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DATE-SETTING IN AMERICA FOR THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST
DURING THE LATE NINETEENTH AND EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY

A Thesis
Presented to
the Faculty of the
Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

In Partial Fulfilment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

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by
Wayne A. Scriven
October 1947

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The advent hope has throbbled in the hearts of men ever since Christ told His disciples that He would return again to receive them unto Himself. Likewise, the time of His second coming has been of interest to His followers throughout the Christian age, and, from time to time, men have gone so far as to fix a date for His second advent. In doing so, they have looked to Bible prophecies for a clue to the time of Christ's return. Apparently, date-setting has never been exceptionally popular with the Christian world, although there have been spasmodic periods when the world has been particularly aware of the doctrine of Christ's return to earth, and, when definite date-setting has received considerable attention.

Perhaps the outstanding period of date-setting was during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. During that time, there was a general advent awakening throughout the world. This was very marked in America where we find prophecy used during the revivals of the 1840's in an effort to determine the exact date of Christ's return. The fact that He did not come at the time appointed by those students of prophecy has caused the Christian world to look with disdain upon those who have tried, in

recent years, to determine the date of Christ's return.

Statement of the Problem. The purpose of this study has been to investigate the setting of dates, in America, for the second coming of Christ during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, endeavoring to ascertain what prophecies were used in determining the date, and how these prophecies were interpreted.

The teaching of Seventh-day Adventists in regard to the second coming of Christ has not been considered a part of this investigation, due to the fact that as a denomination, they do not believe in setting dates for Christ's return, and have not done so during the period under investigation.

Importance of the Study. While many people are aware of the fact that there has been some speculation during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, in regard to the date of the second advent of Christ, some of the facts to be introduced here will be of further interest. Many, during this period, have been misguided regarding the use of prophecy and its interpretation in arriving at a date for Christ's second coming, and the general public is not enlightened as to the teachings of various denominations and individuals regarding the time of His return.

The little that has been done during the period under investigation to present a component picture of what various

writers have found, or of what prophecies they have used to work out their belief concerning the date of the second advent has been largely confined to an attempt to discredit another's theory on the subject. However, Le Roy Edwin Froom, in his work, The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers,¹ has presented an excellent portrayal of the developments of date-setting prior to the period covered in this paper. The works of Daniel Taylor² and Isaac C. Wellcome³ during the nineteenth century, and of Jesse Forrest Silver⁴ during the twentieth century have also been valuable in dealing with the history of date-setting. There is also considerable literature available dealing with the use of prophecy in setting the date for the advent.

It was not the purpose of this study to judge those who have set dates, either as to the sincerity of their belief or the accuracy of their conclusions. It was intended, rather, to discern, on the basis of available evidence, what

1 Le Roy Edwin Froom, The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers (Washington, D. C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1946), Vol. III, 802 pp.

2 Daniel T. Taylor, The Reign of Christ on Earth (Boston: Scriptural Tract Repository, 1882), 545 pp.

3 Isaac C. Wellcome, History of the Second Advent Message (Boston: Advent Christian Publication Society, 1874), 707 pp.

4 Jesse Forrest Silver, The Lord's Return (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1914), 311 pp.

scriptural prophecies have been used in setting dates for Christ's personal appearance, and how they were interpreted.

Plan of Procedure. As a background for the investigation, (1) to review the different prophecies used in a general way as they relate themselves to the setting of dates for the personal return of Christ.

(2) To study the interpretation of the prophecies as they served to point out the various dates which were used as the time forecast for the return of Christ.

(3) To examine the development of each church organization's use of dates in their doctrine of the second coming of Christ in order to determine what changes have been made by those organizations with regard to employing a later date when the earlier one proved false.

(4) To investigate sources of information with the view of gathering information as to how many dates have been set and in what chronological order.

Chapters two to four have the same general arrangement, namely, a brief statement of the background of the church organization or individual under consideration where possible, followed by a sketch of the use and development of prophecy as outlined by each in forecasting the date of Christ's return.

Sources. Although the primary sources for this

investigation are not numerous, they have been sufficient to show definite accomplishment in the field of study. They include (1) letters, (2) pamphlets, and (3) the works of individuals who, during the period under investigation, have figured out time-prophecies in relation to the second advent of Christ.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Parousia. The word most frequently used in the Scriptures to denote the return of Christ is Parousia, which, according to Young's Analytical Concordance, occurs twenty-four times in the New Testament in a variety of settings. The basic meaning of the word is near or alongside and involves all that the English word presence suggests. According to Deissmann, the word is found frequently in classic Greek writings, and "from the Ptolemaic period down into the 2nd cent. A. D. we are able to trace the word in the East as a technical expression for the arrival or visit of the king or emperor"⁵. As used in the New Testament, however, the word does not have a technical meaning but takes on a general meaning of advent or coming as illustrated by Paul's use of the word in connection with the coming of Stephanas

⁵ Adolf Deissmann, Light From the Ancient East, translated by Lionel R. M. Strachan (London: Hadder and Stoughton, 1910), p. 372.

(1 Cor. 16:17), the coming of Titus (2 Cor. 7:6,7), and his own coming (Phil. 1:26).⁶

1 Thess. 3:13; 4:17 and 2 Thess. 2:8 are illustrations of the use of the word showing that the word was also used in connection with the second coming of Christ. In fact the parallelism between the parousia of the representative of the State and the parousia of Christ was clearly felt by the early Christians themselves.⁷

Second Adventists. Two main groups of Second Adventists grew out of the Millerite Movement of the 1830's and 40's. They were the Seventh-day Adventists and the First-day Adventists. During the next two decades, the First-day Adventists were further divided into a number of small groups, some of which were The Church of the Blessed Hope, Brethren of the Abrahamic Faith, Restitutionists, Church of God, Age to Come Adventists, Life and Advent Union, and the Advent Christians. Of the first-day groups, the Advent Christian and Life and Advent Union sects were by far the most important, and it is primarily these sects that are referred to in this paper by the term "Second Adventists". At no time does the term include the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

⁶ John F. Walvoord, "New Testament Words for the Lord's Coming," Bibliotheca Sacra, 101:285, July, 1944.

⁷ Deissmann, op. cit., p. 377.

"Times of the Gentiles". The belief that God has rejected the Jews as a nation for a period of 2520 years, and that the Jews will be restored as a nation at the end of that time has generally been held by Bible students who have attempted to set the date of Christ's return during the past seventy years. This period, also known as the "Gentile Age" has been defined by those who believe in the theory as "the time during which the throne of David is vacant and God's people have no independent form of civil government, but are subject to the Gentile powers that be".⁸ The method used in computing the 2520 years for this period has been to apply the year-day theory to the seven "times" of Dan. 4:25, a "time" being considered as one year of 360 days, thus, $7 \times 360 = 2520$ years.

Rapture. In recent years, a new teaching in regard to the manner of Christ's second coming has found entrance into many churches and Bible schools. According to this theory, there will be two phases to the second coming of Christ, one of them a secret, silent taking away of the church, the other the revelation of Christ in glory.

The "rapture", as the first phase is commonly called, is the time when Christ shall come in the air and secretly

⁸ Milton Colby Burt, The Times Are Fulfilled (Boston: The Warren Press, 1927), p. 99.

snatch from the earth all true believers, to be with Him in a state of exaltation.

The word "rapture" does not appear in the Bible, but is derived from the passage in 1 Thess. 4:17 which has been interpreted to mean "snatched away". By those who believe in this theory, it is generally considered that the "rapture" will take place seven years before the revelation or manifestation of Christ. This is due to the fact that many interpreters of the Bible place the seventieth week of Daniel's prophecy at the end of this world's history and separate from the rest of the prophecy.

CHAPTER II

ANGLO-ISRAELITES

Development of Anglo-Israelism. The theory that the people of England and America are the descendants of the ten tribes of Israel was first introduced in 1649 A. D. by John Sadler, who attempted to show that the English laws and customs were similar to those of the Jewish people, and that the name Britain can be traced to a Phoenician source.¹ Many of the legends surrounding the Coronation Stone of England also have a Jewish tinge.²

The modern Anglo-Israel movement was founded by Richard Brothers (1757-1824), an officer in the British navy who styled himself as "the nephew of the Almighty" and claimed to be a descendant of David.³ The movement has grown until today, it has approximately two million adherents in England and America.⁴ It is the belief of his followers that the ten lost tribes of Israel migrated from Palestine

1 Albert M. Hyamson, "Anglo-Israelism," Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, I, 482. According to John Sadler as quoted by Hyamson, the name "Britain" comes from the Phoenician words Beret Anak, meaning "The field of tin and lead".

2 Joseph Jacobs, "Anglo-Israelism," The Jewish Encyclopedia, I, 600-1.

3 Loc. cit.

4 Hyamson, op. cit., p. 482.

across the Caucasus and on through Europe, finally arriving in England. It is their contention that the Danish people are composed of the tribe of Dan, while England constitutes the remnant of the tribe of Ephraim, and the people of the United States represent the tribe of Manasseh; and that, in the original break-up of the ten tribes, there were some who escaped by ship and found their way to Ireland, bringing with them the Lia-Fail, or Bethel Stone, which was supposedly rescued from the ruins of the temple. This stone, it is believed, later found its way into Scotland, where it was used in the coronation of the Scottish Kings, and from there into England where it is now known as the Coronation Stone.

Those who hold this far-reaching theory are known as British-Israel or Anglo-Israelites. They have not formed a separate sect or denomination, but consider themselves rather to be the handmaids of the churches. Their followers usually retain their religious affiliation, holding their views as supplementary, but organizing themselves privately into associations centralizing in the British-Israel World Federation.⁵ For the most part, the Anglo-Israelites belong to

⁵ Headquarters in England is located at 6 Buckingham Gate, London, while in the United States, their organization is known as the Anglo-Saxon Federation of America, and has its headquarters at 2211 Woodward Ave., Detroit, Michigan. However, at the present time, letters addressed to them at Detroit are returned unclaimed.

the Church of England.⁶

Judging from their list of writers, their organization has many adherents among the higher classes in England where they operate their own printing establishment, known as "The Covenant Publishing Company".⁷ In America, each author has apparently relied upon a private printer for his publications.

Their views are based, to a large extent, on a literal interpretation of certain passages of the Old Testament (King James Version). They refer to Hos. 1:10 to show that the ten tribes were to increase until they became in number "as the sands of the sea". In Isa. 24:15, they find a basis for the belief that the British Isles were to be inhabited by the lost tribes of Israel. Jer. 3:12, supposedly, also refers to Britain as the future home of Israel, and, in Micah 5:8, they find that Israel was to become a great nation, such as the British Commonwealth.

It has not been hard for the adherents to this theory to find illustrations from history which they claim as certain proof that God is acting in a special way toward Britain. They have always looked for the time to come when the Jews would again have control of Palestine, and the fact

⁶ Jacobs, op. cit., p. 600-1.

⁷ Loc. cit.

that England was given control of that country at the end of World War I is cited as definite proof that the people of England must belong to the ten lost tribes.

Among the interesting features included in the teachings of the Anglo-Israelites is their reliance upon the apparent time predictions contained in the Great Pyramid of Gizeh.

The Great Pyramid. The importance attached to the Great Pyramid by the Anglo-Israelites and the early Russellites in dealing with the prophetic dates, makes it of interest to understand something of the size and history of this monument of ancient times. It is located about five miles from Gizeh, near Cairo, where the rocky plateau of the Libyan Desert rises one hundred feet above the fertile plains of the Nile. This massive structure covers twelve acres, and rises nearly five hundred feet from its base to a flat top, the sides averaging seven hundred and fifty-five feet and nine inches, varying only about an inch.⁸

The Pyramid was once covered with a smooth casing of limestone. However, the casing has long since disappeared, having been carried away chiefly by the Arabs who used it for

⁸ Noel F. Wheeler, "Pyramids and Their Purpose", Antiquity: A Quarterly Review of Archaeology, 9:161-83, June, 1935. Cf., Appendix A, p. 104 for drawings of the Great Pyramid.

building purposes. The structure is built of level courses of limestone blocks, about two by three feet, and stands out in great steps, making it possible, with considerable effort, to climb to the top, which is a flat surface about thirty feet square. While the blocks are not always regular in shape, they have been cut to fit so closely that, in many cases, it is impossible to discern where they have been joined.⁹ The original entrance is about fifty feet from the ground on the North side, and descends in a sloping plane through the Pyramid until it ends in what is known as the Pit, which in other pyramids serves as the burial chamber. In the Great Pyramid, however, the Pit is unfinished and left in a very rugged condition. About one-fourth of the way down the descending passage, an ascending passage leads off from it toward the center of the Pyramid. This passage continues for about one hundred and twenty feet where it leads into what is known as the Grand Gallery. The Grand Gallery is about one hundred and fifty feet long, and has a height of twenty-eight feet. It is the largest single space within the Pyramid. The side walls taper in, and the end walls appear to be overlapping steps. Where the low ascending passage connects with the Grand Gallery, a horizontal low passage leads off which terminates in the Queen's Chamber.

⁹ Wheeler, loc. cit.

This chamber has a statue niche in one wall, and ventilating shafts leading to the outside of the Pyramid. There is also a passage known as the Well which slopes downward from the beginning of the Grand Gallery and connects with the descending passage near the Pit. Near the upper end of the Grand Gallery, there is a high step, and from here, the floor becomes horizontal, leading through a low passage to the Ante-Chamber, and from there, through another low passage into the King's Chamber. This is a room thirty-four feet long, seventeen feet wide, and eighteen feet in height. It contains only a lidless stone coffer. Above this chamber are five small chambers, originally without openings, with the exception of the one just above the King's Chamber, which has a small aperture leading to the top of the Grand Gallery.¹⁰

From the time the Pyramid was finished until the eighth century, A. D., the entrance and passages were hidden from the knowledge of men. It was under the influence of Al Mamoun and the Arab treasure seekers that the Pyramid was first entered, and then only by accident. The discovery was made while they were drilling into the side of it, when, during a rest period, they heard a stone drop to the side of their tunnel, and upon turning in that direction, found the

¹⁰ Loc. cit.

true passage-way.¹¹

For centuries the Great Pyramid has stood a monumental mystery. Almost all recorded history has taken place since it was built, overlooking the delta region of the Nile. However, it remained for men of recent years to design a purpose for this great monument of masonry.

While many opinions were current a century ago, it was John Taylor,¹² a London publisher, who first presented the belief that the Great Pyramid holds a divine message from God for the world. From this beginning, speculations concerning the Pyramid's prophetic message have grown, until, for the last seventy years, men have attempted to ascertain a date for Christ's second coming by use of the measurements found in the Pyramid. The use of the Pyramid for this purpose has not been confined to any one group of people, but has been used by various religious organizations in dealing with prophecy. The Anglo-Israelites and Russellites particularly have relied heavily upon it for determining a date for the second advent of Christ.

¹¹ Piazzi Smyth, Our Inheritance in the Great Pyramid (London: Wm. Isbister, Limited, 1880), p. 115.

¹² John Taylor, The Great Pyramid, Why Was It Built, And Who Built It? (Second edition, London: Longman, Green and Co., 1864), First edition, 1859. The most extensive work of recent times is that of D. Davidson and H. Aldersmith, The Great Pyramid Its Divine Message (London: Williams and Norgate, Ltd., 1932).

Date-Setting by the Anglo-Israelites. While the Great Pyramid has been used extensively by the Anglo-Israelites in working out the time of Christ's return, it was not the only source used by them. In 1865, however, one of their number, Robert Menzies,¹³ called to the attention of Piazzi Smyth, the fact that the Grand Gallery might represent the Christian Dispensation, and "that from there in Southward procession, began the years of the Saviour's life, expressed at the rate of a Pyramid inch to a year" (calendar year).¹⁴

Smyth, at the time, was in Egypt doing some work of his own relative to the measurements of the Pyramid. Upon receiving the above suggestion from Menzies, he went to the

¹³ Smyth, op. cit., p. 460-1. Menzies was a young ship builder from Leith, Scotland who had been an ardent student of the Great Pyramid since his youth. He is not mentioned by Anglo-Israelites except in connection with his suggestion to Smyth of the possibility of the Grand Gallery's representing the Christian Dispensation.

¹⁴ Loc. cit. The Pyramid inch is based upon the British inch. However, it is considered one eleven-thousandth of an inch longer. In the Ante-Chamber there is a piece of granite which reaches from wall to wall. It is built in such a way that one must bend under it in order to pass through the Ante-Chamber. This piece of granite is called, by students of the Pyramid, the "Granite-leaf". Upon examination of the "Granite-leaf", a smaller piece of granite can be seen projecting from near its center. This is called the Boss. It was found by Smyth that the Boss extends from the "Granite-leaf" one eleven-thousandth of an inch more than one British inch. It is from this projection that the Pyramid inch is calculated, making the Pyramid inch equal to one and one eleven-thousandth British inches.

Grand Gallery to work out the suggestion, and found that there were about thirty-three Pyramid inches from its North wall to the mouth of the Well, which would represent Christ's death and glorious resurrection. Smyth made other measurements, placing the date of the Exodus about 1483 B. C., and showing, according to his calculations, that the Pyramid was built in 2170 B. C. This satisfied him that the theory of Menzies was correct, and that he could assume the Grand Gallery to represent the Christian Age.¹⁵ Having established the starting point of the Christian Dispensation, it was natural for Smyth to try to determine the time of the end. Speaking of the end of time and the return of Christ, he said:

But though the danger of erring be great, we are not, therefore, instructed not to make any attempt; on the contrary, 'The Revelation of Jesus Christ', was given unto him [John, the Revelator] by God, in order 'to show unto His servants things which must shortly come to pass': and those particular servants were promised blessing, who should both read and hear the words of that prophecy, and struggle in spirit and wrestle in prayer to understand its mysterious saying even in number. Indeed, as the time of the end draws near, it would even seem to be a growing duty of the present day to compare the end, thus far arrived at, with what was said of it in the beginning; and thereby realize more Scripture miracles . . . in our own day and before our own eyes; together with such positive and irresistible proof that there is no God like our God of Israel and the Bible.¹⁶

¹⁵ Ibid., pp. 462-5.

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 544.

By measuring the length of the Grand Gallery, Smyth found it to be 1813 Pyramid inches from the North wall to the Great Step, and sixty-eight inches from there to the South wall, or, to be more exact, 1881.4 Pyramid inches in all.¹⁷ Now, working on the assumption that the Grand Gallery represented the Christian Age, he asks the question, "How close then, is such an end?" and points to the length of the Grand Gallery for the answer. Having reached this decision, he goes on to conclude, "Something, then, seems to be appointed to take place at that particular time (1881.4)¹⁸ However, he did not hold that 1882-3 would see the second coming of Christ as some would have us believe,¹⁹ but definitely points out that it is not Christ's second coming, or the end of the world, but the time of trouble which Christ announced would precede His second coming.²⁰ Commenting further on the time of Christ's return, he wrote,

Exactly when that second coming--which . . . will put an end for ever to all wars and human authorization for man to slaughter his fellow-men, women, and children to promote his own so-called interests--is to take place, is a question toward which the Great Pyramid suggests in the Grand Gallery's Southern low passage, both thencefrom and towards the ante-chamber,--that a beginning of

17. Ibid., p. 546. Infra, Appendix B, p. 105 for Wheeler's measurements of the Pyramid.

18 Ibid., p. 547.

19 Abbie Dunn, "A Survey of Pyramid Teaching", The Ministry, 19:15-6, November 1946.

20 Smyth, loc. cit.

the divine preparations for it may be, in 1879, within only three or four years . . . ; though the full and grand event may not take place until after a further interval of time typified by the difference in years of the two sets of numbers imported to Daniel, viz. 1, 260 and 1, 335.²¹

Therefore, although Smyth laid the ground work for future prophecies from the Pyramid, he did not attempt to set the exact date of Christ's return. This has not been true of those who have followed, however.

Another Anglo-Israelite, who lived at the time of Smyth and published his works shortly after Smyth's speculations, was William A. Redding. He based his teaching on the "times of the Gentiles" which he records as 2520 years. This period, Redding calculated from the seven years, or times, of Nebuchadnezzar's wanderings in the fields, by referring to the fact that, in the Bible, a "time" is reckoned as a year of 360 days, twelve months of thirty days each, thus, "seven times" would be seven years of 360 days or $7 \times 360 = 2520$ days. While, in the case of Nebuchadnezzar, it was literal time, in prophecy, it becomes prophetic time which is represented as a day for a year (Ezek. 4:5,6). Therefore, 360 days are equal to 360 years, which was to be the time of the punishment of Israel.²² During the "times of

21. Ibid., pp. 610-611.

22 William A. Redding, Our Near Future (Peekskill-on-Hudson, N. Y.: Ernest Yates Loomis, 1896), pp. 16-17.

the Gentiles", the Jewish nation was supposedly under the control of non-Jewish people. At its close, the Christian Age will end and the Lord will re-establish His people in the Millennial Age,²³ by His return to earth as he appeared on the mount of transfiguration.²⁴ Now, if it were possible to determine the beginning of the "times of the Gentiles", it would be possible to know when to expect the Lord's return. This, Redding attempted to do. He taught that the 2520 years commenced at the "right time" to end at the close of the Christian Age, and that, it is possible to find the beginning of the "times of the Gentiles", which he dated as 624 B. C. In arriving at this date, he wrote the following:

The time when the Gentiles took Jerusalem is in some dispute due to the fact that when the king of Babylon took Jerusalem in 624 B. C., he left the king of Israel on the throne and did not break up the government. The Jewish government was allowed to continue eighteen years, when because of their rebellion, the king and people were carried away and the city burned (606 B. C.). There are some strong scriptural proofs which go to prove that God counted 624 B. C. as the date when the Gentiles took rule of the earth.²⁵

Thus, taking 624 B. C. as the beginning of the 2520 years, he figured forward and discovered that the time ended

23 Ibid., pp. 17-18.

24 William A. Redding, The Three Churches ([n. p.]: The Author, 1897), p. 149.

25 William A. Redding, Our Near Future, pp. 24-5.

in 1896 A. D. However, although the "times of the Gentiles" ended in 1896 A. D., he found leeway, in the fact that the Jewish government was allowed to continue for eighteen years after 624 B. C., for the governments of earth to carry on for eighteen years longer, which brought him to 1914, the date on which he said some visible changes would take place, thereby implying that the Lord would return at that time.²⁶ In referring to the Great Pyramid, Redding says that it is "another straw which shows which way the wind is blowing". However, he does not recognize it as a prophetic symbol which accurately dates the return of Jesus.²⁷

Shortly after 1900, a new reckoning of the Pyramid prophecies was made, and it was pointed out that the Grand Gallery began at the crucifixion in 31 A. D., and ended in 1913.²⁸ About 1911, D. Davidson met and joined Dr. H. Aldersmith in research concerning the Pyramid. 1913 came and went uneventfully. They continued their research until interrupted by the war in the latter part of the following year. Dr. Aldersmith died in 1918, and after the war Davidson carried on alone.²⁹

²⁶ Loc. cit.

²⁷ William A. Redding, The Millennial Kingdom, (Kansas City, Mo.: Hudson-Kimberly Publishing Co., 1894), pp. 106-8.

²⁸ Davidson, op. cit., p. vi.

²⁹ Ibid., p. xi.

With the war dates known to him, Davidson was now able to show, to his satisfaction, the accuracy of the Pyramid prophecies. Having determined Friday, April 5, A. D. 30 as the date of Christ's crucifixion,³⁰ it was possible, by producing a passage line up through the Great Step until it met a vertical line from the lowest of the overlapping courses at the end of the Gallery, to place the beginning of World War I at August 5, 1914.³¹

It is from this point and date that a new unit of measure is used, known as the inch-month scale, each inch thereafter being recorded as one month of thirty days by Davidson and others who have used the Pyramid theory in recent years. This new unit of measure was adapted because it was discovered that by allowing one inch for a thirty day month, the end of the first low passage would signify the end of World War I. It was, therefore thought imperative that this be considered the correct unit of measure.³² Continuing the inch-month scale, it was found by Davidson that the entry to the King's Chamber would be September 16, 1936, which he concluded must be the time of Christ's return.³³

30 Ibid., p. 354.

31 Ibid., p. 386a. Also plate LXV.

32 Ibid., p. xii.

33 Ibid., Table xxxi, p. 391.

Turning to his Bible, he found confirmation for his conclusions, the "times of the Gentiles" serving to substantiate the prophecies of the Great Pyramid. Davidson discovered that

The latter dating, at the threshold of the King's Chamber, is within a week of 5935 A. K. [The letters A. K. mean after creation.] Reference to Table XXX and Plate LXVI shows that this important dating is 2520 solar years from the date of Jeremiah's prophecy from prison at the central date of Nebuchadnezzar's siege of Jerusalem, . . . 3415 A. K. . . . the date 5935 A. K. (1936 3/4 A. D.) is, therefore, the terminal date of the period of fulfilment of the time of the Gentiles.³⁴

With the publication of Davidson's work in 1924, a new vista was opened to the prophets of Anglo-Israelism, and from that time, they have based their findings upon the measurements and calculations worked out by him. This does not mean that they always reached the same conclusions as to the time of Christ's second coming, for within the next five years, at least two other theories were propounded.

Shortly after May, 1928, one of the Anglo-Israelites published a book in which he claimed that the Lord came on May 27, 1928.³⁵ He contended that the geometry of the Great

³⁴ Ibid., pp. 387-391.

³⁵ Adam Rutherford, The Bridegroom Has Come! ([n. p.]: The Author, 1928), p. 22. Rutherford must be considered as both an Anglo-Israelite and a Jehovah's witness. He felt that Charles Taze Russell's works were the result of God's direction; however, Rutherford's work has not been recognized in any Jehovah's Witnesses' publications, nor were

Step indicated May 27, 1928 as the intersection of the "Grand Chamber floor". If this were true, Pentecost of that year is shown both by the inch year scale³⁶ in the Grand Gallery, and the inch-month³⁷ in the Ante-Chamber to be the time "when the Bridegroom came and the glorification of the church in the first resurrection began".³⁸

I Thess. 4:16 was also fulfilled at that time, according to his reasoning, for he claims that on that very day, the "rapid approach of Christ to earth was accompanied by a sudden shout of joy which rang in the ears of the saints".³⁹

About this time, an Anglo-Israelite by the name of Fredrick Haberman, after working out the time-prophecies of Daniel in such a way that they coincided with the work of Davidson and had a common terminal, September 15-16, 1936⁴⁰ (this date being "the date of the seventh new moon of the

his works published by them. In 1934, he published a book entitled Anglo-Saxon Israel in which he sets forth the arguments of the Anglo-Israelites. His earlier works also show that he was a follower of their doctrine.

36 Cf. ante, p. 16.

37 Cf. ante, p. 22.

38 Rutherford, loc. cit.

39 Ibid., p. 28.

40 Fredrick Haberman, The Message of the Great Pyramid (St. Petersburg, Florida: The Kingdom Press, 1928), p. 39.

Hebrew year"), concluded that the position of the open tomb in the King's Chamber plainly indicated that it is not for man to fix dates for the second coming of Christ.⁴¹ However, he did hold that His return will be within the King's Chamber period (1936-1953). It therefore appears that he favored the theory of the advent's taking place at or near September 16, 1936,⁴² even suggesting in 1932 that President Hoover's second term if he should be re-elected, would go beyond that date, and therefore, no doubt he would be the last President of our country.⁴³ In harmony with other Anglo-Israelites, he has favored the doctrine of six thousand years from creation to the beginning of the Millennium or "day of rest", at which time all things will have been accomplished. According to Haberman's theory, the six thousand years will end in 2001 A. D.⁴⁴

When September 16, 1936 came and passed uneventfully, it was necessary for a new explanation to be found, and, by 1939, the Anglo-Israelites were teaching that the open tomb within the King's Chamber definitely pointed to 1941 as the

41. Ibid., pp. 41-43.

42. Ibid., p. 76.

43. Fredrick Haberman, The Great Pyramid's Message to America (St. Petersburg, Florida: The Kingdom Press, 1932), p. 76.

44. Ibid., p. 16.

probable date of Christ's return,⁴⁵ which was also considered the terminal date of the 2520 years from the last captivity of the Jews, as well as the end of the 1335 "days" of Dan. 12:12.⁴⁶

The present view of this organization seems to be the one that was expressed in 1940 by Haberman. His contention was that the judgment period of God started on September 16, 1936,⁴⁷ and that before 1953 has passed, the Lord must come for His people. He does not indicate that we are to know the day or the hour of Christ's coming, but only the period during which it will take place.⁴⁸

45. A. J. Ferris, The Great Pyramid (London: A. J. Ferris, 1939), p. 72.

46 Ibid., p. 85.

47 Fredrick Haberman, Armageddon Has Come (St. Petersburg, Florida: The Kingdom Press, 1940), p. 90.

48 Ibid., p. 92.

CHAPTER III

JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES

Since the beginning of their organization, Jehovah's Witnesses have been designated by a number of names, which include Russellites, Millennial Dawnites, and Rutherfordites. The "Witnesses" did not use a distinctive name when referring to themselves until 1931 when, as a denomination, they chose the name "Jehovah's Witnesses". They claim that C. T. Russell and J. F. Rutherford were the leaders of their sect, placing them on a par with such Biblical characters as Paul, Peter, John the Baptist, Moses, and Abraham.¹

Since Charles T. Russell enters the picture as the founder of their faith, a brief biography of his life is helpful in getting the true perspective of the Jehovah's Witnesses' teaching regarding the return of Christ.

PASTOR RUSSELL

Charles Taze Russell was born at Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, February 16, 1852, to parents of Scotch-Irish descent.²

¹ Let God Be True (Brooklyn: Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society, Inc., 1946), p. 213.

² William M. Wisdom, The Laodicean Messenger (Chicago, Ill., U. S. A.: The Bible Students Book Store, 1923), p. 1.

His parents were ardent members of the Congregational Church. At an early age, Russell joined the same church, as well as the Young Men's Christian Association, and became very active in local missionary work. His education was obtained in the common schools and from private tutors.³

Until Russell was fifteen years old, he believed in the Gospel as taught by the Congregational Church. However, about that time, he began to have some doubts and misgivings regarding the teaching of the Congregationalists, and when in 1868, he attempted to convert an infidel with whom he came in contact, Russell fell an easy prey to the skillful questions of his rival, and turned to infidelity for a short while himself. "But that which threatened to shipwreck his faith in God" served merely as a stepping-stone to a new interpretation of the Scriptures.⁴ Following his discussion with the infidel, Russell made an investigation of the leading Oriental religions, and when no satisfaction was forthcoming from these, he turned to a study of various creeds of the Christian Churches, which he found to "contain some elements of truth". Among other doctrines, Russell

³ Ernest Sutherland Bates, "Charles Taze Russell" Dictionary of American Biography (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1943), XVI, p. 240.

⁴ "Biography," The Watch Tower and Herald of Christ's Presence, 37:356, Dec. 1, 1916.

stumbled upon that of the Second Adventists⁵ from which he gained a new concept of the divine inspiration of the Bible.⁶

One evening during 1869, his attention, by accident, was drawn to a service conducted by Jonas Wendell, a minister of the Advent Christian Church. He dropped into the dusty, dingy hall to see if the small group gathered there had any light to offer concerning the Bible, and as a result of this experience, Russell was led to a deeper study of the scriptures and the conviction that the Gospel Age was about to close. This marked the beginning of his religious career.

Shortly after his contact with Wendell, Russell and a few friends started a Bible class in Pittsburgh which continued from 1870 to 1876. While he kept up his search for Bible truth, he demonstrated his leadership and business ability by carrying on in the clothing business which he had inherited from his father.

In 1876 Russell met N. H. Barbour,⁷ an editor, who

5 The Second Adventists with whom Russell came in contact were members of the Advent Christian Church, who believed that Christ would return in 1874.

6 Wisdom, *op. cit.*, pp. 3-4.

7 N. H. Barbour had been a member of the Advent Christian Church for a number of years prior to 1874. He was associated with Jonathan Cummings in setting the date 1854 for the time of Christ's return, but, unlike Cummings, he did not give up date-setting when 1854 passed without the return of Christ as expected. He became an advocate of the date 1873-74 as the time of the Lord's return, holding that "the mistake of the 1843 movement was not in the argument

was instrumental in explaining to him the time-prophecies of the Bible. Prior to their meeting, Barbour had sent Russell a copy of his paper, The Herald of the Morning in which was set forth his belief regarding the second coming of Christ. Russell commented that upon opening the paper, he was well aware of the fact that it was a "Second Advent" periodical, but that he was curious to learn what new "time" they would set next for the "burning up of the world".⁸ From this contact began Russell's time-predictions, the publication of the magazine The Watch Tower and Herald of Christ's Presence, and the sale and distribution of millions of copies of his books.

Russell himself made no claim of a special revelation from God, but held that in God's own due time the Bible

proving that the 'days' ended there, but in assuming that they covered all the vision". Cf., N. H. Barbour, C. T. Russell, Three Worlds, (Rochester, N. Y.: The Authors, 1877), p. 158. Barbour held that the thirty years of Christ's life before he entered upon His ministry should be added to the 2300 days making them end in 1874. (This concept he obtained from the parable of the ten virgins which speaks of the Bridegroom's tarrying.)

Another method of obtaining a date for the second coming of Christ was the 6000 year theory which Barbour worked out to end in 1873. When this prediction also failed, Barbour drifted away from the Advent Christian Church, and eventually came to believe that Christ's coming would be a spiritual and not a literal event. This conviction was based on the meaning of the word Parousia in Matt. 24:37-39, which he translated presence rather than coming.

8 Charles Taze Russell, "Harvest Gatherings and Siftings," The Watch Tower and Herald of Christ's Presence, 37:170, June 1, 1916.

would be made plain, and that he, being fully consecrated to the Lord's service, was permitted to understand it.⁹ However, one of his admirers, the writer of his memoirs, speaks of him as "the greatest expounder of Biblical truths since the days of Saint Paul, the twelfth and greatest apostle of the Lamb, and the staunchest defender of 'the faith once delivered to the saints' since Luther".¹⁰

During the later years of his life, Russell traveled extensively, averaging over 30,000 miles a year. He passed away on a train in Texas on October 31, 1916.¹¹

PASTOR RUSSELL AND THE SECOND ADVENTISTS

As has already been noted, Russell's first contact with the Second Adventists was that with Jonas Wendell, an Advent Christian minister.¹² While this experience awakened in him a new desire to study the Bible, Russell claimed that the Second Adventists did not present him with a single truth, giving them credit only for helping him to unlearn

⁹ "Biography," The Watch Tower and Herald of Christ's Presence, 37:356, Dec. 1, 1916.

¹⁰ Wisdom, op. cit., p. 1.

¹¹ "Biography," The Watch Tower and Herald of Christ's Presence, 37:357, Dec. 1, 1916.

¹² Cf. ante, p. 26.

some of the things he had been taught as a boy.¹³ The validity of this statement may be judged by further evidence here presented.

Shortly after 1870, Russell made the acquaintance of two other Second Adventist ministers,¹⁴ which was an indication that his interest in their views had not abated. Speaking of the help which he received from these men, he said:

The study of the word of God with these dear brethren led step by step, into greener pastures and brighter hopes for the world, though it was not until 1872, when I gained a clear view of our Lord's work, as our Ransom Price, that I found the foundation of all hope of restitution to lie in that doctrine.¹⁵

Some years later, Russell referred to a letter he wrote to Storrs in which he spoke of him affectionately as "brother", and offered him space in The Watch Tower and Herald of Christ's Presence, since Storrs had been forced to discontinue his own publication because of illness and

13. Charles Taze Russell, "Harvest Gatherings and Siftings," The Watch Tower and Herald of Christ's Presence, 37:170, June 1, 1916.

14 The Second Adventist ministers referred to here were George Stetson and George Storrs, the latter being the editor of the Bible Examiner.

15 Charles Taze Russell, "Harvest Gatherings and Siftings," The Watch Tower and Herald of Christ's Presence, 37:170, June 1, 1916.

advancing age.¹⁶

Although Russell, in 1873, was familiar with the teaching of Second Adventists concerning the end of the world, he did not accept their doctrine, but looked on it as just another of their errors. He later stated that, with surprise and gratification, he learned from a copy of The Herald of the Morning that some Second Adventists were teaching a spiritual coming of Christ and not His literal return as had been the case prior to 1874. With this knowledge, Russell received a new concept of time-setting, stating it thus:

Here was a new thought; could it be that the Time Prophecies, which I had so long despised, because of their misuse by Adventists, were really meant to indicate when the Lord would be invisibly present to set up His kingdom?--A thing which I saw could be known in no other way . . .

I recalled certain arguments used by my friend, Jonas Wendell, and by other Adventists to prove that 1873 would witness the burning of the world, . . . could it be that these time arguments, which I had passed by as unworthy of attention, contained an important truth which the Adventists had misapplied?¹⁷

Russell immediately wrote to Barbour sending him his

¹⁶ Charles Taze Russell, "Brother Geo. Storrs," The Watch Tower and Herald of Christ's Presence (Reprint), 1:71 January, 1880.

¹⁷ Charles Taze Russell, "Harvest Gatherings and Siftings," The Watch Tower and Herald of Christ's Presence, 37:170, June 1, 1916. The important truth which the Adventists had misapplied, according to Russell, was that of teaching that Christ's return would be literal and not spiritual, and that the world would be "burned up" in 1873-74.

fare, and asking him to come to Pittsburgh to study the time-prophecies with him. As a result of this visit, it was agreed that Barbour should prepare a book, setting forth their views, and that Russell should discontinue his business and devote himself to the preaching of the Word.¹⁸

Barbour, with the help of Russell, resumed the publication of his paper The Herald of the Morning which had been practically suspended after 1874 due to lack of finances. Associated with them was Paton, who had previously helped in the publication of Barbour's paper.¹⁹

TIME-SETTING

The year 1874 held a special significance for Russell, since it was on that date that he believed Christ had returned to this earth. He taught that this coming was not literal, but that Christ had come spiritually, and that His presence has been with us constantly since 1874. Russell's basis for this belief was his translation of the Greek word Parousia in Matt. 24:27,37, and 39. Like Barbour,²⁰ he believed that this word should be translated presence rather than coming. Therefore, the object of

¹⁸ Wisdom, op. cit., pp. 17-18.

¹⁹ Charles Taze Russell, "Harvest Gatherings and Siftings," The Watch Tower and Herald of Christ's Presence, 37:171, June 1, 1916.

²⁰ Cf. ante, p. 29, footnote 7.

Christ's return was that His presence might be on the earth.²¹

With this view in mind, Russell turned to a study of the doctrines advanced by the Second Adventists regarding their belief that the return of Christ would take place in 1874, and concluded that they were valid in every respect. He believed that their doctrine was an outgrowth of the 1844 Millerite teaching, which he considered also a forerunner of his own movement,²² since the argument used by him and his Second Adventist friends in establishing the date 1874 for the second coming of Christ was based on the same time-prophecy used by Miller in arriving at the date 1844. Russell and the Second Adventists taught that the 2300 days (years) of Daniel 8:14 started in 457 B. C. and ended in 1843 A. D.; however, they believed that there was a tarrying time of thirty years, as portrayed by the thirty years of Christ's life on earth before entering upon His ministry. Proof for this theory was derived from the parable of the Ten Virgins in which Christ used the illustration of the Bridegroom's tarrying for a short while. By adding thirty years to the 2300 days (years) they arrived at the date

²¹ Wisdom, *op. cit.*, p. 16.

²² Charles Taze Russell, "Cast Not Away Therefore Your Confidence," The Watch Tower and Herald of Christ's Presence (Reprint), 1:188,189, February, 1881.

1874.²³

Another method used by Russell and Barbour in support of the date 1874 for the return of Christ was to refer to the Jewish jubilee years instituted by Moses in Lev. 25:8,9. Their concept of the jubilee years was worked out in the following manner.

So long as jubilee years occurred, these cycles were fifty years each; when jubilees ceased, the cycles went on, having but forty-nine years, (Lev. 25:8), to each cycle. Hence, we find the nine-teen cycles, which passed while they were in possession of the land, have the jubilee, or fiftieth year, added; and the fifty-one cycles, which have passed since the typical jubilee ended, are cycles of only forty-nine years each.

Seventy is the key; 19 and 51 make 70. Hence, from where the system began, we should find nineteen complete cycles, and fifty-one incomplete; and thus counted they should measure from the end of the forty years in the wilderness, when they crossed the Jordan on entering the promised land, to the spring of 1875. This is a long time, and if there are mistakes in the chronology, such absolute accuracy as is here demanded in order that the law and the prophets shall agree, ought to develop such mistakes.

Nineteen complete cycles, or 19 times 50, is 950 years. Fifty-one incomplete cycles, or 51 times 49 is 2499; and together, make 3449 years. Hence from entering the promised land, which was in the spring on the tenth day of the first month, Josh. 4:19, to the spring of A. D. 1875--that is, the end of 1874--should be 3449 years . . . from the end of the forty years at which time they entered the land

To division of land,	6 years
Under the Judges,	450 "

²³ Charles Taze Russell, "And the Door Was Shut," The Watch Tower and Herald of Christ's Presence, 1:290, October and November, 1881.

Under the Kings,	513 years
The captivity,	70 "
To Christian era,	536 "
This side of the Christian era,	1874 "
Total,	<u>3449 years</u> ²⁴

Further argument offered by Russell was that of the six thousand year theory. He believed that, according to chronology, six thousand years from Adam would end in 1873.²⁵

Russell was not adverse to accepting evidence other than that found in the Bible, and when he came in contact with the work of Piazzi Smyth in regard to the Great Pyramid, he was quick to see how well it complied with his own doctrine of the return of Jesus. Speaking of the Great Pyramid, Russell said:

Viewed from whatever standpoint we please, the Great Pyramid is certainly the most remarkable building in the world; but in the light of an investigation which has been in progress for the past thirty-two years, it acquires new interest to every Christian advanced in the study of God's word; for it seems in a remarkable manner to teach in harmony with all the prophets an outline of the plan of God, past, present, and future.

Again, he stated that:

The Great Pyramid, however, proves to be a storehouse of important truth--scientific, historic, and

²⁴ N. H. Barbour, C. T. Russell, Three Worlds, (Rochester, N. Y.: The Authors, 1877), pp. 102-103.

²⁵ Wisdom, The Laodicean Messenger, p. 15.

prophetic--and its testimony is found to be in perfect accord with the Bible, expressing the prominent features of its truths in beautiful and fitting symbols.²⁶

Another prominent feature of Russell's early teaching was the importance he attached to the year 1878. From the time he accepted Barbour's teaching regarding the Lord's return in 1874, he proclaimed that, in 1878, all the living saints would be translated and thenceforth be forever with the Lord. Russell taught that this event would take place at a point of time "in this age" parallel to the time of the Lord's resurrection.²⁷ Since Christ was raised from the dead just three and one-half years after the beginning of his earthly ministry, three and one-half years from 1874 or the spring of 1878 would see the translation of the saints.²⁸ When 1878 passed uneventfully, Russell was led to a re-examination of the Scriptures with a resultant change in doctrine. His new theory was

. . . that the date, 1878, marked the date for the beginning of the establishment of the Kingdom of God, by the glorification of all who already slept in Christ

²⁶ Charles Taze Russell, The Divine Plan of the Ages and the Corroborative Testimony of the Great Pyramid (Brooklyn, New York: International Bible Students Association, [n. d.]), p. 14. It is generally admitted that the Great Pyramid is a remarkable building. However, it would seem that one is absurd when he attaches prophetic importance to its measurements.

²⁷ Wisdom, op. cit., p. 20.

²⁸ N. H. Barbour, op. cit., pp. 124-130.

(that is, the dead in Him), and the 'change' which Saint Paul mentions is to occur in the moment of death to all the class described, from that date onward through the Harvest period, until all the living members of the 'body of Christ' shall have been changed to glorious Spirit-beings.²⁹

The disillusionment about the date 1878 caused Barbour and Russell to sever connections, and resulted in Russell's publication of Zion's Watch Tower and Herald of Christ's Presence which was later changed to The Watch Tower and Herald of Christ's Presence.³⁰ A group of Barbour's associates also separated from Russell's movement at this time, since they felt they could not work in harmony with his new theory.³¹

A further phase of Russell's date-setting is illustrated by the fact that he believed there was a forty year Harvest period for the Jewish people from the date of Christ's baptism (Autumn of 29 A. D. according to him) to the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A. D., which he believed was a parallel to the Harvest period at the end of the world. Forty years added to 1874, brought him to 1914, at which time Russell taught that the Jewish people would be received

²⁹ Wisdom, op. cit., pp. 20-21. According to Russell, the Harvest period here referred to is a period of time during which the Lord separates the saints from the wicked.

³⁰ "Prefatory note," The Watch Tower and Herald of Christ's Presence (Reprint), 1:1,2.

³¹ Wisdom, op. cit., pp. 22-35.

back into full favor with God.³²

Russell also determined the date 1914 by use of the "times of the Gentiles" theory". The length of the period of Gentile supremacy was ascertained from Lev. 26:18 and Daniel 4 to be "seven times". A time was taken to be a symbolic year of 360 days, each one of which represents one calendar year. Seven times then would signify a period 2520 years in length, at the end of which the Gentile power would cease to exist. According to the "Witnesses'" reasoning the "times of the Gentiles" commenced in 606 B. C. when they believed Nebuchadnezzar defeated and destroyed Jerusalem. With 606 B. C. as a starting point, the 2520 years would end in 1914 at which time they expected the end of the world.³³

For years the Jehovah's Witnesses looked forward to 1914 as the date when Christ would come as King of the world, and it is hard to imagine the keen disappointment they felt when that date passed and their hopes had not been fulfilled. However, once again they turned to a spiritual application for the second coming of Christ, holding that Christ had come and taken over the kingship of His government at that time.

Still another disappointment was in store for the

³² Charles Taze Russell, Studies in the Scriptures, (Brooklyn: International Bible Students Association, 1917), 1889 edition, Vol. 2, p. 221-222.

³³ Barbour, op. cit., pp. 81,83.

Jehovah's Witnesses when, in 1916, their beloved leader, Pastor Russell, passed away. The shock of his death combined with the disappointment experienced in 1914 was so severe that, by 1918, it appeared that his followers would be completely dispersed. J. F. Rutherford rescued the situation however, by reiterating their teaching that the end of all things was at hand, that the end of the Gospel Age had come as well as the end of Satan's dominion, and that they were now living at the beginning of the Millennial Age,³⁴ thus, instilling new courage into the hearts of the faithful "Witnesses".

By 1922, the Jehovah's Witnesses were teaching that Christ had come in early 1918, and was then present in His temple.³⁵ They taught that this date was a parallelism to the date 33 A. D. when Christ cleansed the temple at Jerusalem, early 1918 being three and one-half years after the date 1914, just as the cleansing of the temple was three and one-half years after the beginning of Christ's ministry.

³⁴ "Are the Adversaries Increasing in Power," The Watch Tower and Herald of Christ's Presence, 39:22, Jan. 15, 1918. The Jehovah's Witnesses believe that the Millennial Age has been dawning upon the world since 1874, and that different phases of it were inaugurated in 1874, 1878, and 1914. This was especially true of 1914 when Christ supposedly received his kingship.

³⁵ "The Truth Shall Make You Free" (Brooklyn: Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society, inc., 1943), p. 302.

Israel's double, suggested in Zechariah 9:12, gave them another series of dates. The Israelites were supposed to have received the favor of God for 1845 years, or from the death of Jacob until Christ's triumphal entry in 33 A. D. During an equal period of time, the Jews were to be under God's punishment which ended in 1878 A. D. By adding the forty years of the Harvest period to 1878, 1918 would be the time of full favor to the Jews at which time "ten nations of earth, including Great Britain and the United States, gave official endorsement of the establishment of a Jewish homeland in Palestine".³⁶

The last definite date fixed by the Jehovah's Witnesses for the establishment of Christ's earthly kingdom was 1925. In 1920, J. F. Rutherford, their leader, advanced the theory that a correct understanding of the jubilee system (Lev. 25:1-12) would throw great light upon the events of the near future. He taught that the Scriptures plainly showed that Israel, while God dealt with her, was a typical people, and "their law was typical, foreshadowing greater and better things to come".

Moses instituted the "Sabbath system"³⁷ the year the

³⁶ Rutherford, Millions Now Living Will Never Die (Brooklyn, N. Y.: International Bible Students Association, 1920), pp. 22-23.

³⁷ The "Sabbath system" which Jehovah's Witnesses claim Moses instituted was in reality the system of Jubilees referred to in Lev. 25:1-12.

children of Israel entered Canaan, 1575 B. C., according to Russell's chronology, and every fiftieth year was to be a year of jubilee. From other Scriptures, Rutherford obtained the number seventy.³⁸ Seventy jubilees of fifty years each equalled a total of 3500 years. This period supposedly began in 1575 B. C. and would end in 1925 A. D., at which time the earthly phase of Christ's kingdom would be established. 1925 would also mark the "return of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and the faithful prophets of old, particularly those named by the Apostle in Hebrews chapter eleven, to a condition of human perfection".³⁹ It is interesting to note, however, that in 1926, the resurrection of the ancient Jewish worthies was still in the future, for at that time, Rutherford wrote, "All these faithful men mentioned by the Apostle Paul, . . . will have a resurrection which will be better than the resurrection that will be received by men in general".⁴⁰

PRESENT TEACHING OF THE JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES

In recent years, the Jehovah's Witnesses have made

³⁸ Jer. 25:11, 2 Chron. 36:17-21.

³⁹ Rutherford, Millions Now Living Will Never Die, pp. 85-90.

⁴⁰ J. F. Rutherford, Deliverance (Brooklyn: International Bible Students Association, 1926), p. 310.

little change in their teaching concerning the doctrine of the second advent. For the most part, they have devoted their time to reproducing, with certain modifications, that which Pastor Russell and J. F. Rutherford had set forth in their writings. One modification in their teaching is that which refers to the Great Pyramid. Whereas Russell used the works of Piazzi Smyth to prove that the Lord came in 1874, Morton Edgar, one of their members, in 1924⁴¹ advanced the theory that, since the death of Christ took place in 33 A. D. (the crucifixion of Christ actually took place in 31 A. D.), and since it has been found that the beginning of the Grand Gallery represents the death of Christ rather than His birth, the 1881 and one-half pyramid inches of its length extends to 1914, proving that Christ would be given His kingdom on that date.⁴¹ Moreover, in 1928, Rutherford completely nullified the teaching of Russell concerning the Great Pyramid. He did not condemn the former leader for his use of proof aside from that found in the Bible, but asserted that a true child of God should rejoice that the Lord is willing to give him further light when he learns he has been following the wrong interpretation of prophecy, and that "He will gladly forsake the old and turn to the later and better understanding of prophecy".

⁴¹ Morton Edgar, The Great Pyramid Its Time Features (Glasgow: Bane & Hulley, 1924), p. 105.

The fact that Christ and the Apostles were silent concerning the Great Pyramid served as evidence to Rutherford that the Lord did not place the Pyramid in Egypt to reveal the divine plan of the ages. He further asserted that the scientific study of the Great Pyramid was a waste of time, that such study diverted the mind from the study of the Bible, and that this stone structure was neither built by God nor directed by Him. Rutherford's deduction was that Lucifer had been instrumental in the construction of the Great Pyramid, using its measurements for his own selfish purpose of misleading men and drawing their attention from the true source of knowledge.⁴²

Another change in teaching which demonstrates the Jehovah's Witnesses' ability to adjust their thinking to meet the situation created by the disappointment of 1914 is the change in wording which occurs in editions of Studies in the Scriptures published since 1914. The following comparison of quotations from volumes two and three serves to demonstrate this fact:

- 1914 Their reign of righteousness over the world can date only from A. D. 1914.⁴³
 1915 Their reign of righteousness over the world could not precede A. D. 1915.⁴³

42 J. F. Rutherford, "The Altar in Egypt", The Watch Tower and Herald of Christ's Presence, 49:339-345, November 15, 1928; pp. 335-361, December 1, 1928.

43 Russell, Studies in the Scriptures (1889), II, p. 81.

- 1914 The Jew will not be received back into full favor until A. D. 1914.⁴⁴
- 1915 The Jew will not be received back into full favor until after 1915.⁴⁴
- 1910 That the deliverance of the saints must take place some time before 1914 is manifest . . . just how long before 1914 the last living members of the body of Christ will be glorified, we are not directly informed.⁴⁵
- 1920 That the deliverance of the saints must take place very soon after 1914 is manifest .c. . just how long after 1914 the last living members of the body of Christ will be glorified, we are not directly informed.⁴⁵

According to current teachings of the Jehovah's Witnesses, there is still another coming of Christ for which the date is not known. This coming is associated with the Battle of Armageddon. It is their belief that God's followers are now standing on the threshold of the last great war. They teach that the gathering of nations for the final conflict has been going on since 1918, and that Christ will soon come with all His Holy Angels to engage in battle with the forces of evil, which will usher in the great Battle of Armageddon. The date for this battle will be chosen by God, and is, therefore, unknown to man.⁴⁶

44. Ibid., p. 221.

45 Russell, Studies in the Scriptures (1891), III, p. 228.

46 "The Truth Shall Make You Free," pp. 347-8.

CHAPTER IV

DATE-SETTING BY OTHER DENOMINATIONS AND INDIVIDUALS

DENOMINATIONS

Advent Christians. An outgrowth of the disappointment suffered by those who looked for the return of Christ in 1844 was the separation of a group from the main body of First-day Adventists. They separated in 1855 under the leadership of Jonathan Cummings because of their belief in conditional immortality of the soul which was directly opposed to the belief in the immortality of the soul held by the majority of First-day Adventists. On November 6, 1861 in Worcester Massachusetts, they organized into the "Advent Christian Association".¹

In 1852-53, Cummings advocated the theory that Christ would return in the spring of 1854, basing his conviction upon a re-evaluation of the 2300 day prophecy, making it end in 1854. When this date passed uneventfully, Cummings gave up date-setting, but continued to believe in the near advent of Christ.²

1. United States Department of Commerce, Religious Bodies: 1936 (Washington: United States Printing Office, 1941), Vol. 2, p. 15.

2. Isaac C. Wellcome, History of the Second Advent Message (Boston: Advent Christian Publication Society, 1874), pp. 484-87.

Later, N. H. Barbour, who had been associated with Cummings and who was a member of the Advent Christian Conference of Michigan between 1860-1870, became an advocate of the theory that Christ would come in 1873-4.³ This theory was held by a number of Advent Christians, but resulted only in another disappointment to those who had accepted the theory.

Another member of the Advent Christian Church who attempted to fix the time of Christ's return was William Sheldon, who believed that the Lord would come in 1883. Sheldon's method for arriving at the time of the advent was based upon his own plan of chronology.⁴ By using this new chronology, he was able to show not only a new termination for the 2300 days of Daniel, but also that the end of six thousand years from creation would be 1883.

Sheldon believed that Adam was created in 4118 B. C. rather than 4004 B. C. as found in the margin of the King James Version. By adding six thousand years to what he

³ Cf. *ante*, p. 29, footnote 7.

⁴ Sheldon has worked out his own chronology for most of the dates in antiquity. He placed the Exodus at 1605 B. C. and held that from there to the fourth year of Solomon was 580 years, claiming that an error had occurred in the copying of 1 Kings 6:1. Likewise, according to Sheldon's plan, the fall of Babylon took place in 488 B. C. rather than 538 B. C., the accepted date of Cyrus' victory. This change in dates was of major importance to Sheldon since it was upon the fall of Babylon that much of his chronology is based.

believed was the date of creation, he discovered that the six thousand year period would end in 1883.⁵

The 2300 days of Daniel 8:14, Sheldon began in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes which he claimed was 418 B. C.⁶ Therefore the 2300 day (year) period would end in 1883 A. D., the time which would witness the cleansing of the sanctuary and the return of Christ.

Another method of arriving at the date 1883 for the time of Christ's return was the use of the "times of the Gentiles" theory.⁷ Sheldon claimed that the "times of the Gentiles" started with the overthrow of Ephraim which he believed took place in 638 B. C.⁸ By subtracting 2520 years, the length of the "times of the Gentiles" according to Sheldon, from 638 B. C., he arrived at 1883 A. D. as the end

⁵ William Sheldon, Chronology and Prophecy Made Plain (Boston: W. Kellaway, n. d.), pp. 155-156.

⁶ Sheldon arrived at 418 B. C. as the twentieth year of Artaxerxes by computing the length of the reign of the Persian Kings who ruled following the fall of Babylon. He believed the fall of Babylon occurred in 488 B. C., and that Artaxerxes' first year was 50 years after the fall or 438 B. C.

⁷ Sheldon obtained his concept of the "times of the Gentiles" from the seven times of Daniel, 4:25. He held to the day for a year theory in prophecy and that seven times were equal to seven years; therefore, seven times would be equal to 2520 years.

⁸ Sheldon, op. cit., p. 176.

The overthrow of Ephraim apparently referred to the destruction of Samaria under Sargon which occurred in 722-21 B. C. rather than 638 B. C. as claimed by Sheldon.

of the Gentile Age.

Advent Christians claim that "for the last sixty years or more" date-setting has not been practiced by them as an organization.⁹ However, during the past few years, one or two Advent Christian ministers have taken it upon themselves to deal with the time question in regard to Christ's second coming.

In 1927, Milton C. Burt, a member of the Advent Christian Church, published a book entitled The Times Are Fulfilled, in which he expressed the belief that Christ would come by 1934. He held that, while it is not possible to determine with precision the date of Christ's return, still, by comparing Bible history and prophecy with secular history, it is possible to know the approximate time for the Messiah's return.¹⁰

Burt has divided the world's history into three dispensations or periods of time which he calls the "Patriarchal, the Mosaic, and the Christian. The Patriarchal dispensation reaches from Adam to Moses; the Mosaic from Moses to Christ, and the Christian from the first advent of Christ to His second advent."¹¹ Burt taught that the dispensations

⁹ O. R. Jenks, letter to Wayne Scriven, June 18, 1947. Infra, appendix C., p. 109.

¹⁰ Milton Colby Burt, The Times Are Fulfilled (Boston: The Warren Press, 1927), p. 129.

¹¹ Ibid., p. 87.

intersected each other and each was approximately 2520 years in length.¹² Whereas the Patriarchal dispensation reached from Adam to Moses, he taught that the Mosaic dispensation started at the time of the flood and ended at the crucifixion of Christ, and that the Christian dispensation had its beginning at the Babylonian captivity of Judah and reached to the second advent of Christ.¹³ According to the theory advanced by Burtt, the Christian dispensation was synonymous with the "times of the Gentiles", which he explains as "the time during which the throne of David is vacant and God's people have no independent form of civil government but are subject to the Gentile powers that be".¹⁴ He believed that the "times of the Gentiles" was 2520 years in length,¹⁵ and that it began in B. C. 587 or 586, the time when Zedekiah

12 Burtt's reason for giving the length of each dispensation as 2520 years was that he believed "each one is a great dispensational week, or 2520 years in length". His reason for concluding that there is a dispensational week was based upon the seven times of Dan. 4:16,23. He claimed that "times" is the symbolic term for years. Therefore, seven years, or a week of years, on the symbolic year-day scale would be 2520 years. Burtt, The Times Are Fulfilled, pp. 95,140.

13 Ibid., pp. 96-97.

14 Ibid., p. 99.

15 The method used by Burtt in arriving at 2520 years as the "times of the Gentiles" was to interpret the number seven in Lev. 26:28 as a week. This, he claimed, represents "the great dispensational week of 2520 years".

was taken captive and the temple of Jerusalem was burned, that it extended to A. D. 1934 or 1935, which he concluded was the terminus of prophetic reckoning, and therefore, the last possible date for the return of Christ.¹⁶

W. E. Snider, an Advent Christian Minister, advocates the possibility that Christ will come at the end of six thousand years after the creation of the world. He holds that it is impossible to know the exact date of Christ's return, inasmuch as the date of creation cannot be accurately determined. However, he claims that the earth probably was over 4100 years old at the birth of Christ, and that we are now living more than 1944 years this side of his birth. Therefore, we must be living right at the end of this world's history, and we may look for Christ's return any time.¹⁷

Mormons. The "Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints" was organized by Joseph Smith, April 6, 1830. After Smith's death in 1844, Brigham Young became the president and three years later led a migration of the believers from Illinois to the Salt Lake Valley in Utah, where the present Mormon

¹⁶ Burt, The Times Are Fulfilled, pp. 96-97.

¹⁷ William E. Snider, We Look for the Saviour (Santa Cruz, California: The Mission of the Open Road, 1944, p. 13.

headquarters are located.¹⁸ The church, as a denomination, has not attempted to fix definitely the time of Christ's return. However, there has been some speculation on the subject, some of which involves their prophet, Joseph Smith. On February 14, 1835, Smith said that he had been shown in vision that the Lord would come in fifty-six years, thus placing His advent in 1891.¹⁹ Again, in 1843, Smith made a statement to the effect that if he were to live to the age of eighty-five, he would see "the face of the Son of Man."²⁰ A few days later, in discussing the return of Christ, Smith said:

Were I going to prophesy, I would say the end would not come in 1844, 5, or 6 or in forty years. There are those of the rising generation who shall not taste death till Christ comes.

I was once praying earnestly upon this subject and a voice said unto me, 'my son, if thou livest until thou art eighty-five years of age, thou shalt see the face of the Son of Man'. I was left to draw my own conclusions concerning this; and I took the liberty to conclude that if I did live to that time, He would make His appearance . . . I prophesy in the name of the Lord God, and let it be written--the Son of Man will not

18. Joseph Smith, The Doctrine of Covenants of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (Salt Lake City, Utah, U. S. A.: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, 1940), p. iii. Bound with his Book of Mormon and Pearl of Great Price.

19 "History of Joseph Smith," Millennial Star 15:205, March 26, 1853. Cf., p. 54.

20 Joseph Smith, op. cit., Section 130:14-17.

come in the clouds of heaven till I am eighty-five years old.²¹

Joseph Smith was born in 1805 which made 1890-91 the date for Christ's return had the Lord fulfilled the prediction of this Mormon prophet.

The next Mormon to deal with this subject was Francis M. Darter, who was a High Priest in the Mormon Church until 1937 when he was excommunicated for his views on celestial marriage.²² Although the church has since repudiated Darter's teaching, it did not do so when he first wrote concerning the second advent.

Darter's views relative to the date of Christ's return were first published in 1926. At that time, he taught that the generation which had witnessed the first vision of the prophet, Joseph Smith, would not end before the second advent. Darter attempted to show that, since Noah had spent 120 years preaching before the flood, one generation, in the eyes of God, is 120 years in length. Working on this premise, he concluded that the last generation would begin in 1820 and

²¹ Joseph F. Smith, Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1938), p. 286.

²² Francis M. Darter, Celestial Marriage (Salt Lake City: Francis M. Darter, 1937), p. 6-7.

Darter held that "celestial marriage" and "polygamous or plural marriage" are synonymous terms. He claimed that it was impossible to have marriages for "time and eternity" without having plural marriage, whereas the present Mormon teaching is that celestial marriages are monogamous marriages for time and eternity.

last until 1940 by which time Christ would return.²³

Darter later came in contact with the so-called prophecies of the Great Pyramid and, in 1931, changed his date for the second coming of Christ to 1936 due, he says, to the fact that the "Great Pyramid has apparently placed this event near the close of 1936".²⁴

Since this time prediction failed to materialize, Darter, in 1940, advanced a new theory, holding that he had made a mistake concerning the beginning of the last generation and that it really began on September 21, 1823, the date when the "Angel Moroni" showed to Joseph Smith the "Complete Book of Mormon Gold Plates", thereby placing the date of the end of the last generation and the return of Christ on September 21, 1943.²⁵ Although no longer a member of the Mormon Church, he quoted extensively from Mormon publications in support of this new theory.

Since 1943, no attempt has been made by a Mormon to set the date for Christ's return, and the church now claims that it has never stressed the doctrine of Christ's return,

²³ Francis M. Darter, The Time of the End (Los Angeles, California: Wetzel Publishing Company, 1928 edition), p. 125.

²⁴ Francis M. Darter, Our Bible in Stone (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Publishing Co., 1931), p. 144.

²⁵ Francis M. Darter, End of Our Generation or Christ's Second Coming (Salt Lake City, Utah: Francis M. Darter, 1940), pp. 6-7.

much less any specific date for the event.

INDIVIDUAL DATE-SETTERS

James M. Campbell.²⁶ In 1919, Campbell suggested that the second advent does not synchronize with the end of the world, and that when the disciples asked the Master for the signs of His coming and the end of the world, they were thinking of His coming in terms of the immediate future.²⁷ Campbell taught that the second coming of Christ took place on the day of Pentecost and that it was a spiritual advent rather than a personal visible return.

As a spiritual event it was not verifiable by the senses; as an epochal event it was like the gradual emergence of the sun from a cloud-bank by which its presence had been temporarily eclipsed. Yet it had its focal point, and that point was Pentecost. Hence we are abundantly justified in saying that Christ came at Pentecost, inasmuch as His coming was then outwardly expressed and confirmed; and for the further reason that after Pentecost the disciples came to experience a consciousness of his presence which they never afterwards altogether lost.

But, be it carefully noted that the second coming of Christ while coincident with the coming of the Holy Spirit was not identical with it. Much confusion of thought has arisen from not distinguishing between them. The

²⁶ Campbell grew up in Scotland where he became a minister of the Presbyterian Church. He later came to America. At the time his book was written, he had retired from active labor. Although not a member of the Methodist church, his book was published by The Methodist Book Concern.

²⁷ James M. Campbell, The Second Coming of Christ, (New York, Cincinnati: The Methodist Book Concern, 1919), p. 22.

Holy Spirit is not a substitute for Christ, but is the agent by whom he is made real in human experience.

Nothing must be allowed to becloud or weaken the fact that it is Christ himself, the same Christ whom the disciples knew, the same Christ who vanished from sight, who has returned, and is ever with us.²⁸

The eschatological discourses of Jesus reported by the "synoptical" Gospels presented no problem to Campbell. He claimed that "to those familiar with Jewish Apocalyptic literature these highly colored metaphors present no difficulty".²⁹ These he explains in the light of Gen. 37:9, holding that as Jacob understood the dream of his son, so we are to understand the signs which Christ said would appear in the sun, moon, and stars.

Although Campbell was satisfied that Christ did not come in a visible manner, he admits that the disciples who were present and heard Jesus give His discourses on eschatology looked for an outward manifestation of their Lord's return.³⁰ The fact that the fourth Gospel does not contain the discourse of Jesus relating to the signs of His coming, Campbell claims is due to the fact that at the time of John's writing, the disciples were aware of the return of Christ and that all of the events forecast in the "synoptical" Gospels

28 Ibid., pp. 25-26.

29 Ibid., p. 35.

30 Ibid., p. 54.

had passed into history.³¹

William S. Urmy.³² According to Urmy, the Revelation of John was written about 65 A. D.,³³ and all the prophecies written therein were fulfilled by the time Jerusalem was destroyed in 70 A. D.³⁴ He claimed that the book of Revelation was only a graphic elaboration of Christ's discourse on the Mount of Olives,³⁵ and that His second advent is a past event which took place in 70 A. D.; therefore, Christ has been present in the world since that time.³⁶

31 Ibid., p. 72.

32 Urmy is a retired Methodist minister.

33 William S. Urmy, Christ Came Again (New York: Eaton and Mains, 1900), p. 100-101.

34 Ibid., p. 122.

35 Ibid., p. 103.

36 Ibid., p. 37-39.

While Urmy was a Methodist, it must be remembered that the Methodist Church has no set doctrine with respect to the second coming of Christ. "Each member or minister is free to hold whatever view he thinks proper, or to preach as he desires." (Robert Goodloe, Letter to Wayne A. Scriven under date of May 27, 1947).

In 1879, S. M. Merrill, a bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church advanced the view that there is a double application of the doctrine of Christ's return, one phase being that Christ came spiritually on the day of Pentecost to set up His kingdom in the hearts of His followers, and from that time on, the disciples no longer looked for the establishment of Christ's earthly kingdom; the other phase being that of His personal coming in glory at the end of the Gospel dispensation to reward the righteous and give His kingdom unto the Father. Cf., S. M. Merrill, The Second Coming of Christ, (New York,

In support of the theory that the second advent of Christ took place in 70 A. D., Urmay emphasized the following passages of Scripture: (1) Rev. 1:1 "things which must shortly come to pass", (2) Rev. 1:3 "for the time is at hand", (3) Rev. 22:10 "seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book; for the time is at hand", and (4) Rev. 22:12 "Behold, I come quickly". He held that the book of Revelation is of necessity proved false if Christ did not come "in power and glory within the years immediately succeeding the writing of the book".³⁷

With the above thought in mind, Urmay proceeded to explain the various passages of the New Testament regarding the second advent in such a way that they would be consistent with the theory that Christ had come in 70 A. D. Referring to the words of Jesus in respect to the signs of His coming, Urmay stated that many people have made the mistake of interpreting these words as literal, whereas these prophecies were only symbols which Christ used to impress upon the minds of His hearers the importance of the event which was about to

Cincinnati: The Methodist Book Concern, 1879), p. 17,22.

In 1911, E. L. Eaton, another minister of the Methodist Church expressed the view that Christ returned to earth to set up His Kingdom on the day of Pentecost and has been present in the world since that time. Cf., E. L. Eaton, The Millennial Dawn Heresy (New York: Eaton and Mains, 1911), pp. 109-115.

37 Urmay, Christ Came Again, p. 110.

take place, and are "utterly incapable of being taken in a literal and commonplace sense".³⁸

The resurrection of the righteous dead took place in 70 A. D. immediately following Christ's second advent according to Urmy, and since that time, man has gone directly to his reward at death. He held that prior to Christ's second advent, man was held in an intermediate state of conscious existence after death. However, since Christ at His second coming abolished death, man no longer experiences that intermediate state. He believed this theory was proved by the Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus.³⁹

Urmy further asserted that the forty-two months of Revelation 11:3 are literal months and represent the period of Jewish history from A. D. 67 to A. D. 70,⁴⁰ thus substantiating his theory that Christ's return took place at the close of that period.

Thomas H. Nelson.⁴¹ Nelson felt that although the

38 Ibid., pp. 187-188.

39 Ibid., p. 350.

40 Ibid., p. 116.

41 At the time Nelson published his work on the date of Christ's return, he was superintendent of the "Pentecost Bands". This was a missionary society of young people in the Free Methodist Church which had been organized in 1885 under the leadership of Rev. Vivian Drake. In 1898, it became a distinct organization, adopting the name "Pentecost

use of Bible prophecy has been greatly abused, nevertheless it should not be ignored, and for those who have made the acquaintance of Christ, the study of prophecy will be a great comfort. He felt that fully one-half of the prophecies in the Bible have a direct or indirect bearing upon the subject of Christ's return. Prophecy, to Nelson, was a narration of future events, just as history is a narration of past events, and he believed it reasonable to suppose that God would give His followers in the last days some prophetic evidence of the times in which they lived.

The fact that Christ said that the day or hour of His second advent was not known to man did not deter Nelson in his chronological calculations. He said:

Though Christ declared that no man knew the day nor the hour, yet He does not assert that we could not know anything of the decade or year, but rather describes occurrences which immediately precede the end.⁴²

With the above premise in mind, Nelson discussed the prophecies of Daniel and The Revelation in an attempt to portray how they have served to determine the nearness of Christ's return. According to Nelson, the fact that Daniel and The Revelation have been misunderstood by Bible students

"Bands of the World", with headquarters at Indianapolis, Indiana. In 1935 the name was changed to "Missionary Bands of the World".

42 Thomas H. Nelson, The Midnight Cry (Indianapolis, Indiana: Pentecost Band Publishing Company, 1896), pp. 150.

has been due to the fact that God told Daniel to seal up the book until the time of the end. He further claimed that even at the present time, only a few are privileged to understand the prophecies set forth in these books. (He believed that he was living in the time of the end.)

Nelson believed that the image of Daniel 2 embodied an outline of the rise and fall of nations as well as a history of the world up to the end of time. He taught that the head of gold was symbolic of Babylon, the chest and arms of silver that of Media-Persia, the belly and thighs of brass that of Grecia, and the legs of iron and feet of iron and clay, Imperial Rome which was divided into ten kingdoms representing the ten toes of the image. Nelson held that the Stone which would smite the image on the feet represented Christ at His second coming, that the people of his time were living in the part of the image represented by the ten toes, and that the time had come for the return of Christ and the smiting of the image.⁴³

The four beasts of Daniel 7 were also symbolic of the world's history and corresponded to the four kingdoms referred to by the great image of Daniel 2'. Nelson felt that the Pope fulfilled the requirements laid down in the prophecy of the little horn in Daniel 7.⁴⁴

⁴³ Nelson The Midnight Cry, pp. 111-119.

⁴⁴ Ibid., pp. 120-130.

The second coming of Christ has a dual objective according to this writer, who held that there is a vast difference between the coming of Christ in the "aerial heavens and His revelation at the beginning of the Millennium". Nelson's contention was that Christ's coming to receive His own would be as a thief in the night and completely unexpected, this coming preceding His revelation at the beginning of the Millennial period.⁴⁵

The beginning of the Millennium and the revelation of Christ will take place at the end of six thousand years of this world's history, for, according to Nelson's theory, the literal creation of the world in six days and God's rest on the seventh day are symbolic of the spiritual week of this world, the first six days of which are given to the reign of sin, and the seventh being the rest of God or the Millennial period. Each spiritual day is reckoned as one thousand literal years of time, making the spiritual week seven thousand years in length.⁴⁶

In order to determine the close of the sixth spiritual day, or the six thousandth year of this world's history, it was necessary for Nelson to ascertain the date of creation.

⁴⁵ Nelson, The Midnight Cry, p. 150.

⁴⁶ Ibid., pp. 163-164.

This, he placed at 4104 B. C., claiming that "Mr. Usher, the chronologist, made a mistake of one hundred years in the time of Judges".⁴⁷ Adding six thousand years to 4104 B. C., he found that 1896 was the "Saturday evening" of the world, and within two or three years of the time when Christ would come and set up His kingdom here on earth.⁴⁸

The seventy weeks referred to in Daniel 9:24-27 proved intriguing to Nelson and served to demonstrate the ease with which he disregarded the facts of history in working out his chronology of prophecy. The seventieth week, he separated from the remaining sixty-nine, since, within the seventy weeks, "everlasting righteousness must be accomplished", and according to his reckoning, "everlasting righteousness" would be ushered in with the return of Christ, thereby terminating the seventieth week with the establishment of Christ's kingdom.⁴⁹

Nelson asserted that from the beginning of the seventy weeks (490 years) until Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem and His crucifixion was sixty-nine weeks (483 years) of the prophecy. The beginning of this period was placed at

47 Nelson claimed that Acts 13:20 proved that the period of the Judges was actually 450 years in length, and that Mr. Ussher considered the period only 350 years.

48 Nelson, loc. cit.

49 Ibid., p. 142.

the twentieth year of the reign of Artaxerxes (Neh. 2:1).⁵⁰ Having accounted for sixty-nine of the seventy weeks, Nelson explained that the "three score and two weeks spoken of by the Angel" cover the period of time from the twentieth year of Artaxerxes to the crucifixion of Christ, and that the seven weeks (49 years) of Daniel 9:25 represented the lapse of time from the death of Christ to the "destruction of Jerusalem when the Jews lost their national existence".⁵¹

It is apparent that the duration of time from the twentieth year of Artaxerxes to the crucifixion of Christ cannot be 483 years, and at the same time be only 434 years as indicated by his interpretation of the three score and two weeks, nor is it possible to adapt Nelson's interpretation of the seventy weeks to history. The twentieth year of the reign of Artaxerxes was 445-44 B. C., and sixty-nine weeks (483 years) from that time would place the crucifixion of Christ in 39-40 A. D.; likewise, if only sixty-two weeks (434 years) elapsed from 445-44 B. C. to the time of Christ's death, the crucifixion would have occurred in 11-10 B. C., whereas the crucifixion actually took place in 31 A. D.

A further discrepancy in Nelson's chronology is that of placing the seven weeks (49 years) of Daniel 9:25 as the

⁵⁰ Nelson, The Midnight Cry, pp. 140-43.

⁵¹ Ibid., pp. 145-146.

period of time separating the destruction of Jerusalem from the crucifixion, when in reality only approximately forty years transpired between these two events.

Blanton Duncan.⁵² The time-prophecies of Daniel have proved particularly useful to those who have been interested in a date for the second advent. Blanton Duncan found them so, and he published his interpretation of these prophecies and his belief regarding the return of Christ in 1887. He claimed that "Daniel gives specifically the periods of time from which may be calculated the occurrence of prophetic events".⁵³ Duncan felt that prophecies were often intended to have a double fulfilment, each one being fulfilled in a given number of literal days, months, or years, and at the same time, having another fulfilment in the far distant future. In the case of the latter, each "year" or "time" equals 360 years, each day being recorded as a year.⁵⁴ In harmony

⁵² Little information is available regarding Duncan. However, there was a Blanton Duncan who lived in Louisville, Kentucky during the Civil War and printed money for the Confederate Government, who may have been the individual under discussion. His work was first published as a series of articles in the Southern Churchman, a periodical of the Protestant Episcopal Church in U. S. A.

⁵³ Blanton Duncan, The Near Approach of Christ's Second Advent (Louisville, Kentucky: The Bradley and Gilbert Company, 1887), p. 14.

⁵⁴ Loc. cit.

with this belief, he found a double application for the words of Daniel regarding the length of time that Nebuchadnezzar should dwell "with the beasts of the field".⁵⁵ Considering the seven times of Nebuchadnezzar as seven years, Duncan came to the conclusion that it was typical of 2520 years during which the "times of the Gentiles" would be fulfilled. The date for the beginning of the 2520 years, he placed at 606-607 B. C., the time of the first siege of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon in the third year of Jehoiakim, King of Judah, accepting this in harmony with what he considered the generally accepted view of Bible chronologists. Deducting 606-607 B. C. from 2520, he arrived at the date 1913-1914, believing that to be the time when some wonderful event would take place, and that the event would doubtless be the second coming of Christ.⁵⁶

As for the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation which deal with the 1260, 1290, and 2300 day period, Duncan interpreted them so that they ended before 1913, contending that the 1290 day period extended from A. D. 607⁵⁷ to 1897, and

55 Dan. 4:32

56 Duncan, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

57 Duncan's reasons for choosing 607 A. D. for the starting point of the 1290 days or years of Daniel 12:11 were: (1) that he believed 606-607 saw "the creation of the Pope and the rise of Mohammed", and (2) that by starting it in 607, it would have a common termination with the 1260 day or year period.

that John's prophecy of the 1260 year period, if added to 637 A. D., "the time when the first Moslem ruler was seated on the site of the sepulchre of Christ",⁵⁸ would also extend to 1897. The 2300 day period of Daniel 8:14 was interpreted to start in 397 B. C.⁵⁹ the time Duncan believed the book of Malachi was written. He held that the starting point of the 2300 day period coincided with the work of the last Bible prophet and would therefore end in 1903 when he felt sure something would happen to prove that the end of that period had come.⁶⁰ He looked for a time of trouble and horror to take place from 1887 to 1913-1914, at which time deliverance would come through the personal return of Christ.⁶¹

Wm. J. Scofield.⁶² In 1907, Scofield published a

⁵⁸ The Moslem ruler referred to by Duncan was Omar, the successor of Mohammed, who visited Jerusalem in 638 (637 according to Duncan) following the conquest of Palestine by the Moslem believers.

⁵⁹ Duncan gives no proof that 397 B. C. was the time Malachi was written. He merely asserted that chronologists have agreed in fixing that date for Malachi's work.

⁶⁰ Duncan, The Near Approach of Christ's Second Advent, p. 15-19.

⁶¹ Ibid., p. 15.

⁶² Scofield was living in San Antonio, Texas at the time he made his prophetic predictions. During his youth, he was a member of the Quaker Church, but had severed connections with that group a number of years before the time his book was published. His book was published at his own expense.

book in which he set forth his view of God's plan for the world. He believed that Christ was the beginning of God's creation, and advocated the theory that the world was brought into existence by a created being.

It was Scofield's belief that following the flood God planned to replenish the earth through Shem, Ham, and Japheth, but that with the calling of Abraham, God instituted a fourth family which was to be different from the other families of earth, and through whom the Saviour and Redeemer of the world should come.⁶³ Scofield claimed that when Christ died on Calvary, He was paying a debt which He had contracted before the creation of the world, and that He is now in heaven preparing the world for His return to "rule it in righteousness".

In 1907, at the time when Scofield published his book, he believed that the establishment of Christ's kingdom was due since the toes of the great image of Daniel 2 were completed in 1905. As proof, he states that in 1905 "the Czar of Russia by ukase granted his people a voice in his despotic government thus 'mingling with the seed of men'", and that the next event of importance will be the smiting of the feet of the image by the "stone cut out without hands".⁶⁴

⁶³ Wm. J. Scofield, Witness for Jesus Christ (San Antonio, Texas: Wm. J. Scofield, 1907), pp. 2,8-10.

⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 14.

Scofield held that there would soon break upon the world a time of trouble such as had not been since the flood. He reasoned that this period of trouble would last for a period of eight years, or until 1916 when the first seal spoken of in Rev. 6:1-2 would be opened and Christ would make His appearance.⁶⁵ Scofield arrived at the date 1916 by his interpretation of the "times of the Gentiles". According to his theory, the "times of the Gentiles" began when Nebuchadnezzar took Zedekiah and carried him captive into Babylon, which he dated at 588 B. C. He claimed that the Gentile Age terminated in 1923⁶⁶ and by counting back seven years, which he apparently considered the seventieth week of Daniel's prophecy, Scofield concluded the date 1916 as the date for Christ's second advent.

It is apparent that he did not worry about the number of years ordinarily reckoned in the Gentile Age, for, if he had done so, the period would have ended in 1933.

Scofield's deductions involved a theory concerning a comet which hung over the Northern horizon for some time during 1886, claiming that, according to the astronomers,

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 23-25.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 26.

The "times of the Gentiles" or "Gentile Age" has been reckoned as 2520 years in length by many students of prophecy. See p. 7 for method used in working out the length of the period.

the comet, then visible, would return to earth in 1923.⁶⁷ He taught that when the comet returned, it would collide with and destroy the Western Hemisphere, leaving the Eastern Hemisphere intact, since there Christ planned to set up His kingdom and establish the New Jerusalem. Scofield apparently had a doubt in his mind concerning the accuracy of the astronomer's theory as shown in his statement "If the theory of the astronomers be correct then we may know that A. D. 1923 ends the Gentile Age".⁶⁸ However, this did not prevent his fixing that date as the termination of the Gentile Age.

John Quincy Adams.⁶⁹ In 1924, Adams advanced the theory that the "rapture" of the church would probably take place on April 11, 1925 and the return of Christ in glory approximately seven years later, on October 11, 1931. He arrived at this conclusion by studying the period of the "times of the Gentiles" with other prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation. He contended that the number seven has a special significance, and that it carries the idea of

68 Loc. cit.

69 Little is known concerning Adams except that he also wrote a book entitled The Prophetic Word which was published by the Boyne Clymer Company in St. Paul, Minnesota. In answer to an inquiry concerning Adams and his book, The Prophetic Word, the printers state that they "cannot give any information of any type" about either. Inquiry directed to The Prophetic Society of Dallas, Dallas, Texas has been returned unclaimed.

sacredness in that which relates to this world. Therefore, whenever it appears in divine reckoning, it means that nothing has been left out of and nothing is to be added to the record.⁷⁰

Adams held that the Scriptures marked our century as the time for the Lord's return, and since He has promised that "the Lord God will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets", we may expect to know the date of His coming. Leviticus 26:18 and Daniel 4:16 supposedly indicated that God recorded the "times of the Gentiles" as 2520 years, and that at the end of that period, Christ would return to restore Israel and reign over the earth.⁷¹ This period of time was instituted by three successive events, and would, therefore, be marked with three successive events at its close, the last of which would bring to a close this world's history, and usher in Christ's kingdom. The three dates for the closing of the "times of the Gentiles" according to Adams, were 1844, 1919, and 1931, all being calculated from the three stages in the captivity and dispersion of Judah.⁷²

⁷⁰ John Quincy Adams, His Apocalypse (Dallas, Texas, U. S. A.: The Prophetical Society of Dallas, 1925), p. 41. First printed March 1924.

⁷¹ Ibid., pp. 74-76.

⁷² The three successive stages toward the captivity and dispersion of Judah were, "(1) Deportation of Esarhaddon

Adams found further confirmation for his theory in the three and one-half times and 1335 days of Daniel 12: 7-12, the three and one-half times or 1260 years having supposedly commenced when Palestine went under Mohammedan rule. He contended that the Mohammedans started their calendar on July 16, 622 A. D., and invaded Palestine in 634 A. D. This would extend the 1260 year period to 1844 and 1856 A. D., due to the fact that Mohammedan years are lunar years. To these dates, he added the seventy-five years difference between the 1260 and 1335 years of Daniel, which gave him the dates for the termination of the Mohammedan rule as 1919 and 1931, which correspond with the end of the "times of the Gentiles" and point to the return of Christ in 1931.⁷³

Still another proof that Christ would come during 1931 was that of the six thousand year theory. Adams claimed that it was 1656 years from creation to the flood, 427 years from the flood to the call of Abraham to Canaan,

about 677 B. C.--from which the 2520 years reach through the first 1843 of this dispensation, which Jewish year ended March 20, 1844, March 21 (being Nisan 1st), 1844, being the first day of the next year. (2) 602 B. C. Nebuchadnezzar, to whom God said 'thou art this head of gold'--being thereby the beginning of this image of Gentile Dominion, succeeds his father Nebopolassar as king of Babylon--from which the 2520 years reach into 1919. (3) In 590 B. C. Nebuchadnezzar's last siege of Jerusalem, and from which time Israel has never had a Jewish king that did not have to give report to an overlord Gentile ruler--and from which the 2520 years reach to 1931." Ibid., p. 75.

73 Adams, Op. cit., p. 236.

430 years from Abraham's call to the Exodus, 46 years from the Exodus to the distribution of the land under Joshua, 450 years from the distribution of the land to the end of Samuel's Judgeship, 494 years of kingship, 70 years of captivity, 33 years from the first year of Cyrus to the first year of Artaxerxes, 19 years to the twentieth year of Artaxerxes when Nehemiah was commanded to rebuild Jerusalem, and 445 years from the twentieth year of Artaxerxes to 1 A. D., or 4070 years from creation until 1 A. D. leaving 1930 years since 1 A. D. to make up six thousand years from creation, at the end of which time, Christ will return as King of this world.⁷⁴

Robert O. Ball.⁷⁵ Ball's reason for speculating on the date for Christ's second advent was that he had been unable to find anyone who could interpret the prophecies of Daniel to his satisfaction. He, therefore, made a special study of the prophecies for himself, and reached the conclusion that they contain information to definitely set the date for Christ's return. Ball's work dealt with the prophetic words of Daniel as found in the eighth, ninth, eleventh, and twelfth chapters.

⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 132.

⁷⁵ Ball was a medical doctor who lived in Tacoma, Washington. He was a member of the Evangelical Association and had been interested in Bible prophecies for some years prior to the publication of his book.

The seventy weeks of Daniel 9:24-27 is considered one continuous unit of prophecy which ended in 70 A. D. at the destruction of Jerusalem. Ball held that the only way of determining the beginning of the seventy weeks' prophecy was to count back seventy weeks from 70 A. D., the time of its fulfilment, which would place its beginning at 420 B. C. The sixty-two weeks spoken of in verse 26, Ball considered a part of the seventy weeks' prophecy, and taught that Christ was crucified just 434 years (sixty-two weeks) after 420 B. C., thereby placing the date of the Saviour's death at 14 A. D., just fifty-six years (eight weeks) before the final fall of Jerusalem. He further asserted that Christ was thirty-four years old at the time of His death which would place His birth in 20 B. C. or 483 years (sixty-nine weeks) after the command to restore and rebuild Jerusalem which he claimed was given by Darius in 503 B. C. As reason for the difference in the starting points of the seventy weeks and the sixty-nine weeks, Ball stated that the twenty-fifth verse of Daniel nine is an "interjection" and not connected with the twenty-fourth and twenty-sixth verses.⁷⁶

Concerning the prophecy of Daniel 8:13, Ball felt that it should be divided into two parts, the first dealing with the phrase "how long shall be the vision concerning the

⁷⁶ Robert O. Ball, Second Coming of Christ (Tacoma, Washington: Ball and McDonald, 1921), pp. 200-215.

daily sacrifice", and the second with the phrase "and the transgression of desolation". He held that the first phrase was fulfilled in the seventy weeks' prophecy while the second phrase did not meet its fulfilment until almost six hundred years later, or in 636 A. D. when the Mohammedans took possession of the Holy Land.⁷⁷

Ball claimed that the periods known as the 2300 days (years), 1290 days (years), and 1335 days, (years) all started in 636 A. D.⁷⁸ and that the 2300 years will end in 2936 A. D., while the 1290 and 1335 year periods would both end in 1936, making that the date for Christ's return. He arrived at the date 1936 by adding the 1335 years to 636 A. D., and subtracting the forty-five years, which is the difference between the 1290 and 1335 year periods, and finally, adding the ten years of tribulation which he thought would precede Christ's coming. The ten days or years of tribulation was that referred to in Rev. 2:10. The basis for this juggling of figures according to Ball is the fact that Jesus said the time of tribulation which would engulf the world should be shortened. The original length of this

⁷⁷ Ibid., pp. 332-333.

⁷⁸ The apparent disagreement between Adams (Cf., p. 73) and Ball in regard to the conquest of Palestine by the Mohammedans lies in the fact that Adams dealt with the Mohammedan invasion of Palestine in 634 A. D., while Ball referred to the conquest of that country by the Mohammedan forces which was completed in 636 A. D.

period of tribulation Ball thought to be the forty-five years difference between the 1290 years and the 1335 years. However, he believed this period was shortened to ten years in harmony with Rev. 2:10.

Ball completed his prophetic picture by stating that the Lord would reign for one thousand years, and usher in the judgment day at the end of the 2300 year period which should end in 2936 A. D.⁷⁹

W. F. Tanner.⁸⁰ Few students of prophecy have made as bold a claim as that presented by W. F. Tanner. His theory was not based upon the regularly accepted time prophecies of the Bible, but upon a vision he supposedly received directly from God on March 19, 1941.⁸¹

In 1934, Tanner contracted malaria while living in Texas. This was followed by several recurring attacks, until by 1937, his condition became very critical. That year, he claimed the Lord gave him a vision, giving the directions to follow in order to be healed. He followed

⁷⁹ Ball, Second Coming of Christ, pp. 332-333.

⁸⁰ Tanner received his M. D. in Atlanta, Georgia, in 1910. He lived some time in Texas, later moving to Atlanta where he now resides having retired from the medical profession. He has no affiliation with any organized church.

⁸¹ W. F. Tanner, Jesus is Coming This Week to Reign on Earth (Atlanta, Ga.: W. F. Tanner, 1941), p. 37.

the directions, and was apparently healed. Since 1937, he maintains that he experienced a number of visions, the last one occurring on March 19, 1941, at which time, the Lord instructed him concerning His return.

At some time in his study, Tanner became convinced that the seventieth week of Daniel 9:24 was separate from the remainder of the prophecy, believing that it commenced on June 3, 1941 and will end on April 27, 1948, when Jesus will return to this earth.⁸² He felt sure that, according to his vision of March 19, 1941, Mussolini, dictator of Italy, would make an agreement with the Jewish leaders of Palestine on June 3 of that year, which would last for one prophetic week of seven years ending on April 27, 1948.⁸³

Tanner believes that a great deal of prophecy contemplates two fulfilments, one relatively near to the prophet, and the other always in the last days of this world's history. He claims that by picking out those prophecies which he believes have a double fulfilment and comparing them with the record of the fulfilment relatively near the time they were given, it is possible to have a preview of the completion of the prophecy. However, Tanner holds that we should not look for exact duplications, and cites as an example the prophecy

82. Tanner, Jesus is Coming This Week to Reign on Earth, p. 4.

83 Ibid., p. 37.

of Daniel 8:9-14 which he believed met its first fulfilment at the desolation of the temple at Jerusalem in 168 B. C. under Antiochus Epiphanes. This pollution of the temple, Tanner feels sure lasted for 2300 literal days. He believes that the second fulfilment of this prophecy will also be a time of desolation but will last for only 1260 literal days. He believes this to be explained in Rev. 11:2 and 12:6. According to Tanner, the 1260 day period began in 1944 and will end on April 27, 1947 at which time Christ will return to earth.⁸⁴

The following is a list of important events which Tanner believed would take place between June 3, 1941 and April 27, 1948:

(1) The Holy Spirit would be removed from the earth in 1944, and the abomination of the earth would begin.⁸⁵

(2) Some time between June 3, 1941 and 1944, the "rapture" of the saints would occur.⁸⁶

(3) The Battle of Armageddon will take place on April 27, 1948, when the "beast of Revelation" will be destroyed by the brightness of Christ's coming, at which time 144,000 purified Jews will stand with Christ as the first

84 Ibid., pp. 45-48.

85 Ibid., p. 34.

86 Loc. cit.

saints to be saved from this world of sin.⁸⁷

Wm. A. Bosworth.⁸⁸ Although well aware of the fact that anyone who ventured to fix the date of Christ's return would meet with severe criticism, Bosworth felt that he must do so, for he firmly believed that he held the key to prophecy, and that his interpretation was sure.⁸⁹

Bosworth taught that what is ordinarily referred to as the second coming of Christ is divided into three stages. In the first state, His coming is wholly unseen by human eyes; in the second stage, He will be seen only by those who are a part of His true church; while in the third and final stage, every eye will see Him, for He will come with all His holy angels and His coming will be as the lightning which cometh out of the east and shineth even unto the west.⁹⁰

Although Bosworth has not determined any time for the first phase of Christ's second advent, he believes that it has already taken place, and that Christ is now present in the world directing in the lives of His followers. The second phase of the advent, as later stated, Bosworth believes

87 Loc. cit.

88 It has been impossible to obtain further information concerning Bosworth.

89 Wm. A. Bosworth, Prophecies Relating to the Time of the End (Boston: The Gorham Press, 1918), p. 142.

90 Ibid., pp. 113-115.

will take place in 1955 at which time Christ will come to be with His church. This appearance will not be associated with what many of the expositors who hold the pre-millennial view of the second advent call, the "Rapture of the Church", but will be a time when Jesus will visit His people much in the same manner as he visited the disciples following His resurrection. According to Bosworth, He will counsel with His people and instruct them in ways of meeting the crisis of the tribulation through which they will pass.⁹¹

The third phase, or visible return of Christ will take place just prior to the Battle of Armageddon.⁹² He holds that this phase of the advent will be very closely related to the Battle of Armageddon as to time and result; however, he does not attempt to set a definite date for this phase of the advent.⁹³ According to his reckoning, the Battle of Armageddon will take place in 1955. Bosworth believed that the 1260 years of Daniel began in 39 A. D., when Peter supposedly took the gospel to the house of Cornelius, and ended in 1299 A. D., and that from 1299 A. D. to the Battle of Armageddon will be 666 years. These years, Bosworth taught "are not prophetic years, but just plain years,

91 Ibid., pp. 116-120.

92 Infra.

93 Bosworth, op. cit., p. 136.

'according to the number of a man' or as men commonly reckon them". By adding 666 years to 1299 A. D., he felt that the "second beast of Revelation" will "meet his Waterloo" in 1965, fixing that date as the time for the "last and bloodiest of all the battles of earth, and the end of all wars".⁹⁴

The 1335 year period of Daniel, he apparently started in 620 A. D.,⁹⁵ and extended to 1955 A. D., when the Bridegroom will return, leaving ten years between that date and the Battle of Armageddon.

There was still another date in Bosworth's theory, which was that for the beginning of the Millennium. The basis for this speculation is Rev. 12:14 which refers to time, times, and dividing of times. This Bosworth considered "three and a half century days", or 350 years. Adding 350 years to 1620 A. D. brought him to 1970 A. D. when he says the Millennium will begin.⁹⁶

Bosworth then has given three terminal points in the

⁹⁴ Ibid., pp. 37-38.

⁹⁵ The exact starting point of the 1335 years can be obtained only by figuring back from 1955 A. D. Bosworth contended that the first thousand years of the period was spent by the church in union with Rome, and that the balance of 335 years started in 1620 A. D. when he believed the church fled into the wilderness which he believed was symbolized by the landing of the Pilgrims at Plymouth, since America, on that date, was almost uninhabited by white men.

⁹⁶ Bosworth, op. cit., p. 39..

final setting up of Christ's kingdom, (1) the return of the Bridegroom in 1955, (2) the Battle of Armageddon in 1965, and (3) the final establishment of Christ's kingdom with the beginning of the Millennium in 1970.

Elwell T. Tennyson.⁹⁷ The true Church of God is composed of only 144,000 members who have already been selected and are now in heaven reigning with Christ is the belief of Tennyson. Besides the 144,000 who comprise the church, there is another class who will inherit eternal life, known as the "family of God" or "Kingdom class". The latter group are the faithful who lived before the first advent of Christ with those who have accepted Christ as their Saviour since the 144,000 were chosen. The 144,000 will help Christ in the government of His kingdom, and were chosen following the first advent of Jesus, having been in heaven since before 800 A. D. according to Tennyson's theory.⁹⁸

97 Tennyson was born in 1899 in Jefferson City, Missouri where he now resides, being the owner and operator of a furniture appliance and heating business in that city. For many years he has been a student of the Bible and has studied many of the beliefs and theories that have been advanced concerning the Bible. He has endeavored to arrive at the truth taught by the Bible and has set out these findings in his publications without regarding in any way the prevailing doctrine of men. He is not a member of any sect, denomination or organization of men, and publishes his findings at his own expense.

98 Elwell T. Tennyson, The Time Has Come (Jefferson City, Missouri: The Harvest Publishers, 1940), pp. 36-46.

Tennyson believed that the 144,000 were chosen during what he terms "a period of 1 'week' of 100 year 'days' or a total of 700 years" beginning in 27 A. D. when the total number (144,000) was completed, and that the seven churches of Revelation represent seven periods of one hundred years each, beginning in 27 A. D. and ending in 727 A. D.⁹⁹ Tennyson further asserted that "without a doubt Christ Jesus returned to the earth" secretly in 70 A. D. at the time Titus destroyed Jerusalem, to direct in the selection of the 144,000. This coming, he thinks fulfilled the predictions of Jesus as recorded in Matthew 24.¹⁰⁰

For proof that the 144,000 members of the church were chosen by 727 A. D., Tennyson calls attention to the time-prophecies of Daniel which deal with time, times, and dividing of time. Of this period, he says:

According to the prophecy, then, from the time that it was given to Daniel, to the time that the holy people, the Church of 144,000 were 'scattered' or taken away from the earth, was a period of 1260 years.

Tennyson claimed that Daniel was given this prophecy in the third year of the reign of Cyrus, King of Persia. Recognizing 536 B. C. as the first year of the reign of Cyrus, he concluded the third year was 534 B. C., which, added to 1260 years, placed the taking away of the 144,000 at

99 *Ibid.*, pp. 53-60.

100 *Ibid.*, pp. 61,62.

727 A. D.¹⁰¹

With respect to the "Kingdom class", Tennyson teaches that they shall receive their reward when Christ shall come to set up his kingdom at the end of six thousand years of the world's history, which he feels is the allotted time for "the reign of sin".¹⁰² Working on this premise, he calculated the year for the establishment of Christ's kingdom in the following manner:

From beginning of Adam's sin to end of flood	1644 years
End of flood to confirming covenant with Abraham	427 years
Confirming covenant with Abraham to Exodus and law	430 years
Exodus and law to 4th year of Solomon's reign	480 years
Solomon to beginning of desolation	430 years
From beginning of desolation of land to 1st year of Cyrus	70 years
From 1st year of Cyrus, King of Persia to the year known as A. D. 1	536 years
Balance of years in period of A. D. to fulfil the 6000 years of sin	<u>1983 years</u>
Total	<u>6000 years</u> ¹⁰³

Therefore, according to Tennyson, Christ is due to come at the end of 1983 years or during 1984 A. D.

¹⁰¹ Tennyson, The Time Has Come, pp. 72-75.

¹⁰² Ibid., pp. 110-111.

Martin Anstey in his work Romance of Bible Chronology, Vol. 1, agrees with the view that six thousand years will cover the time from creation to the return of Christ. He, however, would have the end of the six thousand years come about 1958.

¹⁰³ Loc. cit.

As further proof for the accurateness of this date, Tennyson set forth the supposition that each of the seventy weeks of Daniel represents fifty years of time,¹⁰⁴ which equals a period of 3500 years (70X50=3500). This period of time he dated from the exodus and extended to 1984, corresponding it with his previous figures.¹⁰⁵

As final proof for this prediction, Tennyson used the "seven times" or 2520 years ordinarily referred to as the "times of the Gentiles". This period, he dated from the first year of Cyrus, or 536 B. C., and found that it also ended in 1984.¹⁰⁶ There are, then, according to Tennyson, three distinct lines of prophecy which point to 1984 as the date of Christ's second coming, leaving thirty-seven years of this world's history still in the future.

W. W. Fineren.¹⁰⁷ Fineren believes that although God has veiled His Word in mystery and that there are many of God's secrets which are past our understanding, still there

¹⁰⁴ The fifty years, Tennyson has obtained from the jubilee cycle as instituted by Moses in Lev. 25:8-10.

¹⁰⁵ Tennyson, The Time Has Come, pp. 104-106.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., pp. 108-109.

¹⁰⁷ Fineren has been a civil engineer for a number of years, having spent some time in governmental work for the state of Florida. In 1927, he was professor of Mechanical Engineering at the University of Florida. He claims no membership in any sect or church organization, and his views on prophecy have been published at his own expense.

are certain events in history which have been revealed by God, and which can and should be understood by man. Inasmuch as God used prophecy in olden times to write the history of events which would take place in the future, by checking these prophecies with the records of events which have occurred, it can be seen that prophecy is sure, and that all prophecies will meet their completion in due course of time.

With this thought in mind, Fineren concluded that God wishes us to exert every possible effort to understand the chronology of prophecy which has been fulfilled.¹⁰⁸

Fineren believed that the "times of the Gentiles" began in 606 B. C., at which time the Jews were said to have been taken by Nebuchadnezzar in the third year of Jehoachim.¹⁰⁹ This belief was based on the opinion that Judah was taken captive before the death of Nabopolassar which occurred in 605 B. C. Since he considered the "times of the Gentiles" to be 2598 years in length, he placed the return of Christ in 1993 A. D.¹¹⁰

Fineren included the seventy weeks of Daniel's prophecy within this period, the first sixty-nine weeks having

¹⁰⁸ William W. Fineren, The Times of the Gentiles and the Time of the End (Gainesville, Florida: W. W. Fineren, 1944), p. 8.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., pp. 11,12,58.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., p. 58.

covered the period of time from 457 B. C. to 27 A. D.¹¹¹ when Christ was supposedly crucified on a Wednesday.¹¹² The seventieth week he separated from the rest and placed at the close of the "times of the Gentiles", or from 1986 to 1993 A. D., at which time, Christ's coming is expected.

This prophecy applied to the Jews only according to Fineren who claimed God predicted that Jewish history in Jerusalem would be 490 years in length and that the history of the Jewish nation ended with the death of Christ which took place at the end of the sixty-ninth week of the seventy week prophecy. Therefore, there is still one week (seven years) of Jewish history still in the future. This week corresponds with the seventieth week of the prophecy at the end of which time Christ will set up His kingdom.¹¹³ Synonymous with His coming will be the beginning of the Millennium and the beginning of the seventh one thousand year period of this world's history. Thus six thousand years are consumed from creation until the return of Jesus according to Fineren's theory.¹¹⁴

111 Loc. cit.

112 Ibid., p. 40.

113 Ibid., pp. 28-29.

114 Ibid., p. 58.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

In summarizing this study, it should be borne in mind that the use of prophecy in predicting the date of Christ's second coming did not originate during the period under investigation. *Only one new method for predicting the date of Christ's return has been developed during this period, and that was the use of the Great Pyramid of Gizeh.

The investigation has shown that the use of the Great Pyramid has not been confined to any one group of people, but has permeated the teachings of Anglo-Israelites, Jehovah's Witnesses, and in one instance, those of a former High Priest in the Mormon Church.

Only two groups of people have dealt extensively with the time prophecies during this period. They are the Anglo-Israelites and the Jehovah's Witnesses. It has been found that each had a distinct development of the doctrine, setting a number of dates, and experiencing almost as many disappointments. Several other church groups have had individuals within their organization who have dealt with the time of Christ's second advent to the extent of setting the date for His return.

The Anglo-Israelites did not use the Great Pyramid in making their first predictions as to the date of Christ's

return, but relied upon the "times of the Gentiles" theory. However, they acknowledged a belief that the measurements in the Great Pyramid pointed to the near approach of the second advent, and later date-setters among them have relied almost wholly upon the measurements as worked out by D. Davidson. From time to time, the Anglo-Israelites made adjustments in their belief regarding the measurements of the Pyramid, as the dates forecast passed uneventfully. In each case, they were able to find some event in history with which to explain away the seeming difficulty, and at no time has their disappointment deterred them in their date-setting.

It has been established that Charles Taze Russell, the founder of the Jehovah's Witnesses, was influenced by members of the Advent Christian Church. His teaching that Christ's presence has been in the world since 1874 was based upon that of Jonas Wendell and N. H. Barbour, both of whom were Advent Christians. Subsequent dates set by the Jehovah's Witnesses for the return of Christ, with the exception of 1925, have all been based upon the accuracy of the date 1874. The Jehovah's Witnesses have never repudiated any dates they have set, but in each case have turned to a spiritual application of their prophecy to explain the disappointment experienced as each date passed and Christ had not come as predicted. An interesting feature of their present teaching is the fact that they predict still another return of Christ for which no

date has been set. Apparently they have learned caution from past experience.

In recent years, the Jehovah's Witnesses have completely reversed their position concerning the Great Pyramid. Whereas their founder, Charles Taze Russell, believed that God had placed the Great Pyramid in Egypt as a stone witness to his people, the Jehovah's Witnesses now teach that it was built under the direction of the Devil and that a study of its measurements in the light of Bible prophecy leads away from the true source of knowledge.

Other denominations which have been involved in date-setting no longer believe that it is possible to fix the time of Christ's return. Although it has been proved that the Mormon prophet, Joseph Smith, was guilty of setting a date for Christ's return, as a denomination the Mormons now claim that they have neither set dates for nor attached any importance to the second advent of Christ.

With respect to individuals who have attempted to deduce a definite date for the return of Christ from the time-prophecies, dates have been set ranging from 1896 until 1993. The reason for so many dates having been forecast lies in the fact that there was a difference of opinion regarding the starting point of the various time-prophecies used in making the prediction.

The arguments most frequently used by the time-setters were: (1) The "times of the Gentiles" theory, (2) the six thousand year theory, and (3) the passages of the Great Pyramid. Other time-prophecies of the Bible were used to a lesser extent, but, for the most part, merely as corroborative evidence for the deductions which had been made.

It has not been hard for those interested in ascertaining the date of our Lord's second coming to find events in history to use as a starting point for the various time-prophecies. Those who have relied upon the theory of the "times of the Gentiles" have agreed that the beginning of that period should be placed during the reign of Nebuchadnezzar. However, they have not been able to agree as to which of his campaigns should be used as the starting point. Some held to the first one which they thought occurred in 606-607 B. C., while others felt that the time of Zedekiah's captivity and the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 B. C. should be used as the starting point.

The use of history by the various denominations and individuals concerned reveals that some who have used it in interpreting Bible prophecies have been more interested in finding support for their theory than in an accurate interpretation of the historical events involved. This was very noticeable in the case of the Jehovah's Witnesses who place the crucifixion of Christ in 33 A. D. rather than 31 A. D.

when it actually took place. Others have placed Nebuchadnezzar's first campaign in 606-607 B. C., when it could not have taken place earlier than 605-606 B. C.

Those who have set dates for Christ's return have either fallen into the error of not giving sufficient study to the manner of Christ's advent, or have deliberately misunderstood the plain word of God. While Jesus, in talking to His disciples on the Mount of Olives, gave them a number of signs which would show the nearness of His coming, he also said that "of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but My Father only" (Matt. 24:36). By this He meant that man was not to know the exact time of His return.

The return of Christ will not be a secret taking away of His people as many believe, but will be seen by every eye (Rev. 1:7). At that time, Christ will bring His reward with Him and those who are ready will be able to say "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us".

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BIBLIOGRAPHY

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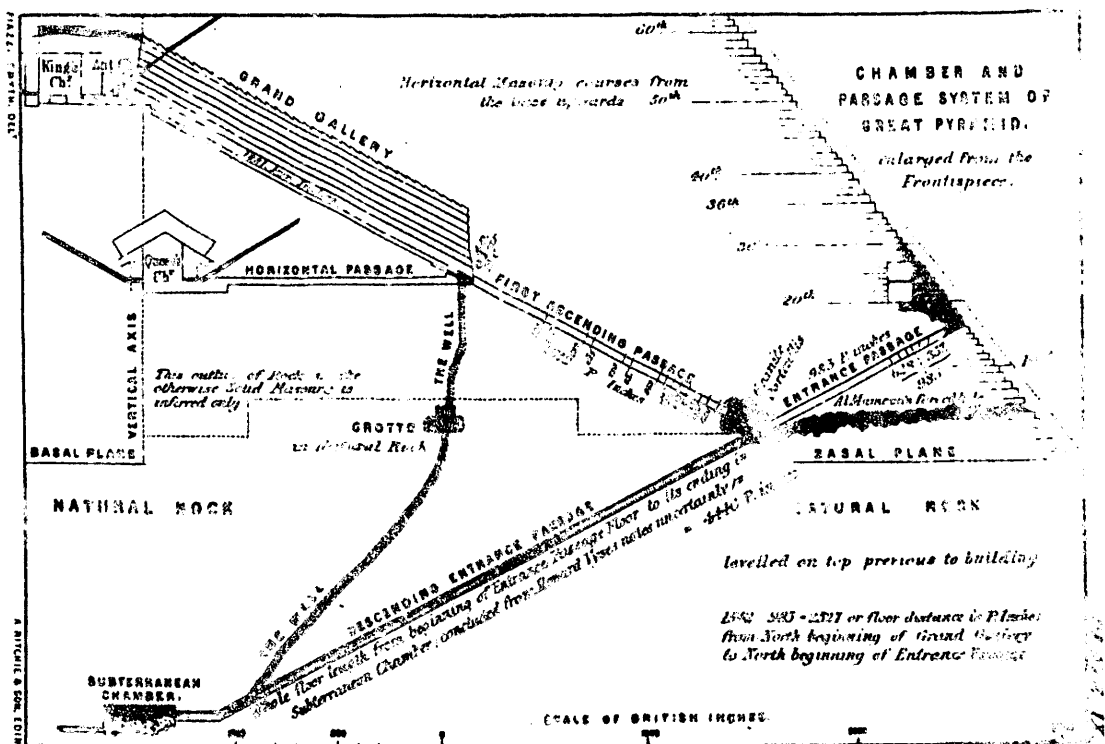
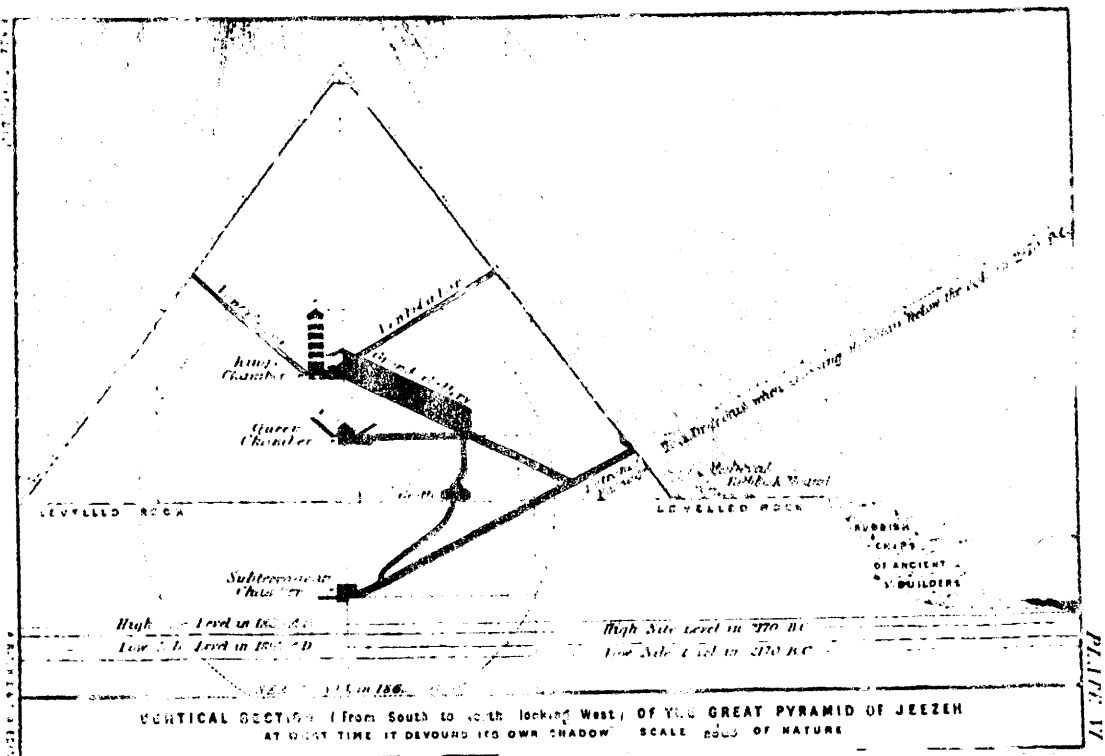
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APPENDIX

APPENDIX A



APPENDIX B

Measurements of the Great Pyramid

The inch measurement is given in brackets; the first column of figures gives the ells, (cubits) the second column the value of the ell to account for this to the nearest finger. The authorities for these measurements are:-- Cole, "Survey of Egypt", Paper No. 39, 1925; Borchardt and Petrie in various publications; Morton Edgar, The Great Pyramid, 1924; and Davidson's The Great Pyramid, 1927.

The average value of the cubits in all these measurements is 20.614 inches.

The Pyramid

	Ells of 7 hands E H F	Necessary value of Ell, in inches
Mean of 4 base lengths (9069	440 0 0	20.61
Height from platform to apex (5782.2)	280 0 0	20.65

Descending Passage

Total floor length (4535)	220 0 0	20.62
Vertical Rise (1854)	90 0 0	20.60
Horizontal displacement (2719)	132 0 0	20.60
Vertical rise from junction with ascending passage to entrance (495.8)	24 0 0	20.66
Floor length of horizontal passage at foot	17 0 0	20.63
Height of floor of original entrance above platform (325.2)	32 3 0	20.59

Ascending Passage

Total floor length	75 0 0	20.60
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Floor length to bottom of plug blocks (1471)	71 0 0	20.71
Total vertical rise (680.3)	33 0 0	20.62
Horizontal displacement (1391)	67½	20.61
Perpendicular height (47.36)	2 2 0	20.61
Vertical height	2 4 0	20.60
Length of plug of 3 blocks and 2 joints	8 4 2	20.62
Length of one plug-block and joint (59.43)	2 6 1	20.60

Grand Gallery

Overall floor length (1884)	91 2 0	20.64
Floor length to Step (1815)	88 0 0	20.63
Intrusive floor length of Asc. passage	1 1 2	20.61
Intrusive floor length of Asc. passage	1 0 1	20.61
Horizontal displacement of total length (1689)	82 0 0	20.60
Horizontal displacement to Step (1629)	79 0 0	20.62
Vertical rise in floor to Step bottom (840½)	40 6 0	20.57
Vertical rise to top of Step (876½)	42½	20.62
Vertical height (339.25)	16 3 0	20.65
Perpendicular height	14 5 1	20.67
Floor width (82.5)	4 0 0	20.64
Width of plug-block chute (41.98)	2 0 1	20.61
Depth of plug-block chute (perpendicular)	1 0 ½	20.61
Length of bridge-slab recess (244.6)	11 6 0	20.62
Length of upper seating for bridge-slab (40.1)	1 6 3	20.61
Length of plug-block chute, bridge to Step (1546.9)	75 0 2	20.61
Length of 25 plug-blocks (1486)	72 0 3	20.61
Necessary projection of block 25 into area occupied by Step (38)	1 6 0	20.61
Maximum thickness allowable for inter-block retaining beams (8.57)	0 3 ½	20.61
Intervals between similar points of beam sockets in sides of chute, each to house one block and one beam (68)	3 2 1½	20.71

Length of 1 plug-block (59.43)	2 6 1	20.60
Width of plug-block (41.8)	2 0 1	20.61
Height of plug-block (47.2)	2 2 0	20.61
Height of Step face (36.01)	1 5 1	20.51
Face of Step from end wall of Gallery (61.01)	2 6 3	20.58
Step above platform level of Pyramid	82 0 0	20.63

Ante-Chamber

Portcullis recess, length	5 5 0	20.59
" " " " , height	7 1 0	20.59
Outer passage length (52.04)	2 3 3	20.59
Inner passage length	4 6 0	20.59
Height of portcullis sections and slides (103)	5 0 0	20.60
Height of outer passage (43.71)	2 0 $3\frac{1}{2}$	20.61
Thickness of portcullis units	1 0 0	20.59

King's Chamber

Length (412.5)	20 0 0	20.63
Breadth (206.3)	10 0 0	20.63
Height (230.5)	11 0 0	20.67
Height of each course of masonry (47.1)	2 2 0	20.60

Sarcophagus

External length (89.71-90.01)	4 2 2	20.59
" breadth (38.65-38.72)	1 6 $\frac{1}{2}$	20.59
" depth (41.16-41.27)	2 0 0	20.61
Internal length (77.93)	3 5 2	20.59
" breadth (26.79)	1 2 $\frac{1}{2}$	20.56
" height (34.34)	1 4 3	20.61

Horizontal Passage to Queen's Chamber

Length (1521)	73 6 0	20.59
Height (46.4)	2 1 3	20.62

Queen's Chamber

Height of side walls	8 6 1	20.59
Height of 'ka' statue niche	8 6 1	20.59
Height of vaulted roof	11 5 2	20.59
Width of 'ka' statue niche at base	3 0 0	20.59
Width of Chamber (205.8)	10 0 0	20.58

Average value of Ell		<u>20.614</u>
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From Wheeler, Antiquity: A Quarterly Review of Archaeology, 9:183-85, June 1935.

APPENDIX C.

Aurora College

AURORA, ILLINOIS

June 18, 1947.

Dear Mr. Scriven:

Your letter of June 17 is about the same as the one I answered a few days ago.

M. Baxter was not in anyway connected with the Advent Christian people. He would consider the Advent Christian people heretical, the same as he would count the Seventh Day Adventists heretics, on account of the fact that both groups teach conditional immortality.

The Advent Christian people have not set any date for the Lord's coming during the last 60 years or more. Individuals have worked on the time periods in Daniel and the Revelation, but their views have only engaged the attention of a few close friends.

Eld. W.E. Snider, Rt. 2, Santa Cruz, Calif., has long been a student of the signs of the times, and the time periods.

Milton C. Burt, now deceased, wrote a book entitled, "The Times Are Fulfilled." He believed that the times ended about fifteen years ago. *This book is likely to be in the*

While these two men were members of the Advent Christian church, they should not be listed as representing the view of the Advent Christian church.

In our Adventual Research Library here in Aurora College we have some material bearing on the time question; but it would require time to search through papers, magazines and books.

Prof. Poon, who is closely connected with your Seminary in Washington, can tell you what you might expect to find in our library here.

Sincerely, in Christian service,

Orrin Jenks

231 Calumet Ave.

Original Library