Predicting the future is humanly impossible. Inarguably, no uninspired prophet or priest; no psychic, clairvoyant or fortune-teller; no analytic prognosticator, nor any computer-generated model can unerringly predict events to come. Peering into the future is the sole domain of God.

In order to establish that fact, nearly three thousand years ago Jehovah God issued a direct challenge to the world and its multitude of gods and goddesses to produce their prophets that could unerringly foresee the future. Isaiah 41:21-23 retains the written record of God’s challenge that has so far gone unanswered. It reads: “Bring your controversial case forward,’ says Jehovah. “Produce your arguments,” says the King of Jacob. ‘Produce and tell to us the things that are going to happen. The first things—what they were—do tell, that we may apply our heart and know the future of them. Or cause us to hear even the things that are coming. Tell the things that are to come afterward, that we may know that you are gods.”

Further down in the 26th verse, Jehovah bluntly states that there are no seers of future events, other than himself, saying: “Who has told anything from the start, that we may know, or from times past, that we may say, ‘He is right? Really there is no one telling. Really there is no one causing one to hear. Really there is no one that is hearing any sayings of you men.”

Jehovah, on the other hand, has produced a large body of prophecy, as contained in the Bible, which has, so far, unerringly foretold the future in considerable detail. The thing that distinguishes God’s declarations of things to come is that what he foretells usually goes counter to the prevailing opinions and trends. Whereas, men may analyze patterns and make accurate short-range forecasts of
things, the events that God foretells usually seem incredible and unlikely to come about—but they always do.

Divine judgment has been pronounced upon “Babylon the Great.” According to Revelation 14:8, an angel declares: “Babylon the Great has fallen.” That has already taken place. No longer can she restrain worshipers of Jehovah. Her own corruption and involvement in war have been widely exposed. Now her final destruction is near. – Keep On the Watch

But, even supposing that we accept the Bible as a divinely inspired book of true prophecy, correctly interpreting it in advance so as to actually foresee the future is an entirely different matter. The Watchtower has stated on occasion that prophecy usually cannot be understood until it has been fulfilled. But is not that an admission of lack of insight? Presumably, one of the primary purposes of Bible prophecy is to reveal the things to come in advance. But, for a certainty, as Joseph said in the Bible, “interpretations belong to God.” For the very reason that prophecy is a product of the mind of God, it is not possible to understand it unless God reveals his matters to the diligent searcher, even as the Proverb says: “The glory of God is the keeping of a matter secret, and the glory of kings is the searching through a matter.”

Jehovah’s Witnesses should humbly recognize that the Watchtower, while having a remarkable degree of insight into the fulfillment of prophecy in the ancient past, does not really have a very good track record of interpreting prophecy connected to our modern times. That is evident from the fact that most of what has been once considered by the International Bible Students to be the final word on God’s prophetic Word has long since been discarded. Just as those early witnesses of Jehovah imagined they understood prophecy, so too, Jehovah’s Witnesses today also confidently assume that what the Watchtower presently teaches is the absolute final word of prophetic interpretation. Most of Jehovah’s Witnesses imagine that only a few trivial “adjustments” might be forthcoming.

It may be hard fact for some to swallow, but the truth is that while Jehovah’s Witnesses may possess a solid doctrinal foundation, as well as vital insights into God’s character and his purpose for mankind and the earth, those under the tutelage of the Watchtower Society are tragically blind in the area of prophecy. No doubt that is why Jehovah poses the discomforting rhetorical question: “Who is blind, if not my servant, and who is deaf as the messenger whom I send? Who is blind as the one rewarded, or blind as the servant of Jehovah?” (Isaiah 42:19)

What accounts for this lack of insight? It seems that the basic principles for the Society’s method of interpretation is sound. The main problem stems from their attachment to 1914 as the beginning of Christ’s presence. Since the Watchtower has stamped a broad range of prophecies as already having been fulfilled during the 1914-1919 period, for that reason Jehovah’s Witnesses have no Scriptural basis for anticipating any future developments.

Secondly, the Watchtower has wrongly applied to Christendom virtually all denunciatory prophecies that Jehovah originally directed against wayward Israel and Judah. The thinking person might
naturally wonder why God would go to so much trouble to rebuke, chastise and correct an idolatrous system of false worship that he has had nothing to do with and will ultimately destroy.

Also, because of a deeply rooted organizational taboo that discourages “independent thinking,” there is no incentive for Jehovah’s Witnesses to privately research God’s Word with a view to reexamining these vital prophecies. The mere suggestion that the Watchtower might be in error could land a brother or sister in the judicial hot seat. So, Jehovah’s Witnesses are saddled with stale and unworkable teachings that offer no insight into actual future events. And I say this from painful firsthand experience: The leadership of the organization is not at all receptive to any sort of revision of their erroneous interpretations. In essence they have ignored the apostle’s exhortation at 1 Thessalonians 5:20, which reads: **“Do not treat prophesying with contempt.”** Nevertheless, Jehovah’s Word is not bound by human blindness.

One class of prophecy that the Watchtower insists has already been realized upon Jehovah’s Witnesses are the prophecies that foretell of a spiritual liberation from Babylon the Great. A very large portion of the book of Isaiah, for the most part from the 40th chapter to the 66th chapter, contains Jehovah’s pronouncements that applied to his people at the time of their imminent release from captivity to Babylon.

While, obviously, the ancient setting of the prophecies initially had to do with the literal release of the Jews from captivity to the Chaldean Empire, the very same prophecies apply primarily to spiritual Israel at the time of Christ’s arrival and Jehovah’s final judgment. There are many reasons for that view. One obvious reason is that ancient Babylon has a modern counterpart, evident by reason of the fact that Revelation refers to an international organization called *Babylon the Great*. Just as the Jews were once released from captivity to imperial Babylon by Cyrus’ decree, according to Revelation 18:4, during the Lord’s Day, Christians are similarly commanded to “Get out of her, my people.”

The question, though, is whether spiritual Israel has already experienced liberation from the modern antitypical Babylon, or whether those declared in prophecy to be God’s people are destined to go into captivity in the near future? Needless to say, any future captivity to Babylon the Great would come as a totally unanticipated disaster for all of Jehovah’s Witnesses.

According to the Watchtower’s long-held view, Jehovah’s people were liberated from babylonish bondage back in 1919. According to the present understanding, that is when Babylon “fell,” in that,
supposedly false religion could no longer exercise any sort of domination over God’s anointed sons and daughters. Why do Jehovah’s Witnesses believe that?

Briefly: In the forty years prior to WWI, the Watchtower and the International Bible Students made a significant impact on the religious world of the United States, and to a lesser extent Europe; to the point that during the hysteria of the First World War, in an effort to destroy the organization, some politically powerful clergymen conspired with the United States judiciary to prosecute the leading officers of the Watchtower on phony charges of sedition. Eight brothers, including the second President of the Watchtower, were railroaded off to the federal penitentiary in Atlanta, Georgia, to serve 20 year sentences on the trumped up charge of sedition. During that difficult time the preaching work of the Bible Students nearly came to a standstill. Years later one of the brothers who had been imprisoned wrote a book entitled *Faith on the March*, which gives his personal account of the events that took place in the organization at that time.

However, after less than a year of imprisonment all eight men were released and exonerated of the false charges. After their release from prison the Bible Students were reorganized and energized to make greater efforts to preach about God’s kingdom and to separate themselves from Christendom. A series of annual conventions at Cedar Point Ohio, and elsewhere, were instrumental in redirecting and motivating the organization during the early part of the 1920’s. Several decades later, in retrospect the Watchtower began to interpret Isaiah’s prophecy as applying to the spiritual restoration of Jehovah’s Witnesses following the hardships that came upon the organization during World War One.

To this day Jehovah’s Witnesses remain convinced that the angelic command to get out of Babylon the Great began to be symbolically heralded back in 1919. However, can we be *absolutely* certain that the developments that have taken place since then fit the prophecies in question? If the prophecies do not line up with reality, then, it becomes evident that an enormous miscalculation has occurred. Worse yet, it means that Jehovah’s Witnesses have no basis for anticipating any sort of future spiritual captivity to Babylon the Great.

Most sobering, the ancient Jews refused to accept the message of the prophets that foretold that their holy city would be destroyed and the entire nation would be deported to far away Babylon. Is the spiritual Israel made up of the kingdom heirs in a similar position today? The daunting task set before this writer is to make the case in the affirmative.

Each reader is implored to summons the courage to re-examine all that you have accepted as the truth of these matters up to this point. That is in harmony with the apostle John’s exhortation at 1st John 4:1 we read: “Beloved ones, do not believe every inspired expression, but test the inspired expressions to see whether they originate with God, because many false prophets have gone forth into the world.”

In the spirit of that apostolic exhortation directed to all Christians, it is your responsibility to test and examine whatever you are taught and have accepted as the truth. Of all people, should not Jehovah’s Witnesses make doubly certain that what you believe and teach regarding prophecy is solidly based on God’s Word of truth? How may we “test” the seemingly inspired expressions? Since much of what the Watchtower has taught Jehovah’s Witnesses has to do with past 20th Century fulfillments, testing the inspired expressions will merely require that we use our powers of reason to see
if our interpretations actually line up with the facts of history. Also, we must use discernment in reading the Scriptures.

“The Mystery of the Woman and the Wild Beast”

For many years the Watchtower has confidently asserted that the great tribulation begins when Babylon the Great is destroyed by the 8th king of prophecy. While there does not seem to be any valid reason for Jehovah’s Witnesses to question the Watchtower’s identification of Babylon the Great as being the world empire of false religion, we do have good reason to question the assumed timing of future events.

Bluntly, there is no Scriptural support for the Watchtower’s oft-repeated assumption that Babylon the Great goes down at the beginning of the global time of trouble. And, incredibly, the Watchtower offers none.

For example, In the June 1st, 1996 Watchtower, page 19, the comment is made:

“The execution of divine judgment will start with the destruction of Babylon the Great. That harlotlike empire of false religion will be forever blotted out of existence. That time is very near!”

Typically, the Watchtower usually supports its teachings with the generous use of scriptural citations, but in the above statement there is not even one verse.

Here is another quote from the April 1st, 1997, Watchtower, pages 14-15:

“The great tribulation begins when the political elements suddenly turn on “Babylon the Great.” They “will hate the harlot and will make her devastated and naked, and will eat up her fleshy parts and will completely burn her with fire.” (Revelation 17:16)

Let the reader take note that the cited reference from Revelation 17:16 states nothing as to the timing of affairs in relation to the beginning of the great tribulation. Yet, the Watchtower dogmatically makes this ascertainment with regularity. However, this seemingly “inspired expression” does not hold up under test.

According to the 17th chapter of Revelation, the seven-headed wild beast goes off into an abyss of destruction. Later, the beast comes back out of the pit as the 8th king, which is when the harlot is depicted as riding the revived beast and immediately before God puts it into the mind of the beast to devour her. A question diligent Bible students ought to ask is: How many symbolic seven-headed wild beasts are there anyway? That is not a stupid question seeing that according to the Watchtower there are two different seven-headed beasts symbolized in prophecy. There is the seven-headed beast
that arises from out of the sea in the 13th chapter of Revelation; and then there is the scarlet-colored seven-headed beast in the 17th chapter.

Furthermore, the 11th, 13th and 17th chapters of Revelation describe a beast that goes into a death-like state only to revive. But, according to the Watchtower’s interpretation there are two separate beasts that both experience destruction on two different occasions and then both come back to life. The Watchtower teaches that the seven-headed beast suffered the foretold symbolic sword stroke as a result of the First World War. However, it is simply not in accord with the facts of history that the Anglo-American allies were destroyed by the travails of WWI.

The abyssing of the scarlet-colored beast is thought to have occurred when the failed League of Nations was dissolved during the Second World War and later it was subsequently “resurrected” in the form of the United Nations. But, in comparison with the seven empires of Bible prophecy, the League of Nations was very limited in the powers granted to it—as is the UN presently. By no stretch of the imagination could the League of Nations qualify as an empire such as the Babylonian, Roman or British empires. Bible students should remind themselves that each of the seven powers of Bible prophecy were great empires that dominated large portions of the earth—not mere forums of arbitration, such as the League of Nations when it was in existence. Besides, the United States was not even a member of the League of Nations. True enough, some prominent clergymen once hailed the newly created League of Nations as the “political expression of the kingdom of God,” but in spite of such blasphemous accolades it seems very unlikely that Jehovah would have depicted such an ineffectual agency, such as the League of Nations was, as a monstrous wild beast.

Furthermore, in the 13th chapter of Revelation the 8th king is also depicted as an image that comes to life and demands the worship of everyone on earth on pain of death. Obviously, neither the League nor the United Nations has ever required such recognition, let alone absolute allegiance.

In view of the United Nations’ present relatively impotent condition, we might ask the question: What would happen if the United Nations suddenly embarked on a world-wide campaign to eradicate organized religion? The answer is—absolutely nothing would happen—except perhaps some embarrassing moments for UN officials. Under the present conditions it is politically unthinkable—yes—impossible, for the United Nations to move against the strongly entrenched religious institutions of this world.

However, the prophetic Scriptures foretell of a great upheaval and catastrophic crash that is due to come upon this system of things concurrent with the actual coming of God’s kingdom. Needless to say, no such global tribulation has occurred yet. However, when it does occur the continued viability
of the present civilization will be called into question. The symbolic death and resurrection of the
globe dominating political system, symbolized by the seven-headed beast, will be a unique and
terrifying worldwide calamity. That will mark the beginning of judgment day.

But the point, as it relates to Babylon the Great,
is that when the 8th king rises from the ashes of
the collapse of the Anglo-American kingdom
and comes to life to rule the world for his
allotted one hour, the hour of test and
tribulation, seated on the back of the scarlet-
colored resurrected beast will sit the great harlot
of Babylon.

Only under the desperate and chaotic
conditions of world war and global financial
collapse is it feasible that the United Nations
could acquire the sort of political and military
power necessary to topple the organized
religions of this world.

It is worth noting that both the League of Nations and the United Nations were originally brought
into being in the aftermath of the First and Second World Wars, respectively. So, it is not such a
great speculative leap to suppose that another world war or terror attack using nuclear weapons
could be the pretext for fully empowering the UN to serve as a world government—the eighth king
of prophecy.

But, rather than the destruction of organized religion marking the commencement of the great
tribulation, the tribulation apparently brings about the collapse of the present Anglo-American
dominated democratic system. That is in keeping with Daniel's prophecy, which foretells that a king
of fierce countenance will bring mighty ones to ruin, as well as the sons of the kingdom. Afterwards,
with the democratic nations brought low, the United Nations will be empowered to the extent of
becoming a global empire.

Since the nations have already been conditioned to look to the UN for answers, and obviously there
exists a global bureaucratic infrastructure already in place, it is only a matter of finally transferring
power away from the sovereign nations in order to cause the 8th king to fully come to life as the
first truly global empire. Then, and only then, will it be possible for God's word to be accomplished
concerning the destruction of Babylon the Great by the 8th king.

The vision of the Apocalypse concerning the last hour of the 8th king undoubtedly awaits a future
realization. Therefore, the angelic command to 'get out of her my people' has evidently not been
heralded. But in what way is it possible for Jehovah's people to go into babylonish captivity in the
future?

To better understand how that is possible it is necessary to appreciate that religion is very much a
controlling factor behind the relentless drive towards world government today.
The Vatican is by far the most politically powerful religious institution in the world. It survives to this day as more than a mere relic of the Roman Empire, but as a viable functioning remnant of the ancient empire. The Vatican operates much like a political nation; having ambassadorial representatives in most countries. Here is a link to the Vatican’s website that lists her many diplomatic connections throughout the world. Here is a website that lists the Church’s numerous affiliations with various international organizations. The Vatican also has the distinction of being the only religious body with an official, so-called “observer” seat at the United Nations. However, the Vatican is not merely a passive observer, but an influential policy maker as well. More recently, in 2009 the Pope of Rome called for a world political body to deal with the economic crisis. Most other religions also give their support to the United Nations. Here are a few: The Bahai faith has been an ardent supporter of the United Nations since its inception. It even enjoys what is called “consultant status” with several UN agencies.

The Watchtower’s former fellow travelers as NGOs, the Moonies and their self-proclaimed new world messiah, Sun Yung Moon, have been big promoters of the UN through Moon’s peace federation.

The philosophy of Buddhism has been recognized as the foundation of the United Nations.

The National Council of Churches and the World Council of Churches both seek to use their influence to steer the United Nations. Not to be left out, the Mormon Church seeks to wield its influence over the UN in family matters.

Meanwhile, the official religious consort of the United Nations Organization itself is New Age pantheism, the so-called mother earth religion of Gaia.

Without question, organized religion and their many NGOs are very active in support of the United Nations. And it seems that the reverse is true as well: The UN zealously courts their religious support. As was true in the original city of Babel, and through the succession of biblical world powers starting with ancient Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Persia, Greece and Rome, up until now, the ruling element and the popular religion were inseparable. So it is also in the culmination: The ultimate political empire, the counterfeit of Christ’s kingdom, and the Devil’s religion called Babylon the Great, in combination, stand poised to dominate the world, as well as Jehovah’s Witnesses, as never before during the last hour. “The mystery of the woman and the wild beast” is solved.

How may we ascertain for certain that Babylon the Great will not go down at the beginning of the tribulation, but that she will steer the beast under her control to persecute and trample Jehovah’s
Witnesses during the period oncoming? We may do so by consulting no less of an authority than Jesus Christ. What did Jesus have to say on this topic?

**LET THE READER USE DISCERNMENT**

Most of Jehovah’s Witnesses have no doubt read and re-read Jesus’ extensive prophecy of the sign of the conclusion many times. But with the above question concerning whether false religion goes down first, let us read and reason upon select passages of the 24th chapter of Matthew one more time.

At Matthew 24:15-22, Jesus indicated that the tribulation commences when a prophetic “disgusting thing” makes God’s holy place desolate. Now, the Watchtower has identified the modern day “holy place” as Christendom, because Christendom claims to be Christian but is apostate and corrupt, just like Jerusalem was during the time of Christ. However, according to the next span of verses, Jesus makes it plain that false religion continues in existence for some time after the prophetic holy place is trampled underfoot. After describing the desperate times coming upon the world, at Matthew 24: 23-27 Jesus went on to say: “Then if anyone says to you, ‘Look! Here is the Christ,’ or, ‘There!’ do not believe it. For false Christs and false prophets will arise and will give great signs and wonders so as to mislead, if possible, even the chosen ones. Look! I have forewarned you. Therefore, if people say to you, ‘Look! He is in the wilderness,’ do not go out; ‘Look! He is in the inner chambers,’ do not believe it.”

“Then,” in the context of Jesus’ prophecy, means “then,” during the tribulation—after the destruction of the antitypical holy place by the disgusting thing. However, if the desolation of the holy place signifies the destruction of Christendom, as now supposed, how is it that wonder working false prophets and false messiahs are active during the tribulation at a time after false religion is supposed to have been eliminated? The Watchtower has no answer.

But it should be obvious that the Master intended to warn his faithful ones of the dangers of being misled by false religionists during the tribulation. The reason for the glaring discrepancy is because the Watchtower has wrongly interpreted the meaning of the holy place of Jesus’ prophecy to symbolize Christendom.

As a realistic hypothetical example of how false prophets and pseudo messiahs may operate in the near future, consider the following plausible scenario: In recent years Evangelicals have jumped on the Armageddon bandwagon. Countless books and web pages have been published with various endtime scenarios. But, one of the common themes among them all is that the establishment of the modern
state of Israel is a biblical sign and that soon Christ is returning and that Armageddon is literally going to be fought in the Middle East by warring nations.

One of the more influential end time oracles is Hal Lindsay. Basically, though, Evangelical end times theology is nothing more than elaborate Anglo-Zionist propaganda that has its roots in 19th Century, London-hatched British-Israelism. Nevertheless, what happens in the event of a nuclear war in the Middle East? Needless to say, even a limited nuclear strike with mini-nukes would send an instantaneous and terrible shockwave reverberating through the world. In an ensuing period of fear and hysteria, it is conceivable how the pre-positioned false prophets will have appeared to have called it right. Perhaps, through Hollywood special effects trickery, the gullible may even be induced to believe that Christ has actually appeared somewhere “in the wilderness” of the Middle East.

In view of the fact that Babylon the Great is a veritable fountainhead for a variety of phony messiahs who are all apparently waiting in the wings to exploit the credulous during the oncoming times of confusion and terror, consider one more feasible scenario: A fellow by the name of Benjamin Crème is a prominent New Age oracle loosely associated with the New World Order and U.N. He claims to be the spokesmen for the new world messiah. The invisible entity he communicates with, called Maitreya, was supposedly Christ’s master and Crème preaches that Maitreya is about to make his own personal appearance on earth. So, again, during the hysteria of a global catastrophe, “Lord Maitreya” would appear to be positioned to arrive in the “inner chambers” of the UN’s New Age sanctuary.

No wonder Jesus emphasized that even his own chosen ones might be deceived, which is why he said: “Look! I have forewarned you.” Jesus’ warning takes on even more importance in view of the fact that the Watchtower’s lack of discernment concerning these vital matters has left Jehovah’s Witnesses vulnerable to deception too!

It is noteworthy that Jesus exhorted his followers to use discernment when he spoke about the events of the tribulation. Matthew 24:15 reads: “Therefore, when you catch sight of the disgusting thing that causes desolation, as spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in a holy place, (let the reader use discernment.)”

What should be discerned from the prophecy of Daniel is that the holy place has reference to Christ’s congregation of holy ones. For example, Daniel 11:31 reads: “And there will be arms that will stand up, proceeding from him; (the king of the north) and they will actually profane the sanctuary, the fortress, and remove the constant feature. And they will certainly put in place the disgusting thing that is causing desolation.”
Daniel 12:11 also connects the placing of a disgusting thing with the removal of the constant feature. It reads: “And from the time that the constant feature has been removed and there has been a placing of the disgusting thing that is causing desolation, there will be one thousand two hundred and ninety days.”

The 8th chapter of Daniel does not mention the disgusting thing by name. Instead, the king of fierce countenance is described as crushing the sons of the kingdom and removing the constant feature and trampling on God’s holy place. But, that portion of Scripture makes key connections for the reader with discernment, in that, the enlightening angel indicates that the constant feature of our worship and the holy place are part of the same thing. Not only that, they are to be trampled on and made desolate.

Daniel 8:11-13 reads: “And all the way to the Prince of the army it put on great airs, and from him the constant feature was taken away, and the established place of his sanctuary was thrown down. And an army itself was gradually given over, together with the constant feature, because of transgression; and it kept throwing truth to the earth, and it acted and had success. And I got to hear a certain holy one speaking, and another holy one proceeded to say to the particular one who was speaking: “How long will the vision be of the constant feature and of the transgression causing desolation, to make both the holy place and the army things to trample on?”

By comparing parallel prophecies in Daniel, the reader may discern that the holy place of Christ’s prophecy that is destined to become desolate and trampled upon by a disgusting thing, is the spiritual temple of God—not Christendom. No doubt the “transgression causing desolation” is the Watchtower’s apostatizing by becoming an NGO and by Bethel’s hypocrisy in the child abuse atrocities. That is why Jesus said that the desolation of the holy place was a time of meting out justice.

Also the overlapping prophecies concerning the king of fierce countenance; the 11th horn of the beast in the 7th chapter of Daniel; the disgusting thing and the last manifestation of the king of the north, as well as the 8th king of Revelation, are all depicting different aspects of the same political entity—namely, the United Nations of the future. That being the case, when the 8th king desolates the anointed congregation of God, the symbolic harlot of Babylon will be sitting astride her beastly mount. In that way Jehovah’s Witnesses will be conquered and taken captive by Babylon the Great.