words do not come true, they should not be viewed as false prophets such as those warned against at Deuteronomy 18:20-22. In their human fallibility, they misinterpreted matters.*

Undeterred by previous failures, some seem to have been spurred on by the approach of the year 2000 and have made further predictions of the end of the world. The Wall Street Journal of December 5, 1989, published an article entitled "Millennium Fever: Prophets Proliferate, the End Is Near." With the year 2000 approaching, various evangelicals are predicting that Jesus is coming and that the 1990's will be a "time of troubles that has not been seen before." At the time of this writing, the latest occurrence was in the Republic of Korea, where the Mission for the Coming Days predicted that on October 28, 1992, at midnight, Christ would come and take believers to heaven. Several other doomsday groups made similar predictions.

The flood of false alarms is unfortunate. They are like the wolf-wolf cries of the shepherd boy — people soon dismiss them, and when the true warning comes, it too is ignored.

But why has there been such a tendency through the centuries and down to our day for false alarms to be sounded, as Jesus said they would be? (Matthew 24:23-26) Jesus, after telling his followers about different events that would mark his return, said to them, as we read at Matthew 24:36-42: "Concerning that day and hour nobody knows, neither the angels of the heavens nor the Son, but only the Father. For just as the days of Noah were, so the presence of the Son of man will be. . . . Keep on the watch, therefore, because you do not know on what day your Lord is coming."

They were told not only to be on the watch and to be prepared but also to watch with eagerness. Romans 8:19 says: "For the eager expectation of the creation is waiting for the revealing of the sons of God." Human nature is such that when we fervently hope and yearn for something and wait in eager expectation of it, a powerful temptation arises within us to see it at the door even when the evidence is insufficient. In our eagerness false alarms may be sounded.

What, then, will distinguish the true warning from the false ones? For the answer, please see the following article.

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Why Awake! is Published Awake! is for the enlightenment of the entire family. It shows how to cope with today's problems. It reports the news, tells about people in many lands, examines religion and science. But it does more. It probes beneath the surface and points to the real meaning behind current events, yet it always stays politically neutral and does not exalt one race above another. Most important, this magazine builds confidence in the Creator's promise of a peaceful and secure new world before the generation that saw the events of 1914 passes away.

Would you welcome more information? Write Watch Tower at the appropriate address on page 5. This is part of a worldwide Bible educational work that is supported by voluntary donations.

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* Jehovah's Witnesses, in their eagerness for Jesus' second coming, have suggested dates that turned out to be incorrect. Because of this, some have called them false prophets. Never in these instances, however, did they presume to originate predictions 'in the name of Jehovah.' Never did they say, 'These are the words of Jehovah.' The Watchtower, the official journal of Jehovah's Witnesses, has said: "We have not the gift of prophecy." (January 1883, page 425) "Nor would we have our writings revered or regarded as infallible." (December 15, 1896, page 306) The Watchtower has also said that the fact that some have Jehovah's spirit "does not mean those now serving as Jehovah's Witnesses are inspired. It does not mean that the writings in this magazine are inspired and infallible and without mistakes." (May 15, 1947, page 137) "The Watchtower does not claim to be inspired in its utterances, nor is it dogmatic." (August 15, 1950, page 263) "The brothers preparing these publications are not infallible. Their writings are not inspired as are those of Paul and the other Bible writers. (2 Tim. 3:16) And so, at times, it has been necessary, as understanding became clearer, to correct views." (Pro. 4:18) —February 15, 1981, page 19.

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Semimonthly Languages—Afrikaans, Arabic, Cebuano (also cassettes), Finnish, Hmong, Ilocano, Italian, Japanese, Slovak, Spanish, Swahili

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