

An Open Letter to a Jehovah's Witness

George Burnside

www.CreationismOnline.com

A lady sent Pastor G. Burnside a copy of "Awake," a Jehovah's Witness publication, and some questions. The following is Pastor Burnside's reply.

Dear XXX

Thank you for your letter which you so kindly wrote me and also for the magazine which you enclosed.

I certainly agree with you regarding the dangerous times in which we live and the fact that we are seeing prophecy fulfilled every day. The Scriptures you quoted are quite correct and I believe every one of them implicitly. The prophecies are certainly fulfilling very rapidly and our day holds a very definite place in those prophecies.

I read with interest the magazine which you sent, and I certainly was surprised at some of the things that were mentioned in it, and as you asked me to give my views I will make some comments. I noticed on page twelve it says, "That is why the publishers of this magazine called attention to the year 1914 as far back as 1879, pointing out that disastrous conditions would begin then. Yet while these witnesses of Jehovah were proclaiming that 1914 would bring the worst time of trouble in history, what were others saying?" - "Awake," October 8, 1968.

When I read these words I thought that that was interesting, and as I have been a reader of these books now for a few decades I thought I would look back and see just what they did teach in years gone by, and I must say I was surprised. I first opened the book, "The Time Is at Hand," Volume 2, 1903 edition, which was printed in 1905. At the back of the book under the heading: "Things You Ought to Know," I read first of all this statement:

"Six thousand years from Adam ended in AD 1872."

"The Christian Age 'Harvest' 40 years AD 1874-1914."

I then turned back and on page 242 I read:

"The 'Gentile Times', prove that the present governments must all be overthrown before the close of AD 1914."

Now this statement is very clear and very definite that all the then existing governments of this earth would be overthrown before 1914. Well, then, how can your publishers in honesty say that they pointed to 1914 as the beginning of disastrous conditions in this world? If all earthly governments were to be overthrown before 1914, then, with the establishment of God's government, peace would be certain.

This is made clear on page 179, for it says:

"Times of the Gentles, or their lease of dominion, will run fully out with the year 1914, and that by that time they will all be overthrown and Christ's Kingdom fully established."

Now these statements are very clear and positive. Christ's kingdom would be fully established in 1914 and all these other governments would be completely overthrown. Then I took down Volume 3, "Thy Kingdom Come," which I noticed was printed in 1903, and on page 228 I read:

"That the deliverance of the saints must take place sometime before 1914 [you will notice it is before 1914], is manifest, since the deliverance of fleshly Israel as we shall see, is appointed to take place at that time, and the angry nations will then be authoritatively commanded to be still, and will be made to recognize the power of Jehovah's Anointed. Just how long before 1914 the last living members of the body of Christ will be glorified, we are not directly informed."

Now by these clear statements all the saints of God were to be delivered and glorified before 1914, and by that year the angry nations were to be authoritatively commanded to be still. Now how these statements can be explained in view of the fact that you state that in 1914 the worst time in history would begin, I just do not know. Pastor Russell taught that the angry nations by 1914 would be

authoritatively commanded to be still. That is the very opposite to the worst time of history to begin. It seems to me, Mrs. XXX, that the publishers of the "Awake" must be deliberately trading on the ignorance of people and the fact that they do not have these books that were published back in 1903 and 1905. The "Awake" disappointed me and made me question the honesty of the publishers of that paper. Are they totally ignorant of their teachings or are they deliberately trading on the ignorance of people? This is not criticism, but it is a stubborn fact that stares one in the face.

Further, I turned over to page fifteen of the "Awake" and there is a chart which claims that the creation of man took place in 4026 BC and that the 6,000-year period from creation will end in the year 1975. It clearly states that this will be the end of the 6,000-year period from Creation. Now this is a clear, positive statement, but when I opened the book "The Time Is at Hand," Volume 2, which I noticed was copyrighted in 1886 and printed in 1905, I read at the back of the book under the heading "Things You Want to Know": "Six thousand years from Adam ended in 1872" and when I turned to page 242 of the same book I read:

"The same All Wise One Who taught us through the Chronology that six thousand years from Adam's creation ended in AD. 1872, and that the seventh thousand, the Millennial Age, began there."

At the beginning of this century the "Watch Tower" publishers made the statement most emphatically that the All Wise One showed conclusively that the 6,000 years from Adam's creation ended in 1872. Why don't they tell the people that they have made tragic mistakes? If the All Wise One showed that it ended in 1872 that must be the correct date; therefore, the present copy of the "Awake" which you sent to me must be entirely erroneous.

While I am on this subject, you may be interested in some other statements that I noticed in this same book, "The Time Is at Hand," Volume 2. On page 170 I read:

"AD 1874 was the exact date of the beginning of the Times of Restitution, and hence of our Lord's return."

Then on page 211 I read:

"The date of our Lord's second advent, and the dawn of the Times of Restitution, we have already shown to be AD 1874."

You see, in the early days of the Witness movement it taught emphatically that the Lord was to come in 1874, and that by 1914 everything was to be lovely, the millennium ushered in and all opposing powers done away with entirely. I read on page 170 of Volume 2:

"Times of the Gentiles,' or their lease of dominion, will run fully out with the year 1914, and that by that time they will all be overthrown and Christ's Kingdom fully established."

These, then, are just a few of the reasons why I was amazed when I read this recent copy of the Awake which you sent to me, and I was mystified as to how the publishers in honesty could make the statement, "That is why the publishers of this magazine called attention to the year 1914 as far back as 1879 pointing out that disastrous conditions would begin then." The facts are that they taught the very opposite. Why then do they make such false statements?

By 1914 they expected the kingdom of Christ to be fully established and all opposing powers silenced forever. Now my problem is: Why don't they give the full facts to the people, for these facts rebel against these recent statements made in the "Awake"?

I appreciate your earnestness in writing out to people and I believe you are sincere and that you have a great desire to advance the cause of God. I trust that the Lord will guide you as you look into these things. How anybody can circulate papers like this and claim to be Jehovah's witnesses is beyond me. Give this serious consideration, for these are the plain facts from their own books. I have no hostility against Jehovah's Witnesses; none at all. I like people and I want to see them established in truth. That is why I have taken the trouble to write these things to you. God is always on the side of truth. Christ said that He is "the truth and the way" and His way and His truth will triumph.

I trust that on that great day both of us will triumph with the truth of God. May the Lord guide you in these things. Sincerely yours, George Burnside.

www.freeminds.org