Critique of “Jehovah’s Witnesses and the Secular World”, pages 32-33, by Zoe Knox
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**THE PASSAGE BY KNOX THAT IS THE SUBJECT OF THIS CRITIQUE**

This *Critique* addresses the following passage from *Jehovah’s Witnesses and the Secular World*, pages 32-33, by Zoe Knox

Witnesses believe that the Kingdom of God is a government in heaven. (Endnote 14: ‘When Will God’s Kingdom Come?’, *The Watchtower*, 15 February 1953, 113–126.)

The year 1914 is crucial to the Watch Tower Society’s teachings on heaven. Russell taught that Jesus returned to rule the Earth invisibly in 1914. Rutherford reaffirmed that it was indeed a watershed year marking the invisible presence of Christ in a speech in February 1918. (The speech was the foundation of the tract ‘Millions now living will never die!’, one of the most widely circulated publications in the organisation’s history).

Rutherford wrote: ‘The physical facts, the fulfilled prophecy and prophecy further in course of fulfilment, prove overwhelmingly and beyond a shadow of a doubt that the Lord is present, that the world has ended, that the kingdom of heaven is at hand!’ *(Endnote 15: J. F. Rutherford, The Harp of God: Proof Conclusive that Millions Now Living Will Never Die; a Text-book for Bible Study Specially Adapted for Use of Beginners; with Numerous Questions and Scripture Citations* (London: International Bible Students Association, 1924), 250.

**RUSSELL’S 1874 INVISIBLE “COMING” OF CHRIST**

Knox is wrong when she writes: “Russell taught that Jesus returned to rule the Earth invisibly in 1914”. He expected that his Church would be glorified about that time, after expecting this to happen in 1910. Russell taught that at the same time on earth, 1914 would witness the Kingdom of God under the jurisdiction of the Zionists.

Charles Taze Russell said that the Parousia (the invisible coming) of Jesus had taken place in 1874, not in 1914. Other dates he held for that early period included 1872, 1876, and 1878. Russell said there would be a 40 year “time of trouble” starting with Christ’s invisible coming (parousia) in 1874.

For these reasons, Russell named his magazine “Zion’s Watch Tower and Herald of Christ’s Presence”. The former part showed his support for Zionism and latter part heralded the invisible Parousia (Coming) that had taken place in 1874.

**The Watchtower Society's own history acknowledges that Russell preached Christ's Coming had taken place in 1874**

One morning in January 1876, 23-year-old Russell received a copy of a religious periodical called *Herald of the Morning*. … The editor, Nelson H. Barbour, of Rochester, New York, believed that … [Christ’s] coming would be not in the flesh but as a spirit. … Barbour believed from Biblical time-prophecies that Christ was already present (invisibly). … Barbour succeeded in convincing Russell that Christ's invisible presence had begun in 1874. …

C. T. Russell was a man of positive convictions. Convinced that Christ's invisible presence had begun, he was determined to proclaim it to others. …

Barbour and Russell jointly published *Three Worlds, and the Harvest of This World*. … It presented the view that Jesus Christ's invisible presence dated from the autumn of 1874.

*(Jehovah’s Witnesses – Proclaimers of God’s Kingdom, pages 46, 47. Published by The Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc; International Bible Students Association. 1993)*
THE 1918 SPEECH BY RUTHERFORD

Knox provides no justification for saying, incorrectly, that “[1914] was indeed a watershed year marking the invisible presence of Christ in a speech in February 1918”. She does not explain what she means by “a watershed year” nor does she provide any quotation from Rutherford’s speech.

When reporting the 1918 speech, the Watchtower makes no mention of 1914

A recent issue of The Watchtower links Rutherford’s 1918 speech to events that are yet future. However, it does not replicate the contents of Rutherford’s speech.

The members of the bride class—the spirit-anointed Christians—are the first to extend the invitation to “come.” To whom? … Her words are directed to those who hope to gain everlasting life on earth after “the war of the great day of God the Almighty” has been fought.

The anointed followers of Christ have been extending the invitation since as far back as 1918. In that year, the public talk entitled “Millions Now Living May Never Die” offered hope that many will gain life in a paradise earth after the battle of Armageddon. (The Watchtower, Study edition, February 15, 2010, pages 15-16)

In the context, the Watchtower article does mention 1914. There is no mention of either Russell or Rutherford in that issue of the magazine.

Though the “river of water of life” will flow in the fullest sense during the Thousand Year Reign of Christ, it begins to flow in “the Lord’s day,” which dawned with the heavenly enthronement of “the Lamb” in 1914. (Rev. 1:10) Hence, certain provisions for life became available after that. (page 15)

Wikipedia does not provide the content of Rutherford’s speech


The discourse “The World Has Ended—Millions Now Living May Never Die” is first delivered on February 24 [1918] in Los Angeles, California. On March 31, in Boston, Massachusetts, the talk is entitled “The World Has Ended—Millions Now Living Will Never Die”


The Summary at Amazon of “Millions Now Living Will Never Die” does not provide the content of Rutherford’s 1918 speech

A public talk titled “The World Has Ended; Millions Now Living May Never Die” was first delivered on February 24, 1918 in Los Angeles, California. Just five weeks later, on March 31, 1918 the title was changed to indicate absolute certainty and the word “May” was substituted by the word “Will”. So the new title became “The World Has Ended; Millions Now Living Will Never Die.” The public talk continued to be delivered under that same title until 1925. The material in that talk was published in 1920. For decades Jehovah’s Witnesses believed that they would never die in this system and that they would simply pass on into a righteous new earth.

**Knox’s Endnote 15 Reference to Rutherford’s 1921 Book**

**The Harp of God**

The above passage by Knox cites as Reference 15 paragraph 443 of *The Harp of God*. That paragraph makes no mention of any date, not even 1914.

In *The Harp of God*, Rutherford mentions 1914 in only two passages

In this passage from *The Harp of God*, 1914 is mentioned twice:

> The length of the gentile times is definitely fixed in the Scriptures as a period of seven symbolic times of 360 years each, or a total of 2,520 years. This period beginning with the year 606 B.C. necessarily must end in 1914 A.D. …

> It would be reasonable to expect him to be present some time before he would take unto himself his great power to reign. His presence beginning in 1874, he has carried on his harvest work from 1878 forward, but has not interrupted the gentile dominion until that dominion should end. The end of the gentle rule, therefore, would mark necessarily the end of the present order; therefore, the end of the world. We should expect, then, to find 1914 as the beginning of the end of the old world or order of government. (*The Harp of God*, Paragraph 430)

In the following passage, 1914 is linked to “social and political order” on earth, not to Christ’s invisible presence.

> Upon the earth there are now, according to the best statistics obtainable, approximately 1,700,000,000 persons who have a measure of life. The proof cited herein shows that the old world (social and political order) ended and began to pass away in 1914, and that this will be completed in a few years and righteousness fully established. (*The Harp of God*, Paragraph 525)

In *The Harp of God*, Rutherford refers to 1874 fourteen times

Two passages from *The Harp of God* that mention 1874, selected at random:

> There are two important dates here that we must not confuse, but clearly differentiate, namely, the beginning of “the time of the end” and of “the presence of the Lord”. “The time of the end” embraces a period from A.D. 1799, as above indicated, to the time of the complete overthrow of Satan’s empire and the establishment of the kingdom of the Messiah. The time of the Lord’s second presence dates from 1874. (*The Harp of God*, Paragraph 400, underline added)

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> The great work of the harvest, that is to say, the proclaiming of the second presence of the Lord and the gathering together of those who truly love his appearing, has been so remarkably fulfilled since 1874 that it is one of the most striking and conclusive proofs of the Lord’s second presence. (*The Harp of God*, Paragraph 425, underline added)

**As Late as 1930, Joseph Rutherford Kept the 1874 Coming**

Following Russell’s death in 1916, Joseph Rutherford took over control of the organisation.

When Russell’s predictions failed, Rutherford altered problematic words in Russell’s book (changing “before” to “after” and so forth) and he kept selling the adulterated books.

Even as late as 1930, Rutherford was still saying that the Parousia had taken place in 1874:

> The Scriptural proof is that the second presence of the Lord Jesus Christ began in 1874 A.D. (*Prophecy* by J. F. Rutherford, page 65, published by International Bible Students Association; Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society, Brooklyn, New York, 1930)
In 1930, Rutherford saw 1914 marking Christ’s enthronement, with an earthly “coming” still in the future

In his 1930 book, Prophecy, Rutherford mentions the year 1914 fourteen times. As these examples show, Rutherford was not associating Christ’s invisible Coming with that year.

The things there prophesied began to come to pass in the year 1914, and they are still in process of fulfilment. Jesus foretold the fall of Jerusalem and the dispersion of the Jews and that subsequently they would again become the recipients of God’s favor. The first part of that prophecy was long ago fulfilled, and the latter part is now beginning to be fulfilled. (Prophecy, page 52, underlining added)

Rutherford said Jesus was set up on his throne in 1914.

In 1914 Jehovah set his anointed One upon his throne; therefore at that time Christ Jesus took his authority as King. Three and one-half years thereafter, to wit, in 1918, the Lord came to his temple, which is the temple of God. One of the purposes of the Lord’s coming to his temple, as shown by the words of the Prophet Malachi, was and is to give those of the temple class a clearer understanding of God’s purposes. Therefore that would mark the beginning of a clearer understanding of the prophecies, because it was God’s due time. (Prophecy, pages 73-74, underlining added)

In 1930, Rutherford wrote that in 1914 the action took place in heaven although it was not until 1918 that “true followers” became aware what had taken place “in heaven”.

It was in 1914 that the ‘period of waiting’ came to an end. (Ps. 110: 1; Reb. 10: 13) That marked the time of the end of Satan’s rule, and from that time forward he would not be permitted to go on without hindrance. It was then that the World War began, which marked the fulfilment of the prophecy concerning the Lord’s presence and the end of the world. (Matt. 24: 7-10) It was then that the war in heaven began, resulting in the ousting of Satan from heaven. (Rev. 12: 7-9) But the true followers of Christ Jesus could not and did not see that “sign in heaven” until after 1918, because it was in 1918 that the Lord came to his temple and began to give to the temple class greater light upon God’s Word. (Rev. 11: 19). (Prophecy, page 82, underlining added)

Russell’s followers had expected to be taken to heaven in 1914.

In the fiery experiences of 1918 many of these fell away from the Lord and turned back to the world. Many of such had been looking for the Lord to come and take them to heaven, and had particularly fixed the year 1914 as when this should be done. The year 1914 was a marked date; but these had merely contemplated something to happen which did not come to pass. (Prophecy, page 82, underlining added)

In 1930, Rutherford taught that Jesus’ “return” was his “coming for his faithful ones” and it would take place after 1914.

Jesus actually received his kingdom in 1914, when God commanded him to rule. (Ps. 110: 2) Necessarily his return must be after that time and must therefore refer to his coming for his faithful ones, to receive them unto himself, even as he had prophesied. (Prophecy, page 90, underlining added)
Knox’s Endnote 14 Reference to The Watchtower, February 15, 1953, “When Will God’s Kingdom Come?”

Referring to The Watchtower of February 15, 1953, Knox writes: “Witnesses believe that the Kingdom of God is a government in heaven.” This position is regularly pushed by the Watchtower today but it is not necessarily the position taken during the 19th and early 20th centuries. The Society’s portrayal of its own history needs to be taken with a truckload of salt.

The Watchtower of 1953 refers to Watchtower publications from the early years of the 20th century. Knox should have drilled down into statements made by the Watchtower article and tested the sources. This is appropriate given that Knox’s book focuses on actions taken by secular authoritarian governments. She acknowledges the authoritarian nature of the Watchtower leadership, so she should have expected the Society to behave similarly to secular authoritarian governments.

The 1953 Watchtower’s reference to Russell’s 1914 Watch Tower

That the year 1914 was seen to be significant, we again refer to The Watchtower, and this time to the issue of January 1, 1914 (pages 3, 4). “From every point of view the year 1914 seems big with possibilities. … We believe that the year 1914 gives evidence of greater possibilities of service for the truth than has any previous year. … Let us be more than ever on the alert, therefore, to be used and useful in the service of our King.”

(The Watchtower, February 15, 1953, page 123, underlining supplied)

Passages from The Watch Tower of January 1, 1914 (Charles Taze Russell)

Clearly Russell was expecting glorification and the passage to spirit life would take place very soon, hopefully by October 1914 but perhaps in 1915. He was, however, prepared to accept that a “few years” might yet pass.

Russell was a staunch Zionist and he expected the Jews would take on the responsibilities of running the Kingdom of God on a peaceful Earth while the Church, his church, had been glorified and were in heaven. The years 1878 and 1918 later became significant to Russell’s successor, Joseph Rutherford, which for some time he related to the Zionist movement.

From every point of view the Year 1914 seems big with possibilities. …

So far as our judgment goes, the Year 1914 is the last one of what the Bible terms “Gentile Times”—the period in which God has allowed the nations of the earth to do their best to rule the world. The end of their “times” marks the date for the beginning of Messiah’s kingdom, which the Bible declares is to be ushered in with a great time of trouble, just such as we see impending.

As already pointed out, we are by no means confident that this year, 1914, will witness as radical and swift changes of dispensation as we have expected. It is beyond the power of our imagination to picture an accomplishment in one year of all that the Scriptures seem to imply should be expected before the reign of peace is ushered in. …

The signs of the times clearly indicate the near approach of the very trouble for which we have for forty years been looking. The signs of the Son of Man in the wonderful inventions and progress of the world are manifest to us. We believe that the Parousia of our Redeemer took place thirty-nine years ago. … We believe that the year 1914 gives evidence of greater possibilities of service for the truth than has any previous year of the harvest, …

We may not read the time features with the same absolute certainty as doctrinal features; for time is not so definitely stated in the Scriptures as are the basic doctrines. … If later it should be demonstrated that the church is not glorified by October, 1914, we shall try to feel content with whatever the Lord’s will may be. We believe that very many who are running the race for the prize will be able to thank God for the chronology, even if it should prove not accurate to the year, or even out of the way several years. We believe that the chronology is a blessing. If it should wake us a few
minutes earlier or a few hours earlier in the morning than we would otherwise have waked, well and good! It is those who are awake who get the blessing.

If 1915 should go by without the passage of the church, without the time of trouble, etc., it would seem to some to be a great calamity. It would not be so with ourself. We shall be as glad as any one if we shall all experience our change from earthly to spirit conditions before 1915, and this is our expectation; but if this should not be the Lord’s will, then it would not be our will. If in the Lord’s providence the time should come twenty-five years later, then that would be our will. …

If October, 1915, should pass, and we should find ourselves still here and matters going on very much as they are at present, and the world apparently making progress in the way of settling disputes, and there were no time of trouble in sight, and the nominal church were not yet federated, etc., who would say that evidently we have been out somewhere in our reckoning. In that event we would look over the prophecies further, to see if we could find an error. And then who would think, Have we been expecting the wrong thing at the right time? The Lord’s will might permit this. Our expectation as a church is that our change is near. Nothing of restitution blessings can come to the world until after the church has been glorified.

Another thing to be considered, should our hopes not be so soon realized as we expect, would be as to whether we were surely of the elect class. …

So far as we have been able to see up to the present time, the failure of a full development of matters in 1915, or before, would imply that all the chronological arrangements, as we have them, are wrong—our view of the harvest and all. And we have no reason to believe that these are wrong. We remember that we are not infallible, and that our judgment is not infallible; but the wonderful inventions of today, and the light that is dawning in every direction, as well as the universal unrest, seem in corroboration of the chronology—that we are in the dawning of the new age. But just how far along we are we do not positively know.

In a letter appearing in *The Watch Tower of August 15, 1914 Watchtower* (note the date), correspondent S. Houston opined:

It has seemed to me that the chronology should not be too closely associated with events; that the present Savior did not startle the world with the bright-shining of his presence suddenly in 1874, though he came at that date; that even the Jew was not aware of his favor in 1878, but it began; that Babylon did not feel its rejection, nor topple over in 1881, but was “spewed out” and is no longer recognized, just the same, while even yet, after 33 years, the world is not startled by the evidence, nor does Babylon believe it. Hence I feel that should the present order of things roll on for some time yet, we should not then doubt October, 1914, any more than we doubt 1874, 1878 or 1881. But we should be watchful, prayerful, and “keep our garments,” awake to the fact that the chronology may be accurate, while our ideas of how the Lord will order events may be wrong. The Lord may permit seeming inaccuracies to test whether our consecration is to chronology or to him.

**The 1953 Watchtower’s reference to Rutherford’s 1920 Watch Tower**

Note these comments as published in *The Watchtower* of July 1, 1920. … That article stated in part:

“We can now see that 1914 is a date clearly marked in the Scriptures. … The way now seems to be open to go forward in the Lord’s work, and the first thing to be done would seem to be the taking up of the message of truth. … To this end June 21st [1920] has been set as the date for the beginning of this work. … Therefore it seems that now is the time for the church to proclaim far and wide in Christendom this good news. … We earnestly request the friends … to rent a well located and popular meeting place and thoroughly advertise a public meeting.”

*(The Watchtower, February 15, 1953, page 121, underlining supplied)*
The following are all the appearances of “1914” in The Watch Tower of July 1, 1920

The Gentile times ended in 1914, and many expected that the church would be glorified by that time. We can now see that 1914 is a date clearly marked in the Scriptures, although it did not mark the complete glorification of all the members of the body of Christ. The harvest period of forty years closed in 1918. …

The Gentile times beginning there covered a period of seven symbolic times, or 2,520 years. The date of the beginning being 606 B.C., it would follow that the Gentile times would end in 1914; i.e., the legal lease of power would at that time expire and then the time would be due for him “whose right it is” to receive and exercise kingly authority. …

The Gentile times legally and chronologically ended in the fall of the year 1914, at which time the nations did become angry and God’s wrath began to be visited upon them. Jesus answered that nation would rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; and this we find had the beginning of its fulfillment in the year 1914 in the great world war. …

During this period of time since 1914, true to the prophetic utterances of the Master, false prophets or teachers have arisen amongst the Lord’s people and have deceived many. …

When the times of the Gentiles should be fulfilled, which was when God’s kingdom was due to be set up in power, when the “present evil world” came to an end, at the end of the Jewish civil year in the autumn of 1914. …

If we take this literally, and add these 11 years to the time when the iniquity of the antitypical Amorites is full (autumn of 1914), it gives the autumn of the year 1925, which, according to the Jubilee types, is the real Jubilee or the antitypical beginning of the time for every man to return from the dead. (underlining added)

The 1953 Watchtower’s reference to Rutherford’s 1925 Watch Tower

Charles Taze Russell died in 1916 and by 1925, Rutherford was overturning Russell’s teachings and adding many of his own. This continued well into the next decade and he lost many followers in the process. Rutherford coined the distinctive name “Jehovah’s witnesses” in 1931, applying it solely to the 144,000 elite class. When Rutherford did that, he called the others Jonadabs.

1953 citation of the 1925 Watch Tower

The Watchtower of March 1, 1925, stated:
“in that year [1914] the Lord took his power and began his reign. There the ‘man child [the Nation], which was to rule the nations with a rod of iron,’ was born. … In 1914 the birth of the nation occurred. In 1914 the war in heaven began, and Satan and his official family were thrown out of heaven. … The new nation is born. Its glory shall fill the whole earth. The kingdom of heaven is here.” (Pages 69, 73, 74)

Relevant quotations from the Watch Tower of March 1, 1925

WHAT is here published is not dogmatically stated. Trusting in the Lord for guidance, it is submitted for the prayerful and careful consideration of the anointed ones. If there are readers of the Watch Tower who cannot agree with what is here stated, then it is suggested that such calmly and carefully wait upon the Lord, always keeping a pure heart. …

It seems to be well settled now in the minds of the anointed that the Gentile Times, which began in 606 B.C., ended in 1914; that the devil became the god of the entire world when Israel was cast off, and that with the coming of 1914 the devil’s privilege of ruling the world without interference ceased. …
In Revelation 11:17, 18 we read that the Lord has taken his power and reigned: “And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come.” This prophecy began to have its fulfilment with the World War in 1914. … The Scriptural proof heretofore submitted in the Watch Tower is to the effect that the Lord came to his temple in 1918; and that there began a final trial and judgment upon the Church. …

Following 1918, when the Lord came to his temple and it was opened there would be flashes of lightning; that is to say, intermittent illuminations of the Word of God, giving further glimpses of truth in the great plan. …

There have been great truths come to light and a wider proclamation of truth throughout the earth since 1919 than at any time previous. …

The twelfth chapter of Revelation … could not be understood or appreciated until after 1918; that is to say, until the opening of the temple when the Lord came to his temple. …

What has been the outstanding feature of the divine plan during the ages? At once we all answer: The establishment of the kingdom for which Jesus taught us to pray. That means the birth of the new nation, which shall rule and bless all the families of the earth.—Daniel 2: 44. …

From 1878 to 1914 the anointed ones of Zion were hoping and patiently waiting for the kingdom. … In 1918 and 1919 Zion suffered still more. … From 1874 until 1918 there was little, if any, persecution of those of Zion; that beginning with the Jewish year 1918, to wit, the latter part of 1917 our time, the great suffering came upon the anointed ones, Zion. Prior to 1914 she was in pain to be delivered, greatly desiring the kingdom; but the real travail came later. …

Since 1878 the devil has watched the development of Zion; and hearing so much about the new kingdom, or nation, he thought that he would be able to destroy it. Therefore, as the picture represents him, “the dragon stood before the woman [Zion], … for to devour her child [the new nation] as soon as it was born.” …

From 1878 forward Jesus was gathering together his consecrated followers; and these, with the hope of an early birth of the new nation or government, have struggled on for the cause of righteousness, holding fast to the precious truths. They expected this birth in 1910 and at other dates, but particularly in 1914. In that year the Lord took his power and began his reign. There the “man child [the Nation], which was to rule the nations with a rod of iron,” was born. Up to 1914 not all the anointed who loved the Lord were of Zion. …

Michael, who is Christ the Lord, has been present since 1874, but he did not interfere with Satan. He remained silent until his right to rule had come. Satan’s right had expired in 1914. “And at that time shall Michael stand up. …

Satan and his angels, namely, his official family, his invisible joint-rulers, were hurled down to the earth. That fight must have begun in 1914. Just how long it lasted the Scriptures do not indicate. …

From 1878 to 1914 the people of Zion were expecting the birth of the new nation. At the same time the dragon stood by, waiting to devour whatsoever was born. In 1914 the birth of the nation occurred. In 1914 the war in heaven began, and Satan and his official family were thrown out of heaven. In 1918, after Satan recovered from his dazed condition, he set about to persecute the members of the Church on earth. In 1918 he caused the imprisonment of the officers of the Society and others. On March 26th, 1919, these were released from prison; and the Church (representing the woman) there fled into the wilderness for 1260 literal days. From March 27th, 1919, to September 8th, 1922, inclusive was exactly 1260 days. (underlinings added)
THE WATCHTOWER HAS KEPT RUTHERFORD’S 1914 COMING OF CHRIST

Today the Society holds to Rutherford’s creation that Christ’s invisible Parousia took place in 1914. The Society links its 1914 Parousia another date that is critical for Watchtower authority. They say that in 1919 Jehovah God and Jesus Christ appointed their organisation to be the sole representative on earth of their ruling heavenly government.

The Watchtower Society teaches that when a member of their class of 144,000 dies, they are immediately transported, as a male, to become a member of that ruling government. To deny the Society’s leadership is thus to defy Jehovah God and his rule.

KNOX’S REFERENCES TO THE WATCHTOWER’S DOCTRINAL POSITION ON 1914

The events that the Watchtower Society linked with 1914 are crucial to its teachings, to its very purpose. The following lists the extent of Knox’s references to the Watchtower’s doctrinal position on 1914.

Witnesses believe that Jesus cast Satan out from the heavenly sanctuary and began ruling the Kingdom of God in 1914. (Knox, 33)

Witnesses believe that Jesus cast Satan out from the heavenly sanctuary and began ruling the Kingdom of God in 1914. The Kingdom will soon replace worldly governments. (Knox, 33)

The Watch Tower Society teaches that only 144,000 will dwell in the Kingdom of Heaven, where they rule with God, Jesus Christ, and the faithful angels. They are known as the ‘anointed class’ or the ‘little flock’. … The Kingdom of Heaven began to be populated ‘sometime’ after 1914, as members of the anointed class died and were transferred. (Knox, 33)

It is widely held that the Watch Tower organisation has repeatedly failed to predict the date of Armageddon. Its critics allege failed prophecies relating to the years 1873, 1914, 1918, 1925, and 1975 (and sometimes more besides). The organisation teaches that some of these years have indeed proved significant, albeit in different ways than expected, such as Christ’s invisible return in 1914. (Knox, 35)

MODERN CONFLATION OF EVENTS

Charles Taze Russell, the Watch Tower’s second President and his claimed successor Joseph Rutherford in his early stages taught that Christ’s “coming in kingdom power” and his “Coming/presence” were separate events. JWs now say both events occurred in 1914. Modern Watchtower teachings conflate these events. Knox appears to do likewise

In The Divine Plan of the Ages, [Russell] identified 1914 as the year that would mark the end of the Gentile Times and the return of rule by Christ. (Knox, 70)