

no question about that.” The “immediate future” was “certain to be filled with climactic events ... within a few years at most”, the final parts of Bible prophecy relating to the “last days” would undergo fulfillment as Christ’s reign began.

**1968:** No one could say “with certainty” that the battle of Armageddon would begin in 1975, but time was “running out rapidly” with “earthshaking events” soon to take place. In March 1968 there was a “short period of time left”, with “only about ninety months left before 6000 years of man’s existence on earth is completed”.

**1969:** The existing world order would not last long enough for young people to grow old; the world system would end “in a few years.” Young Witnesses were told not to bother pursuing tertiary education for this reason.

**1974:** There was just a “short time remaining before the wicked world’s end” and Witnesses were commended for selling their homes and property to “finish out the rest of their days in this old system in the pioneer service.”

**1984:** There were “many indications” that “the end” was closer than the end of the 20th century. And now the latest literature refinements<sup>2</sup> seem to point to the year 2035 as the deadline for the end of the “system of things”, arguing that Noah preached for 120 years until the Great Flood came. Leaving us with the idea of this new date by drawing parallels to our present day and adding 120 years to 1914.

When this date arrives and nothing happens, maybe they’ll study the arguments of Isaac Newton, who pointed to the year 2060.<sup>3</sup>

What does the Bible say about this habit of trying to schedule a time for the end of the “system of things”? Note that the Bible couldn’t be clearer on this:

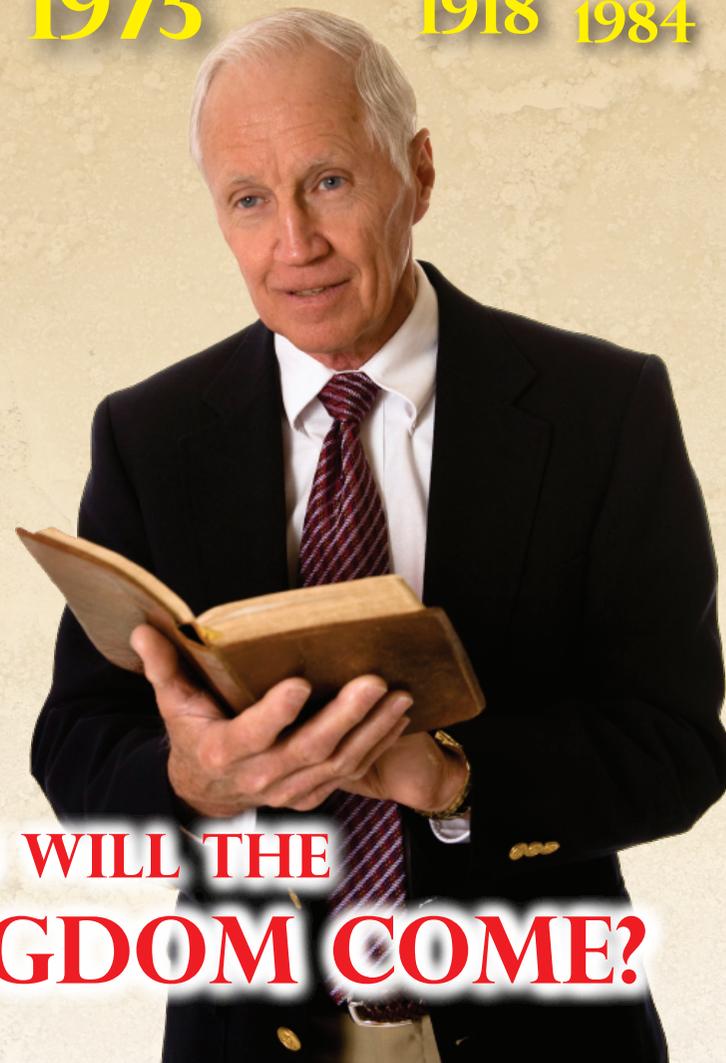
*“...He [Jesus] said: ‘Look out that you are not misled, for many will come on the basis of my name, saying, ‘I am he,’ and, ‘The due time is near.’ Do not go after them.” (Luke 21:8)*

<sup>2</sup> The Watchtower December 15, 2003, on p. 14-19 article: “More than ever we need to be vigilant”.

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/1422794/Newton-set-2060-for-end-of-world.html>

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**WHEN WILL THE KINGDOM COME?**

## When will the Kingdom come?

Wondering about the future is a sincere human desire. Knowing what the future will bring can enable us to be better prepared to face it and make the most appropriate choices now.

Christians also have this yearning to know what the future will bring, even more so because Jesus instructed them:

*"Keep on, then, seeking first the Kingdom and his righteousness..."* (Matthew 6:33)

*"You must pray, then, this way... Let your Kingdom come..."* (Matthew 6:9, 10)

For about two thousand years Christians have obeyed this command. They've prayed and looked forward to the arrival of this Kingdom. Even when Jesus was still with us in his physical body, his followers asked him:

*"Tell us, when shall these things be?"* (Matthew 24:3)

*"Lord, are you restoring the kingdom to Israel at this time?"* (Acts 1:6)

Jesus didn't rebuke them for asking that. But notice how he answered them:

*"...these things must take place, but the end is not yet."* (Matthew 24:6)

*"It does not belong to you to know the times or seasons..."* (Acts 1:7)

Note that he didn't tell them a date. Quite the contrary, for Jesus made it clear that it would not be for them to have knowledge of dates ("times", "seasons").

But then, didn't Jesus indicate a time or a season by telling them:

*"... and Jerusalem will be trampled on by the nations until the appointed times of the nations are fulfilled"* (Luke 21:24)

But consider this, could it be that this prophecy was not fulfilled with the destruction of Jerusalem? After its destruction in 70 CE, Jerusalem ceased to make sense as the center of Jewish worship. Its role in the unfolding of God's purpose came to an end.

Therefore, wanting to determine what these "appointed times of the nations" means can be a futile effort.

Some may say, this Scripture could enlighten research on the meaning of those appointed times:

*"Concerning this salvation, the prophets ... made a diligent inquiry and a careful search. They kept on investigating what particular time or what season the spirit within them was indicating concerning Christ."* (1 Pet. 1:10, 11)

And so, wouldn't it then be also worthwhile to try to find the "season", that is, an approximate date for the coming of God's Kingdom?



Jesus, meeting with his disciples on the Mount of Olives, prophesies about the future destruction of Jerusalem

The following list may let us see where this research led the Bible Students, now known as Jehovah's Witnesses<sup>1</sup>:

**1877:** Christ's kingdom would hold full sway over the earth in 1914; the Jews, as a people, would be restored to God's favor; the "saints" would be carried to heaven.

**1891:** 1914 would be "the farthest limit of the rule of imperfect men." (Charles Taze Russell, *The Time Is At Hand* (1891) as cited by James Penton, *Apocalypse Delayed*, page 44).

**1904:** "World-wide anarchy" would follow the end of the Gentile Times in 1914.

**1916:** World War I would terminate in Armageddon and the rapture of the "saints".

**1917:** In 1918, Christendom would go down as a system to oblivion and be succeeded by revolutionary governments. God would "destroy the churches wholesale and the church members by the millions." Church members would "perish by the sword of war, revolution and anarchy." The dead would lie unburied. In 1920 all earthly governments would disappear, with worldwide anarchy prevailing.

**1920:** Messiah's kingdom would be established in 1925 and bring worldwide peace. God would begin restoring the earth. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and other faithful patriarchs would be resurrected to perfect human life and be made princes and rulers, the visible representatives of the New Order on earth. Those who showed themselves obedient to God would never die.

**1922:** The anti-typical "jubilee" that would mark God's intervention in earthly affairs would take

place "probably the fall" of 1925. The chronology was described as "correct beyond doubt," "qualified, and absolutely correct," bringing "the stamp of approval of Almighty God" and "too sublime to be the result of chance or human intervention."

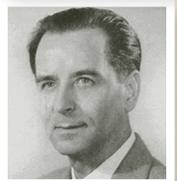
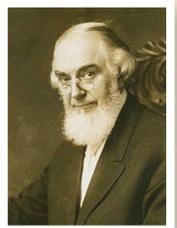
**1924:** God's restoration of Earth would begin "shortly after" October 1, 1925. Jerusalem would be made the world's capital. Resurrected "princes" such as Abel, Noah, Moses and John the Baptist would give instructions to their subjects around the world by radio, and airplanes would transport people to and from Jerusalem from all parts of the globe in just "a few hours".

**1938:** Armageddon was too close for marriage or child bearing.

**1941:** There were only "months" remaining until Armageddon.

**1942:** Armageddon was "immediately before us."

**1966:** It would be 6000 years since man's creation in the fall of 1975 and it would be "appropriate" for Christ's thousand-year reign to begin at that time. Time was "running out,



The 4 Watchtower's Presidents (from top): Charles T. Russell, J.F. Rutherford, N. H. Knorr e Frederick Franz.

<sup>1</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Criticism\\_of\\_Jehovah%27s\\_Witnesses](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Criticism_of_Jehovah%27s_Witnesses)