from their brochure *What Is The Purpose of Life* (1993):

> Have those things that Jesus and Paul foretold taken place in our time? Yes, they certainly have… They began the foretold period of time called "the last days," the beginning of the last generation when God would permit wickedness and suffering.
>
> Likely you are familiar with the events of the 20th century… Truly, we have been in the last days since 1914 and are nearing the culmination of Bible prophecies involving our time.
>
> How long a time period would these last days prove to be? Jesus said regarding the era that would experience the "beginning of pangs of distress" from 1914 onward: "This generation will by no means pass away until all these things occur." (Matthew 24:8, 34-36) Thus, all the features of the last days must take place within the lifetime of one generation, the generation of 1914. So some people who were alive in 1914 will still be alive when this system comes to its end. That generation of people is now very advanced in years, indicating that there is not much time left before God brings this present system of things to an end.

The new interpretation in 1995 was that "this generation" referred to the historical period that started with 1914.

A website critical of JWs responded in 1999:

> One might expect the Watchtower to clean house periodically and throw out, delete or modify old light (previous understandings now considered untruthful)… Check their site … to see how long the stale food will remain.

The WTS website today contains articles on many topics and offers some recent publications for downloading. It also has electronic coupons for requesting personal home visits. The website has no return e-mail address and some people have apparently written comments on the electronic coupons as indicated by a request not to do that.

Governing Body prevents exposure

Considering the great effort JWs put forth to preach their message one might expect their Governing Body to be pleased when other websites reprint WTS publications, but they aren't.

WTS lawyers readily use copyright laws to get JWs material that was uploaded to the Internet without permission removed. In 2005 a former JW who posted quotes from WTS literature had to remove them. In 2010 a person who uploaded an instruction manual for elders was forced to take it down. An animated children's video supplied free at conventions in 2012 and uploaded to the Internet also did not stay long.

JWs publishers are instructed not to promote their religion on the Internet. *Our Kingdom Ministry* (November 1999) has 36 paragraphs about the Internet, most of them warning of dangers. Here are extracts from some of the paragraphs:

> 6. Would you invite a stranger into your home without first finding out who he is?
>
> 8. The comments may be a cover for spreading apostate reasoning.
>
> 10. They often point you to other sites where you can have online association with Jehovah's Witnesses around the world. But can you tell for certain that these contacts have not been planted by apostates?
>
> 12. The Christian congregation is the theocratic means through which we are fed spiritually by "the faithful and discreet slave"… Can we expect to find these same loving arrangements when associating with others via the Internet?
>
> 13. Some Web sites are clearly vehicles for apostate propaganda.
>
> 17. Other individuals have disowned the truth because of believing information provided by apostates.

18. There is no need for any individual to prepare Internet pages about Jehovah's Witnesses, our activities, or our beliefs.

20. The publications provided by Jehovah's organization stimulate our minds with up-building thoughts and train us "to distinguish both right and wrong" (Heb 5: 14) Can we say that this is achieved if others do our research for us?

33. Since we are deep in the time of the end of this system of things, this is not time to let our guard down.

36. It is imperative that we stay close to our brothers in the congregation… As this system nears its finish, let us "no longer go on walking just as the nations walk…"

It is clear from these quotes that JWs should not promote their religion on the Internet or do private research. These instructions are backed up with implied death threats such as "deep in the time of the end" and "this system nears its finish".

JWs publishers not to produce websites

Ordinary JWs are not supposed to produce websites about their religion:

Thus, "the faithful and discreet slave" does not endorse any literature, meetings, or Web sites that are not produced or organised under its oversight. (Our Kingdom Ministry, Australia, 2007 September, p.3)

Internet benefits ex JWs

Search engine search results on "Jehovah's Witnesses" in mid 2015 numbered about 5 million in *Google Search* and *Bing*, 2.9 million in *Lycos*, and 0.6 million in *Ask*.

Prior to the Internet most disfellowshipped JWs faded into obscurity. Labelled as "demonized" and "deceivers", having poor resources and few contacts, and hated and ostracised, their influence was insignificant.

The JWs leaders controlled communication channels within the sect and could constantly re-iterate official teaching without needing to defend it against criticism.

With the Internet ex-JWs can locate each other and share information. False prophecies and revisions of "Bible truth" can be exposed and out-of-copyright WTS publications can be made available to anyone.

(See also: *WEBSITES ABOUT JWs*)

INTERNET — WEBSITES ABOUT JWS

See: *WEBSITES ABOUT JWS*

INTOLERANCE (1933)

The name of a speech delivered by Rutherford and published as a booklet after 50 JWs suffered imprisonment.

JWs leaders deny being intolerant and stress being open minded. (g1984 11/22) Yet anyone who questions their credentials as "god's prophet" or criticizes any doctrines or exposes their failed predictions is disfellowshipped.

Former Governing Body member Raymond Franz questioned various doctrinal changes and prophecies and was disfellowshipped in 1981. His criticism of the 1914-generation doctrine turned out valid but he received no apology. All JWs excommunicated on doctrinal grounds suffer intolerance as "apostates" and are shunned. (See: *DISFELLOWSHIPPING*)

Some expelled JWs advertise their expulsion in the press. A report about Gary Schmitt in *The West Australian* (1984, December 15), for example, focused on the "intolerance" aspect. Many former JWs nowadays put their story on the Internet.

The JWs leaders criticize religious intolerance, and give lip-service to tolerance, but don't tolerate JWs who disagree on points of doctrine. Like the Pharisees they preach what they don't practice:

The scribes and Pharisees sit on Moses' seat; so practice and observe whatever they tell you, but not what they do; for they preach, but do not practice." (Matthew 23:1-3)

Where these totalitarian religionists are in the majority this use of force has resulted in the practice of intolerance; but where they are in the minority they call for toleration and plead for it and demand it. Just as soon as they get the upper hand, then they abuse their power and position and they themselves practice intolerance and all other methods to take away religious liberty from others. Yet oneness has not come this way. (w1956 4/1 196)

Who are promoting this teaching that leads people to peace and love and tolerance? Who are the ones who live in unity regardless of their national origin? Who have received a Bible education that has changed their whole outlook from one of hatred to one of love? We recommend that you examine the teachings and practices of Jehovah's Witnesses to discover why they truly

have a worldwide unity.-John 13:34, 35; 1 Corinthians 13:4-8.(g1993 9/8 310)

Christianity, however, was split into rival sects. Two cities, Byzantium (later named Constantinople) and Rome, each claimed to be the home of the true church. Both were intolerant of those disagreeing on doctrinal points. The persecuted had again become the persecutors. (g1983 11/8 3-6)

Catholic canon law states: "Most firmly hold and in no way doubt that every heretic or schismatic is to have part with the Devil and his angels in the flames of eternal fire, unless before the end of his life he be incorporated with, and restored to the Catholic Church." And up to this day the oath of allegiance of Roman Catholic bishops states: "With all my power I will persecute and make war upon heretics." Thus intolerance was built into Catholic thinking. But justifying this attitude, the authoritative French Dictionnaire de Th,ologie Catholique states: "Being the guardian of revealed truth, faith and morals, the church cannot tolerate the spreading of any teaching that is harmful to the faith of the faithful."

Thus the Catholic Church has often hounded down "heretics," judged them and then handed them over to the secular authorities for punishment. The New Encyclopaedia Britannica writes: "In the imperial church [after Constantine]-especially after the emperor Theodosius in the late 4th century-heresy became a criminal transgression punishable by the state. The enemy of the church was likewise viewed as the enemy of the empire. Thus, bishops at the imperial synods of the 4th to 8th centuries attempted to declare as heretics the minority of dissenters and to eliminate them as enemies of the state." (g1983 11/8 3-6)

"Yes, it was only after the apostasy set in that "Christians" became intolerant persecutors. Foretelling this apostasy, the apostle Paul wrote: "The time is coming when men will not tolerate wholesome teaching . . . They will no longer listen to the truth, but will wander off after man-made myths." (2 Timothy 4:3, 4, The New Testament in Modern English by J. B. Phillips) The creeds of Christendom's churches contain many man-made myths, and it was precisely over such myths that apostate Christians became persecutors..." (g1983 11/8 7-11)

Jehovah's Witnesses likewise use the Bible truths as their only weapons for overturning strongly entrenched man-made religious myths. But they never use coercion, nor do they persecute those who disagree with them, although they themselves have been the victims of cruel persecution by religious and political powers. (g1983 11/8 7-11)

On whether the JWs hierarchy wants tolerance see the entry "Apostates".

INVESTIGATOR MAGAZINE

Magazine published in South Australia since 1988 on "Religion, the Supernatural and the Paranormal" which aims to give skeptics and true believers "fair opportunity to settle their differences". Most editions include an article about JWs:
http://users.adam.com.au/bstett/

INVISIBLE PRESENCE / RETURN

A doctrine of Christ's invisible return was advocated in the book *Last Times* (1856) by American Lutheran minister Joseph A. Seiss (1823-1904) who edited the magazine *Prophetic* Times.

The doctrine was also advocated by R.C. Shimeal, a contributor to *Prophetic Times*, in his book *Second Coming of Christ* (1874).

After N.H. Barbour's prediction of Christ's visible return in 1873-1875 failed, his co-worker Benjamin W. Keith found out from *Wilson's Diaglott* that "parousia", which is often rendered "coming" in the King James Bible, can mean "presence".

Rather than admit to false prophecy Barbour and Keith retained the 1874 date and, since no one had seen Jesus, adopted the idea of Christ's invisible presence and taught it in their magazine *The Herald*.

C.T. Russell may have gotten his "invisible presence" idea from Seiss or Shimeal. The similarity in belief with Barbour prompted Russell in 1876 to join his Bible group to Barbour's cult.

(See: *RETURN OF CHRIST*)

IRAN

Peak publishers and Memorial attendance in Iran and their ratio to the population:

	Peak	Ratio 1 to	Mem.	Ratio 1 to
1970	24	1,124,000		
1975	29	1,103,000		
1980	38	926,000	204	173,000

IRELAND
Publishers and Memorial attendance in Ireland and their ratio to the population:

	Peak	Ratio 1 to	Memorial	Ratio 1 to
1970	987	4,463		
1975	1,657	2,719		
1980	1,866	2,630	3,655	1,343
1985	2,447	2,083	4,821	1,057
1990	3,451	1,474	6,635	767
1995	4,463	1,144	8,017	637
2000	4,611	1,179	8,195	663
2005	5,096	1,128	9,370	613
2010	5,833	1,071	11,060	565
2013	6,291	1,020	11,682	549
2015	6,422	1,040	11,779	567
2018	7,061	939	11,842	560
	Ave.			
2019	6,845	994	11,818	576
2020	6,887	996	11,709	586
2021	7,230	954	13,802	500
2022	7,341	1,207	12,561	705
2023	7,775	907	13,498	522
2024	8,063	892	13,860	519
2025	8,280	885	13,823	530

IRREGULAR PUBLISHER
A JW who did not go door-to-door or failed to report his ministry for one or more of the previous six months is "irregular".

IRVINE, C.W. (flourished 1900-1940)
Author of *Timely Warnings* (1917) renamed *Heresies Exposed* in the 1921 edition. The book examines new religions including C.T. Russell, and went through many editions and printings.

William C. Irvine was born in New Zealand, became founding editor of the *Indian Christian* magazine, and was superintendent of Belgaum Leprosy Hospital in India for 25 years.

IS THERE A GOD WHO CARES? (1975)
An official WTS booklet which helped to get JWs past the failure of Armageddon in 1975-1976 by stressing the reserve date of within the 1914 generation:

> Jesus also said regarding the generation of people who saw the beginning of the "last days" in 1914: "Truly I say to you that this generation will by no means pass away until all these things occur." (Matthew 24:34) This means that some of the people who were alive when World War I began in 1914 would still be alive to witness the end of this present system of things. That World War 1 generation is getting very old now, and that is strong evidence that the end of wickedness is rapidly approaching. (p.22)

Of course Jesus meant no such thing. By "This generation" Jesus meant his generation, his contemporaries. If another generation were meant the correct wording is **"that** generation". When people speak of "this week", "this month", "this year" and "this century" they refer to the week, month, year or century they are currently experiencing, not to a week, month or century thousands of years in the future.

The booklet purports to explain why there is evil such as war, famine, poverty and sickness if God exists. The booklet's author places much of the blame on religious ministers, whom he labels "hypocrites", for "pray(ing) for God's blessing on wars". (pp 9-10) The purpose in badmouthing Christianity is evidently to discourage JWs from going to other churches when *The Watchtower*'s predictions of Armageddon and the "righteous new world" failed — which it did in 1975-1976.

The booklet's explanation for evil is that paradise was lost in the Garden of Eden; God let the world rebel to demonstrate that humans cannot rule properly without him; and with this point now proved he will "soon" kill all non-JWs and a paradise world will follow.

The booklet's assurances that wickedness will "soon" end (pp 21, 28), with "soon" limited to the lifetime of the people who lived in 1914 and are "very old now" (p.22), were worthless assurances, contrary to the Bible, and those "very old" people have now died out.

IS THIS LIFE ALL THERE IS? (1974)
A WTS publication authored by Reinhard Lengtat about death and resurrection. In argumentation it is less detailed than Russell's *What Say the Scriptures Concerning Hell*. (wr 1900 3/15; wr1900 4/1)

To discredit the notion of a soul or spirit that survives death Lengtat relies heavily on Ecclesiastes which says, "…but for the dead, they are conscious of nothing at all... "

Ecclesiastes, however, presents insights and conclusions based on observation and experience. The writer of Ecclesiastes accumulated wealth and tried everything life offered, but concludes that the certainty of death makes life vain and calamitous. Ecclesiastes is about what a man unsure of God's agenda would find out by observation and experience of the world around him. To press this point Ecclesiastes repeatedly (29 times) has the phrase "under the sun" — the book is about what people experience "under the sun".

Observation shows that death makes everything vain because life after death

(Ecclesiastes 3:21) is not confirmed. As far as can be seen "the dead are conscious of nothing at all". Chapter 12, however, goes into the spiritual viewpoint which is that "the spirit returns to God who gave it." (12:7)

Taken out of context Ecclesiastes Chapter 3 contradicts the doctrines of eternal life, the resurrection of Jesus, and the JWs doctrine of the resurrection in 1918 of the 144,000.

ISRAEL

Publishers and Memorial attendance in Israel and their ratio to the population:

	Peak	Ratio 1 to	Memorial	Ratio 1 to
1970	167	23,495		
1975	263	17,388		
1980	237	21,414	466	10,891
1985	316	17,517	655	8,451
1990	380	15,989	756	8,037
1995	599	12,513	1,234	6,074
2000	1,077	8,449	2,261	4,025
2005	1,223	8,724	2,401	4,044
2010	1,355	8,506	2,761	4,174
2013	1,459	5,517	2,671	3,014
2015	1,567	5,456	3,242	2,637
2018	1,808	5,008	4,179	2,167
	Ave.			
2019	1,836	5,044	3,166	2,925
2020	1,920	4,919	3,653	2,585
2021	1,992	4,764	4,177	2,272
2022	2,017	4,797	3,670	2,637
2023	2,090	4,731	3,835	2,579
2024	2,093	4,733	3,762	2,633
2025	2,080	4,859	3,451	2,928

The improved ratios in 2013 over 2010 resulted from the Palestinian Territories being considered separately.

ISRAEL -- RUSSELL

Israel was at the centre of Russell's prophetic scheme.

To Russell the Gentile Times involved literal Israel. They were a period of 2520 years from Jerusalem's destruction in 606 BCE until 1915 when resurrected "worthies" of the Old Testament, such as Abraham and Daniel, stationed in Jerusalem would rule the world.

His prophetic system also included an invisible Kingdom set up in heaven in 1878, Armageddon to start around 1912 with the destruction of all religions, governments and institutions in 1914, and world peace in 1915. In this way the Gentile Times would end. However, it all failed. (See: *GENTILE TIMES*)

Russell claimed that the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 CE foreshadowed wrath upon Christendom which he anticipated for 1910-1914:

> And now, in the end of this Gospel age, according to the broader significance of the prophecy, is to come the parallel of that trouble upon nominal spiritual Israel, which, in its widest sense, is Christendom. (Studies IV 1897, 48)

JWs still accept the interpretation that Christendom parallels 1st century Jerusalem, except for the dates such as 1914, 1915 and 1918 when the final wrath was supposed to come but didn't.

Russell predicted that the Jews would be restored to the land of Israel by 1914 in fulfillment of Ezekiel 37. (Studies III 1891, 243, 244; Studies V 1899, 260)

The outbreak of WWI he considered to be the beginning of Armageddon and would lead to Israel's restoration.

ISRAEL — RUTHERFORD

In 1920 Rutherford deferred the time of Israel's restoration to 1925.

In 1920 he predicted, in his book *Millions Now Living Will Never Die*, that the ancient "worthies" of the Bible would be restored to life in 1925 or soon afterwards and would rule the world and create a global paradise:

> As we have heretofore stated, the great jubilee cycle is due to begin in 1925. At that time the earthly phase of the kingdom shall be recognized… Therefore we may confidently expect that 1925 will mark the return of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and the faithful prophets of old... (Millions 1920, 89-90)

> Jesus, furthermore, said that the regathering of Israel to Palestine (Luke 21:24) would be one of the most conclusive proofs of his presence and of the end of the world. A full discussion of this point, together with many other points concerning the end of the world, is set forth in detail in the above mentioned booklet, "Millions Now Living Will Never Die". Therein is shown conclusively that the prophecies have been fulfilled exactly on time; that Israel is now being regathered and is rebuilding Palestine exactly as the Lord foretold. (The Harp of God 1921, 249)

Comfort campaign 1925-1931

In 1925 Rutherford realized that no ancient Jews were reappearing; it wasn't happening.

Therefore he attempted to fulfill a semblance of the prophecy himself. Using the WTS he initiated a campaign to persuade Jews to create a new Israel. For that purpose he authored *Comfort for the Jews* (1925):

> The promise, time and again repeated, that the Lord would regather them and bless them in the land and keep them there and bless them for ever is conclusive proof that the promise must be fulfilled... (Comfort for the Jews, 1925, 55)

In 1929 Rutherford authored the book *Life* which was the final book in which he interpreted the Bible as predicting Israel's restoration.

The final *Watchtower* article to affirm Israel's restoration was "Restoration Foretold" in September 1931:

> Prophecy can be understood and properly interpreted after its fulfilment, or when in course of fulfilment…
> When prophecy is fulfilled, we describe the facts of its fulfilment as physical facts…
>
> God promised to restore Palestine to the Jews. The rebuilding of Palestine is now beginning and is well under way. This is being done clearly in fulfilment of prophecy uttered as promises from Jehovah. This alone should command not only the respectful attention but the profoundest interest of every one who believes that Jehovah is God. It was the great Jehovah, speaking through men who had faith in him, that foretold what we now see transpiring concerning Palestine. The privilege of living on earth at the time of the fulfilment of these prophecies cannot be overestimated. At once the Jew comes into prominence, and the history of the Jewish people becomes more thrilling than any fiction ever written. Because the promises of God are not always fulfilled at the time when men think they should be fulfilled, many lose faith in his promises made. Let each one settle it in his mind for all time that when God Almighty makes a promise that promise is absolutely certain of fulfilment in God's due time. (w1931 9/1 270-271)

The following year Rutherford discarded the "promises from Jehovah" to the Jews, and applied them to his Watchtower cult.

In *Vindication* III (1932) Rutherford removed Israel and the Jews from Bible prophecy and applied the restoration-of-Israel prophecies to his Organization from 1919 onwards.

WTS Organization becomes "Israel"

In 1932 Rutherford and claimed:

> …the witness to the nations ... is a more complete witness than the beautifying of the literal land of Palestine could possibly be as a testimony to the heathen nations... (w1932 6/15 183)
>
> The Israelites as a people foreshadowed "Christendom", and what came to pass unto Israel will come to pass on 'Christendom', only on a far greater scale. (w1933 8/15 259)

From 1932 onwards Rutherford taught that the Old Testament prophecies in which Israel is described as disobedient applied to "Christendom", and prophecies in which Israel is described as blessed or restored are fulfilled in the (Rutherford's) Organization.

Amos 9:14 foretells Israel's restoration and regarding this prophecy Russell wrote:

> Notice, particularly, that the prophecy cannot be interpreted in any symbolic sense. (Studies III 1891, 244)

Nevertheless Rutherford interpreted Amos 9:14 in a "symbolic sense" as referring to the growth of the WTS from 1919 onwards. (w1939 10/15 312)

Rutherford's reasons for rejecting the idea of a literal restoration of Israel probably included:

- To take his followers' attention away from his failed prophecies regarding Israel;
- Because support for the Jews was inconsistent with JWs political neutrality;
- A literal Israel through which God ruled the world did not fit with Rutherford's goal of his Organization taking over the world;
- To defuse accusations that the WTS was financed by Jews. (w1934 1/1 11)

Anti Semitic

With the Jews not cooperating with him and his prophecies proved false, Rutherford became anti-Semitic.

In his *Declaration of Facts* (1933) he tried to placate Adolf Hitler and professed agreement with the principles of Nazism and wrote:

> The greatest and most oppressive empire on earth is the Anglo-American empire. By that is meant the British Empire, of which the United States of America form a part. It has been the commercial Jews of the British-American empire that have built up and carried on Big Business as a means of exploiting and oppressing the peoples of many nations. This fact particularly applies to the cities of

> London and New York, the stronghold of Big Business. This fact is so manifest in America that there is a proverb concerning the city of New York which says: 'The Jews own it, the Irish Catholics rule it, and the Americans pay the bills.'

As Nazi opposition to both the Jews and JWs increased Rutherford's statements concerning Jews became fairer. For example:

> In justice to the Jews, it is claimed that between 1925 and 1928 the one firm of J. P. Morgan & Company floated larger loans than all Jewish bankers combined, that there is not a single magazine of national circulation owned and controlled by Jews, not a single newspaper chain, and a survey shows that 769 of the highest-paid officials in the motion-picture industry are non-Jews. (g1937 2/10 294)

In 1939 Rutherford reiterated that Israel has no special place in Bible prophecy:

> It therefore follows and the Scriptures conclusively prove that the nation of Israel or Jews will never be restored as a nation... (g1939 11/29 17 Australian Edition)

What had been "shown conclusively" in *The Harp of God* (1921) — that "Israel is now being regathered and is rebuilding Palestine exactly as the Lord foretold" — would now "never" happen!

Israel became a nation in 1948 and "never" therefore lasted only nine years. The JWs leaders admitted no error but called the restoration of Israel "selfishness".

Some JWs arguments evaluated

Romans 11:25-26 says:

> A dulling of sensibilities has happened in part to Israel until the full number of people of the nations has come in, and in this manner all Israel will be saved.

JWs dispute about this passage with other religionists who expect a large scale conversion of Jews.

JWs claim that "all Israel" means spiritual Israel i.e. the "remnant of the 144,000". (w1985 1/15 5-6) Yet a reading of the whole chapter shows that every occurrence of "Israel" in Romans 11 and of the words "them", "their", "they", "some", "all", "those" and "these", refer to literal Israel.

JWs argue: "...was Paul [in Romans 11:5] predicting a future mass conversion of the Jews? How could that be so, since he himself indicated that only a remnant of Jews would accept Christ?"

Romans 11:5 indeed says: "So too at the present time there is a remnant [of Jews], chosen by grace." This statement, however, refers to "the present time" and therefore does not preclude a greater conversion rate in the future.

Another JWs argument concerns the word "until" in Romans 11:25 "a hardening has come upon part of Israel, until the full number of the Gentiles has come in."

The argument is:

> ...the word "until" does not necessarily imply some later conversion. (Compare the use of "until" at Acts 7:17, 18 and Revelation 2:25.) Paul is actually saying that the natural Jews' sensibilities would *remain* 'dull' right down to the end. (w1985 1/15 6)

However, Acts 7:17-18 reads: "the people grew and multiplied in Egypt until there arose a different king over Egypt..." Here the word "until" signifies a change from a rapid multiplication rate to a slower rate. In Revelation 2:25 the word "until" signifies a change from "holding fast what you have" until Christ comes, after which great effort to "hold fast" is unnecessary.

Thus the word "until" implies change in the status quo, and Romans 11:25-26 therefore suggests a future large scale conversion of Jews.

The fourth JWs argument is that literal Israel today is not at peace whereas Ezekiel 38 describes Israel at peace. (w1984 9/15 10-20)

Rutherford, however, applied Ezekiel to the millennium when there is peace. (The Finished Mystery 1917, chapter 38)

JWs analysis biased

The above discussion is not meant to suggest that today's Israel exists in fulfillment of Bible prophecy — rather that the JWs analysis of Romans 11 is biased.

(See also: *DATES; DECLARATION OF FACTS; JEWS; GENTILE TIMES*)

ISAIAH'S PROPHECY Volume 1 & Volume 2 (2000; 2001)

These are official WTS books written by Governing Body members explaining the writings of the Old Testament prophet Isaiah.

ITALY

Publishers, memorial attendance in Italy and their ratio to the population:

	Peak	Ratio 1 to	Memorial	Ratio 1 to
1950	1,211			
1960	5,892	8,630		
1970	18,636	2,899		
1975	51,200	1,078		
1980	84,800	668	189,400	299
1985	127,500	443	275,900	205
1990	181,000	318	355,800	162
1995	214,400	271	388,300	150
2000	228,800	252	406,700	142
2005	234,800	249	416,200	140
2009	243,400	247	435,700	138
2010	243,900	248	443,800	136
2011	245,700	248	460,500	132
2012	247,300	247	452,100	135
2013	248,700	246	461,000	133
2015	251,000	242	435,000	140
2018	251,500	240	417,100	145
	Ave.			
2019	250,500	242	414,600	146
2020	249,800	241	503,000	120
2021	250,700	241	519,000	116
2022	250,100	241	426,000	141
2023	249,600	236	424,100	139
2024	250,800	235	420,400	140
2025	252,000	234	405,476	145

By the 1980s JWs were the second largest religion in Italy and in October 1986 became legally recognized by a presidential decree passed by the Council of Ministers.

JWs growth in Italy slowed around 2000 CE due to counter efforts by the Catholic Church and the failed prophecies for "this generation" and "our twentieth century". For a consideration of future prospects see the entry, *Goal of World Rule*.

IVORY COAST
See: Cote d'Ivoire

REFERENCES:

Beckford, J.A. 1975 *The Trumpet of Prophecy,* Halsted Press

Cross, S. Independent Churches and Independent States: Jehovah's Witnesses in East and Central Africa, In: Fashole, L. et al 1978 *Christianity in Independent Africa*, Indiana University Press

Festinger, L. 1957/1962 *A Theory of Cognitive Dissonance*, Stanford University Press

Reber, A.S. 1985 *The Penguin Dictionary of Psychology*, Penguin, p.129

Rubin, Z. & McNeil, E.B. 1981 *The Psychology of Being Human*, Third Edition, Harper & Row, pp 240, 570

Service Year Reports of JWs Worldwide [since 2017] https://jw.org/

Stark, R. 2005 *The Victory of Reason*, Random House

Watchtower Attorney Olin R. Moyle Sues Watchtower President Joseph F. Rutherford And Wins! New York Supreme Court, October 1943

The Douglas Walsh Trial *The Watchtower Under Oath*, Court of Session, Scotland, November 1954

Vine, W.E. 1981 *Vine's Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words*, Fleming H. Revell

Yearbook of Jehovah's Witnesses [various dates] WTBS

https://ed5015.tripod.com/

https://investigatormagazine.net