



Counting the Days to Armageddon: Jehovah's Witnesses and the Second Presence of Christ

Robert Crompton

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Counting the Days to Armageddon is work is of vital importance for all concerned with the Jehovah's Witness movement. It provides a thorough examination of their eschatological development, treating Watch Tower theology objectively but sympathetically. Crompton also speculates about the future direction of Jehovah's Witness teaching.

The book begins with a brief consideration of the biblical foundations of doctrines of the last days, particularly the books of Daniel and Revelation. There follows an outline summary of some of the main aspects of the history of this doctrine within the Protestant mainstream during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, and an outline of the Adventist teaching of William Miller (1782-1849) in the U.S.A.

During the time following the failure of Miller's expectations of the end of the world, his ideas were developed by Charles Taze Russell (1852-1916), prime mover of the Watch Tower movement. **Counting the Days to Armageddon** explores the way in which Russell amended Miller's ideas, and also the distinctive way in which he handled the Dispensational categorisation of history of John Nelson Darby (1800-1882) to create an extension of historicist speculation on the application of prophecy to the modern world.

The response of the Watch Tower movement to the failure of Russell's expectations in 1914 is explored, and the new body of doctrine which has replaced Russell's is examined. The ways in which these doctrines have been modified in the past suggest ways in which future doctrine may develop, especially in response to the protracted delay of Armageddon. What is envisaged, in the light of the history of Watch Tower doctrine, is no dramatic collapse of the movement but rather an increasing emphasis upon other, less vulnerable areas of doctrine together with a greater turnover of membership which may, in due course, undermine the movement's stability.

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