

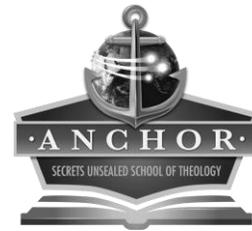
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LESSON #1 - INTRODUCTORY MATTERS

Revelation 12:17:

Explanation of the symbols:

- **Dragon:** Satan
- **Woman:** The true church
- **Remnant:** Jesus is the Seed and the remnant are His final followers
- The **Commandments** of God: The Ten Commandments
- The **testimony** of Jesus Christ: The gift of prophecy

What is the testimony of Jesus?

Revelation 12:17, KJV

*"And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the **testimony of Jesus** Christ."*

Revelation 19:10: The testimony of Jesus is the Spirit of Prophecy

*"And I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me, "See that you do not do that! I am your fellow servant, and of **your brethren** who have the testimony of Jesus. Worship God! For the **testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.**"*

Revelation 22:9: The prophets have the testimony of Jesus

*"Then he said to me, "See that you do not do that for I am your fellow servant, and of your **brethren the prophets**, and of those who keep the words of this*

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book. Worship God."

Why is the gift called the spirit of prophecy?

I Peter 1:10-12: The **Spirit of Jesus** spoke through the prophets:

*"Of this salvation **the prophets** have inquired and searched carefully, who **prophesied** of the grace that would come to you, **11** searching what, or what manner of time, the **Spirit of Christ** who was in them was indicating when He **testified beforehand** the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow. **12** To them it was revealed that, not to themselves, but to us they were ministering the things which now have been reported to you through those who have preached the gospel to you by the **Holy Spirit** sent from heaven ó things which angels desire to look into."*

Zechariah 7:12: The Holy Spirit imparted the message to the prophet

*"Yes, they made their hearts like flint, refusing to hear the law and the words which the LORD of hosts had **sent by His Spirit** through **the former prophets**. Thus great wrath came from the LORD of hosts."*

I Corinthians 12:7: The Holy Spirit imparts the gift

*"But the manifestation of **the Spirit** is given to each one for the profit of all."*

2 Peter 1:21: Prophecy came by the operation of the Holy Spirit

*" . . . knowing this first, that no **prophecy of Scripture** is of any private interpretation, **21** for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were **moved [prompted] by the Holy Spirit**."*

Why is the gift called the testimony of Jesus?

There were two lesser lights gave witness to Jesus:

John 5:39: The **Old Testament** gave witness to Jesus

*"You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which **testify of Me**."*

John 1:6-9: **John the Baptist** gave witness to Jesus

*"There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. **7** This man came for **a***

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witness [testimony], to bear witness [testify] of the Light that all through him might believe. ⁸ He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness [testify] of that Light. ⁹ That was the true Light that gives light to every man coming into the world.”

Revelation 1:1, 2:

“The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants—things which must shortly take place and He sent and signified it by His angel to His servant John, ² who bore witness [testified] to the word of God, and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, to all things that he saw.”

Revelation 22:16: The book of Revelation contains the testimony of Jesus

“I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things in the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the Bright and Morning Star.”

For whom is prophecy given?

I Corinthians 14:22: The gift is for God’s professed people

“Therefore tongues are for a sign, not to those who believe but to unbelievers; but prophesying is not for unbelievers but for those who believe.”

2 Chronicles 36:15, 16: Sent and **rejected** by his own people (for example, Jeremiah, Isaiah, Elijah, John the Baptist).

“And the LORD God of their fathers sent warnings to them by His messengers, rising up early and sending them, because He had compassion on His people and on His dwelling place. ¹⁶ But they mocked the messengers of God, despised His words, and scoffed at His prophets, until the wrath of the LORD arose against His people, till there was no remedy.”

Isaiah 30:8-11: Prophets were sent and rejected by God’s own people

“Now go, write it before them on a tablet, and note it on a scroll, that it may be for time to come, forever and ever: ⁹ That this is a rebellious people, lying children, children who will not hear the law of the LORD; ¹⁰ who say to the seers, “Do not see,” and to the prophets, “Do not prophesy to us right things; speak to us smooth things, prophecy deceits. ¹¹ Get out of the way, turn aside from the

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path, cause the Holy One of Israel to cease from before us.”

Matthew 23:29, 30: God’s own people rejected the prophets that were sent to them:

*“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! Because you build the tombs of the **prophets** and adorn the monuments of the righteous, **30** and say, ‘If we had lived in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the **prophets**.’*

Revelation 1:1, 2, 4: Father, Son and Holy Spirit were involved in the inspiration of the book of Revelation. Therefore a rejection of the message is a rejection of **all three persons** of the Godhead

*“The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants— things that must shortly take place and He sent and signified it by His angel to His servant John, **2** who bore witness to the word of God, and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, to all things that he saw. **4** John, to the seven churches which are in Asia.”*

Revelation 2:11: In prophecy the Spirit speaks **to the churches**

*“He who has an ear let him hear what the Spirit says to **the churches**”*

Why did God give the gift of prophecy to the church?

1 Corinthians 12:14, 18, 27 and 28: The apostle Paul described the church as a **body** with **many members**. Each body part has been called by God to fulfill a specific function. For example, the **right arm** is the health message and **the feet** are those who proclaim the gospel. The gift of prophecy is the **eyes of the church:**

*“For in fact the body is not one member but many. **18** But now God has set the members, each one of them, in the body just as He pleased. **19** And if they were all one member, where would the body be? **27** Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually. **28** And God has appointed these in the church: first apostles, second **prophets**, third teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, varieties of tongues. **29** Are all apostles? **Are all prophets?** Are all teachers? Are all workers of miracles?”*

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I Samuel 9:9: The eyes of the church

*"(Formerly in Israel, when a man went to inquire of God, he spoke thus: "Come, let us go to the **seer**"; for he who is now called a **prophet** was formerly called a **seer**)"*

Proverbs 29:18, KJV: Where there is no prophetic vision, the **people perish**

*"Where there is **no vision**, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he."*

Isaiah 29:10: When there is no prophecy the **people are blind**:

"For the LORD has poured out on you the spirit of deep sleep, and has closed your eyes, namely, the prophets; and He has covered your heads, namely, the seers."

Revelation 3:18: The church of **Laodicea is blind**

"I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see."

Can a Woman be a Prophet?

There were **many women** in Scripture who were prophets. Here are some:

- Huldah (2 Kings 22:14),
- Miriam the sister of Moses (Exodus 15:20),
- Deborah (Judges 4:4)
- Noadiah (Nehemiah 6:14),
- Isaiah's wife (Isaiah 8:3)
- Anna (Luke 2:36)
- The daughters of Philip (Acts 21:9)

The apostle Paul even encouraged women prophets to **speak in congregational worship**. However, the spiritual gift of 'prophet' must not be confused with the church office of elder.

Can there be prophets after John the Baptist?

The gift of prophecy did **not cease** in the apostolic church. The apostle Paul affirmed that the gift of prophecy would continue **until Jesus comes**.

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Is there such a thing as a non-canonical biblical prophet?

There were **many**:

Enoch (Jude 14, 15)
Abraham (Genesis 20:7)
Jasher (2 Samuel 1:18)
Nathan (1 Kings 1:45)
Gad (1 Samuel 22:5)
Ahijah (1 Kings 14:18)
Jehu (1 Kings 16:7)
Elijah (Malachi 4:4-6)
Elisha (1 Kings 19:16)
Shemaiah (2 Chronicles 12:5)
Iddo (2 Chronicles 13:22)
Oded (2 Chronicles 15:8)
John the Baptist (Luke 7:26)

How does consider the rejection of the prophetic gift?

2 Kings 2:23, 24

*"Then he went up from there to Bethel; and as he was going up the road, some youths came from the city and mocked him, and said to him, "Go up, you baldhead! Go up, you baldhead!" **24** So he turned around and looked at them, and pronounced a curse on them in the name of the LORD. And two female bears came out of the woods and mauled forty-two of the youths."*

Numbers 12:6-8

*"Then He said, "Hear now My words: If there is a prophet among you, I, the LORD, make Myself known to him in a vision; I speak to him in a dream. **7** Not so with My servant Moses; he is faithful in all My house. **8** I speak with him face to face, even plainly, and not in dark sayings; and he sees the form of the LORD. Why then were you not afraid to speak against My servant Moses?"*

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I Samuel 8:7

“And the LORD said to Samuel, “Heed the voice of the people in all that they say to you; for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them.”

The Purpose of the Gift

Ephesians 4:11-15: The **purpose** for the gift: Growth in unity

*“And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, **12** for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, **13** till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; **14** that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, **15** but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head ó Christ ó **16** from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.”*

“Satan is . . . constantly pressing in the spurious--to lead away from the truth. The very last deception of Satan will be to make of none effect the testimony of the Spirit of God. “Where there is no vision, the people perish” (Proverbs 29:18). Satan will work ingeniously, in different ways and through different agencies, to unsettle the confidence of God’s remnant people in the true testimony. There will be a hatred kindled against the testimonies which is satanic. The workings of Satan will be to unsettle the faith of the churches in them, for this reason: Satan cannot have so clear a track to bring in his deceptions and bind up souls in his delusions if the warnings and reproofs and counsels of the Spirit of God are heeded.” Selected Messages, volume 1, p. 48

A Final Story: **2 Chronicles 20**

20:1 A message was delivered to King Jehoshaphat: A multitude of enemies are coming against Judah (Ammon, Moab, Seir).

20:3, 4: Jehoshaphat **consulted** the Lord and proclaimed **a fast**.

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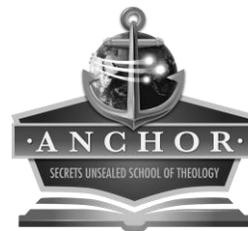
20:5-12: Jehoshaphat uttered a **long intercessory prayer** (read verse 12).

20:14-19: A prophet **instructs Judah** to face the enemy by **singing praises** to the Lord.

20:20: Jehoshaphat encouraged Israel to listen to the voice of the prophet in the following memorable words: "Hear me, O Judah and you inhabitants of Jerusalem: Believe in the LORD your God, and you shall be established; believe His prophets, and you shall prosper."

20:21-23: Although it appeared that singing was a ridiculous way fighting a battle, the people obeyed the voice of the prophet and the enemy was soundly defeated.

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LESSON #2 - THE END TIME GIFT: WHEN WHERE AND TO WHOM?

False Prophets in the End Time

Mathew 7:15: Jesus affirmed that there would be false prophets in the end time.

"Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing [look like a lamb], but inwardly they are ravenous wolves [speaks like a dragon]."

Matthew 24:24: There will be false prophets at the very end of time.

"For false christs and false prophets [Revelation 16:13] will rise and show great signs and wonders [Revelation 13:13] to deceive, if possible, even the elect."

Note: If there will be counterfeit prophets at the end of time there must also be genuine prophets. It would make no sense for Satan to counterfeit, that which does not exist.

How to Distinguish the Genuine from the Counterfeit

I Thessalonians 5:20, 21: Prophets must be tested

"Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise prophecies. Test all things; hold fast what is good."

Note: One way of testing whether an end-time prophet is genuine or counterfeit is to determine from biblical chronology when and where the end time gift of prophecy would reappear and what would characterize those who would receive it.

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The books of Daniel and Revelation provide a sequence of events that clearly delineate **where**, **when** and **to whom** the gift of prophecy would be restored in the time of the end. So let's take a look at the sequence of events that occur before the gift is restored to the end time church.

Daniel Seven's Perspective

First Three Beasts:

- **Lion**: Babylon (605-539 BC)
- **Bear**: Medo-Persia (539-331 BC)
- **Leopard**: Greece (331-168 BC)
- **Dragon**: The United **Roman Empire**: (168 BC-476 AD)

Daniel 7:23-24: The fourth beast is **Rome** and Rome has **three clear stages in Daniel 7**:

- The **dragon**: The Roman Empire as a **political entity** (168 BC – 476 AD)
- **Ten horns**: The Roman Empire **fragmented or divided** (476-538 AD)
- **Little horn**: The Roman Catholic **Papacy** (538-1798 AD)

Daniel 7:25: The **time period** and **activities** of the little horn

*"He shall speak **pompous words** against the Most High, shall **persecute the saints** the Most High, and shall intend to change **times and law**. Then the saints shall be given into his hand for a **time and times and half a time**."*

Note: Clearly in the prophecy of Daniel seven we have moved in the flow of prophetic history from Babylon to the fall of the papacy in 1798 AD.

Chronological Sequence of Revelation 12

Let's take a look now at the prophetic sequence of events in the parallel prophecy of Revelation 12:

- **31AD**: Old Testament Israel: The woman with the child in the womb represents the **Old Testament Church** that is crying out for the birth of the Messiah.
- **31 AD**: The dragon (Satan working through Rome) attempted to kill the

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man-child when He was born. This represents the time when **Jesus was born**.

- **31AD:** The Man Child **ascended** to God's throne in heaven: After Christ's ministry on earth He ascended to heaven.
- **31 AD:** The heavenly **universe celebrated** as the man-child arrived in heaven
- **538-1798 AD:** The dragon (Satan working through Rome) then focused his wrath upon **the woman** who bore the man-child and persecutes her for **1260 years**
- **1620 AD:** Toward the end of the 1260 years **the earth** (the territory that later became the nation of the United States) **helps the woman** by swallowing up the persecuting waters
- **1844 AD:** God calls a remnant who keep the Commandments of God and possess the testimony of Jesus and Satan launches a final persecution against them

Let's **review** the key chronological points in Revelation 12 beginning with the Old Testament period:

Revelation 12:1-5: The period of the **fourth beast** with the **ten horns**:

*"Now a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a garland of twelve stars. 2 Then **being with child**, she cried out in labor and in pain to give birth [**the Old Testament Church crying out for deliverance**]. 3 And another sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great, **fiery red dragon** having seven heads and **ten horns**, and seven diadems on his heads [**Satan working through Rome**]. 4 His tail drew a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was ready to give birth, to devour her Child as soon as it was born. 5 She **bore a male Child** [**the birth of Jesus**] who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron. And her Child **was caught up to God and His throne** [**the ascension of Jesus**].*

Revelation 12:6, 13-15: Papal Rome: Time, times and half a time

"Then the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God

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that they should feed her there **one thousand two hundred and sixty days [538-1798]**. 13 Now when the dragon saw that he had been cast to the earth, he **persecuted the woman** who gave birth to the male Child. 14 But the woman was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness to her place, where she is nourished for **a time and times and half a time [538-1798]**, from the presence of the serpent. 15 So the serpent spewed water out of his mouth like a flood after the woman that he might cause her to be carried away by the flood.”

Revelation 12:16: The **earth dries up the waters** of persecution toward the end of the 1260 years. The **territory of the United States** provided a refuge for those who were being persecuted in the Old World. Persecution ceases for a season.

“But the **earth helped** the woman, and **the earth opened its mouth** and swallowed up the flood which the dragon had spewed out of his mouth [**the territory of the United States helps the woman**].”

Explanatory Note: Revelation 12:13-15 provides a description of the persecution of the woman by the dragon for 1260 years. Then in **verse 16** the earth helps the woman by swallowing up the waters of persecution. The earth helps the woman slightly **before** the 1260 years come to an end (and continues helping her for a period after the 1260 years come to an end). This is made clear by the sequence of events as they appear in **The Great Controversy**:

1. In **The Great Controversy**, p. 265 Ellen White begins the chapter on the **French Revolution** (“The Bible and the French Revolution”). The French Revolution began in 1789 and ended in 1798 when Pope Pius VI was taken prisoner. Thus this chapter describes the climax of the 1260-year prophecy.
2. In the very next chapter (p. 289: “The Pilgrim Fathers”) Ellen White **goes back** in time and describes how the **territory of the United States** provided refuge for those who were persecuted in Europe.
3. This is very similar to the order of Revelation 12:13-16. In **verses 13-15** the woman is persecuted for 1260 years and then in **verse 16** the prophecy goes back in time to describe how the earth helped the woman.

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Revelation 12:17: The final stage is when the **dragon** is filled with rage against the woman and unleashes a final desperate persecution to try and wipe out the Remnant of the woman's Seed. The woman's Seed has already been identified as **Christ** so the Remnant of the Seed is the **Remnant of Jesus**.

*"And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the **remnant of her Seed**, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ."*

From Revelation 12 we have four identifying marks of this final remnant:

- It will arise in the territory that is described as 'the earth'
- It will arise after the year 1798 AD
- It will keep the commandments of God
- It will possess the testimony of Jesus

The Commandments of God

What is the meaning of the expression 'keep the commandments of God'? Does this refer specifically to the **Ten Commandments**?

Matthew 19:17-22: The **rich young ruler**

*"So He said to him: "Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God. But if you want to enter into life, **keep the commandments**." He said to Him, "**Which ones**?" Jesus said, "'You shall not murder,' 'You shall not commit adultery,' 'You shall not steal,' 'You shall not bear false witness,' 'Honor your father and your mother,' and: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'" The young man said to Him, "All these things **I have kept from my youth**. What do I still lack?" Jesus said to him, "If you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me." But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions."*

Luke 23:56: The **women** who came to the tomb rested on the **Sabbath** (the fourth) according to **the commandment**:

*"Then they returned and prepared spices and fragrant oils. And they rested on the Sabbath **according to the commandment**."*

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Mark 7:9, 10: The expression “**commandment of God**” is used to refer to the **fifth commandment** of God’s law. Instead of keeping the commandments of God, the Pharisees ‘keep’ their tradition:

*“He said to them, “All too well you reject the **commandment of God**, that you may **keep** your tradition. 10 For Moses said, ‘Honor your father and your mother’; and, ‘He who curses father or mother, let him be put to death.’”*

Romans 7:7-12: The word ‘commandment’ is a reference to the **tenth commandment**:

*“What shall we say then? Is the **law** sin? Certainly not! On the contrary, I would not have known **sin** except through the **law**. For I would not have known covetousness unless the **law** had said, “You shall not covet.” But sin, taking opportunity by the **commandment**, produced in me all manner of evil desire. For apart from the **law** **sin** was dead. I was alive once without the **law**, but when the **commandment** came, **sin** revived and I died. And the **commandment**, which was to bring life, I found to bring death. For **sin**, taking occasion by the **commandment**, deceived me, and by it killed me. Therefore the **law** is holy, and the **commandment** holy and just and good.”*

I Corinthians 7:19: Paul wrote that we must “**keep** the **commandments** of God”

*“Circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing, but **keeping the commandments of God** is what matters.”*

“Law” and “Commandments” Interchangeable

Exodus 16:28: In the **Manna episode** the words ‘commandments’ and ‘laws’ are used together:

*“And the Lord said to Moses, “How long do you refuse to keep My **commandments** and My **laws**?””*

Exodus 24:12: God gave Moses the law and the commandments that **He had written**. This cannot refer to the **ceremonial commandments** because God did not write them:

*“Then the Lord said to Moses: “Come up to Me on the mountain and be there; and I will give you **tablets of stone**, and the **law** and **commandments** which **I have***

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written, that you may teach them."

The book of Deuteronomy informs us that God wrote the **Ten Commandments on tables of stone** but we are also told that God gave Israel a **fiery law**. Clearly the words 'commandments' and 'law' are interchangeable:

Deuteronomy 4:13: God wrote the **commandments**

*"So He declared to you His covenant which He commanded you to perform, the **Ten Commandments**; and **He wrote them** on two tablets of stone."*

Deuteronomy 33:2: God wrote the **Law**

*"The Lord came from Sinai and dawned on them from Seir; He shone forth from Mount Paran and He came with ten thousands of saints; from **His right hand** came a **fiery law** for them."*

Romans 7:7-12: The **apostle Paul** uses the words 'commandment' and 'law' interchangeably:

*"What shall we say then? Is the **law** sin? Certainly not! On the contrary, I would not have known sin except through the **law**. For I would not have known covetousness unless the **law** had said, "You shall not covet." But sin, taking opportunity by the **commandment**, produced in me all manner of evil desire. For apart from the **law** sin was dead. I was alive once without the **law**, but when the **commandment** came, sin revived and I died. And the **commandment**, which was to bring life, I found to bring death. For sin, taking occasion by the **commandment**, deceived me, and by it killed me. Therefore the **law** is holy, and the **commandment** holy and just and good."*

Romans 13:8-10: Once again Paul uses the words 'law' and 'commandments' interchangeably:

*"Owe no one anything except to love one another, for he who loves another has fulfilled the **law**. **For the commandments**, "You shall not commit adultery," "You shall not murder," "You shall not steal," "You shall not bear false witness," "You shall not covet," and if there is any other **commandment**, are all summed up in this saying, namely, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." Love does no harm to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfillment of the **law**."*

James 2:10-12: James uses the word 'law' to refer to two of the Ten Commandments:

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*“For whoever shall keep the whole **law**, and yet stumble in **one point**, he is guilty of **all**. For He who said, “Do not commit adultery,” also said, “Do not murder.” Now if you do not commit adultery, but you do murder, you have become a **transgressor of the law**. So speak and so do as those who will be judged by the **law** of liberty.”*

Mark 7:9, 10: Jesus used the expression ‘the commandments of God’ to refer to the fifth commandment:

*“He said to them, “All too well you reject the **commandment of God**, that you may keep your tradition. For Moses said, ‘**Honor your father and your mother**’; and, ‘He who curses father or mother, let him be put to death.’”*

I John 5:2, 3

*“By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep His **commandments**. 3 For this is the love of God, that we keep His **commandments**. And His **commandments** are not burdensome.”*

What is the Testimony of Jesus?

A comparison of three texts in the book of Revelation clearly proves that the testimony of Jesus is the gift of prophecy:

Revelation 12:17, KJV

*“And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the **testimony of Jesus** Christ.”*

Revelation 19:10: The testimony of Jesus is the **spirit of prophecy**

*“And I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me: “See that you do not do that! I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren who have the testimony of Jesus. Worship God! For the testimony of Jesus is **the spirit of prophecy**.”*

Revelation 22:8, 9: The **prophets** have the testimony of Jesus

*“Now I, John, saw and heard these things. And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel who showed me these things. 9 Then he said to me: “See that you do not do that for I am your fellow servant and of your **brethren the prophets** and of those who keep the words of this book. Worship God.”*

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The Backdrop of the Little Horn

In Daniel 7:25 we find that the little horn would think to change **two things**: The times and the law. The change in the times was the implementation of a counterfeit method of interpreting prophecy and the change in the Law was the change of the Sabbath. In order to counteract this double change that was made by the little horn during the 1260 years, God called Ellen White.

The historical sequence of Revelation 12 clearly reveals that God called Ellen White right on schedule! God restored the gift of prophecy in order to correct the change that the papacy attempted to make in God's times and in His Law. Ellen White was not only called to repair the breach that the papacy made in God's Law but also to clearly explain how end time events, or the times, would transpire.

There is something far deeper in the end time conflict than Sabbath versus Sunday. At the center of the end-time controversy are **two rival systems** of prophetic interpretation. One system denies that the papacy changed the Law and the other affirms it. One system turns everyone's eyes to the Middle East for the fulfillment of prophecy while the other points to Rome and the United States.

You see, Protestantism has not only embraced the **wrong day** of worship from the Papacy but it has also borrowed the **wrong way** of interpreting prophecy as well. In this way, Protestantism has made a prophetic image of the beast and has become the spokesperson for her mother from whom she received the change in the times and in the Law.

The change that the little horn made in the times and in the Law is intimately related. When the Papacy succeeded in getting Protestants to abandon the historical method of interpreting prophecy, it also succeeded in hiding the Roman Catholic system as the Antichrist. And because Protestants no longer saw the Papacy as the predicted Antichrist, they could not discern the role of the Papacy in the change of the Sabbath. Simply put, if the little horn does not symbolize the Papacy, then the Papacy did not change the Sabbath commandment. The change in the times, then, hides the culprit who changed the Law!!

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No wonder that Protestants are blind to the central issues in the final conflict! No wonder they are oblivious to the fact that the final controversy will be between Sabbath observance as a sign of loyalty to God's authority and Sunday observance as the sign of loyalty to the Papacy's authority!! It should not surprise us that Protestants are looking to the Middle East for the fulfillment of Bible prophecy when prophecy is fulfilling right before their eyes in the west! The Great Controversy not only restores the Sabbath to its proper position but also clearly points out the power that changed it.

Let's summarize the relationship between Daniel 7:25 and Revelation 12:17:

The little horn system during the 1260 years attempted to change:

1. The times
2. The Law

God counteracted these two changes at the end of the 1260 years by raising up a people who:

1. Have the testimony of Jesus
2. Keep the Commandments of God

The Role of Seventh-day Adventists

The Seventh-day Adventist Church stands alone in the world as the bulwark of the historicist method. This is the only church in the world that can detect and unveil the Antichrist of Scripture along with all its allies because this church alone has preserved the proper prophetic hermeneutic. Those in the Seventh-day Adventist Church who are tampering with the historicist method and attempting to change God's times would do well to remove the shoes from their feet and bow before the One who knows the end from the beginning!

Satan knows that in order to destroy the **message and mission** of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, he must first destroy its **method**. The claim of the Seventh-day Adventist Church to be the Remnant is based on the historical method of interpreting Bible Prophecy. We have employed the historical method to identify the papacy as the Antichrist, but this is only the tip of the iceberg. The historicist method has also been used to prove that the Remnant Church would arise shortly after 1798 with a prophet in its midst (Revelation

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12:17). Our explanation of the Messianic prophecy of the seventy weeks, the prophecy of the 2300 days, the bittersweet book of Revelation 10, the churches, the seals, the trumpets, the beasts, the three angels' message, the role of the United States in prophecy, etc., is based on the governing principle of the historical method. Frank B. Holbrook stated it well in 1983:

“The real distinctive frame holding together the picture of truth as perceived by Seventh-day Adventists is their understanding of the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation. In these apocalyptic prophecies Adventists have found their times, their identity, and their task.”

Satan's success against the Seventh-day Adventist Church can be far greater if he zeroes in on the **method** of Adventism rather than only on its **message**. You see, when the method is destroyed, the message goes with it!! The method of the Protestant Reformers became the catalyst for their message. In fact, if it had not been for the method, there would have been no message and so it is with the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church today finds itself at a hermeneutical crossroads. Some theologians within the church are even now questioning the soundness of the historical hermeneutical methodology. Some are offering **Preterist** interpretations of prophecy and others are proposing **Futurist** interpretations of passages that the Seventh-day Adventist Church has traditionally understood in a historical manner. Others are making **dual applications** of prophecies that clearly have only one fulfillment. Is it any wonder that some of these same theologians in our church are committed to political correctness when it comes to preaching about the little horn, the sea beast and the earth beast with lamblike horns? Is it any surprise that some of the scholars within God's remnant church are even encouraging the Seventh-day Adventist Church to build bridges of understanding with Rome?

Satan's Counterattack

The book of Revelation informs us that Satan is not going to stay with his arms crossed while God's Remnant Church restores the prophetic times and the Law. Revelation 13:11-18 describes a future period when Protestants in the United States will do **two things** continuing what the Papacy did during the 1260 years:

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First, they will enforce the mark of the beast (the change in the Law) eventually on pain of death. This will be the future enforcement of the Papacy's change in the Law. Second, they will become the beast's false prophet by teaching the Papacy's counterfeit prophetic scenario, that is, the change in the times.

For most conservative Protestants today the United States is the 'good guy' and Islam is the deadly enemy. After 9/11 all eyes have turned to the terrorists in the Middle East. The government, the media and even many Evangelical churches see militant Islam as the deadly enemy of the west. Many right wing talk show hosts consider any criticism of the policies of the United States as unpatriotic and unchristian. What an overwhelming surprise it will be when they finally discover that the United States, by joining hands with the Papacy, will commit national apostasy that will lead to national ruin. What a shock it will be when they realize that prophecy was being fulfilled right before their eyes in Rome and in the United States while they were looking for the enemy in the Middle East!

Satan is a master at smokescreens and diversions. He does not want the world to know the true issues in the final conflict and therefore he has changed the meaning of Bible prophecy to hide who changed the Law. He has deceived the religious world into thinking that the Antichrist will be a nasty individual who will arise and sit in a rebuilt Jerusalem temple for three and a half literal years after the church has been snatched away to heaven.

What importance do futurist preachers give to the book of Revelation? On the surface it might appear that they are very much interested in it because they talk and write about it all the time. But let's take a closer look at their view of the book of Revelation.

According to most, if not all, futurists when John was told by a voice from heaven to 'come up hither' (Revelation 4:1) this was a reference to the rapture of the church. Futurists believe that the rest of the book of Revelation from that point on will be fulfilled with the literal Jews in the Middle East after the Church is gone from planet earth!

Think about the implications of this. Seventh-day Adventists have traditionally believed that the origin and destiny of our movement is clearly portrayed in the little book episode of Revelation 10. We also believe that our divinely appointed origin is portrayed in Revelation 12:17 and that our distinctive message and

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mission to the world is found in Revelation 14:6-12. But if Revelation 4-22 applies only to the literal Jews during the future tribulation after the church is in heaven, then our divine origin, message and mission are gone. We have no reason to exist!

Furthermore, according to the futurist scenario the enemies of God's people will not even come on the scene until after the rapture so why worry about them now. If we are going to be gone, why even bother to speak about the beast, his image and his mark? Why bother to call people out of Babylon? Focusing on literal Israel in the future in the Middle East hides the true identity of the beast and the false prophet. People will be looking for these powers at the wrong time and in the wrong place! And so the Papacy and the United States will be fulfilling prophecy right before peoples' eyes and they will not be able to see it because they will be looking in the wrong place at the wrong time for the wrong Antichrist!

The very message, mission and identity of the Seventh-day Adventist Church depend on our method of interpreting Revelation. If the fulfillment of Revelation 10 is yet future like some in our own church are suggesting, then it has nothing to do with the origin and mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. If the fulfillment of Revelation 12:17 is still in the future then it has nothing to do with the origin and identification of the Remnant church that arose shortly after 1844! I firmly believe that God called Ellen White set the record straight when it comes to end time events.

Ellen White once warned one of our schoolteachers about the dangers of his futurist and Preterist views concerning the prophecies that have made us what we are as a people:

*"We have a sleepless adversary, and he is constantly at work upon human minds that have not had a personal experience in the teachings of the people of God for the past fifty years. Some will take the truth applicable to their time, and **place it in the future**. Events in the **train** of prophecy that had their fulfillment away **in the past are made future**, and thus by these theories the faith of some is undermined."*

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The Historical Sequence of Revelation 13

Revelation 13 also helps us understand the time when God would restore the gift of prophecy to the church. In fact, Revelation 13 follows the **same basic historical sequence** as Daniel 7 and Revelation 12. Notice the sequence of Revelation 13:

Revelation 13:2: The first three beasts link Revelation 13 with Daniel 7. These first three beasts represent three Old Testament powers—Babylon, Medo-Persia and Greece:

*“Now the beast which I saw was like a **leopard**, his feet were like the feet of a **bear**, and his mouth like the mouth of a **lion**.”*

Revelation 12:3: The **dragon** with **ten horns**: The **Roman Empire** and **divided Rome**

*“And another sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great, fiery **red dragon** having seven heads and **ten horns**, and seven diadems on his heads.”*

Revelation 13:2: The ten-horned dragon (Imperial and Divided Rome) gives its power, its authority and its throne to the beast. Dominion is now transferred from Imperial Rome to Papal Rome:

*“Now the beast which I saw was like a leopard, his feet were like the feet of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. **The dragon [which in Revelation 12:3 had ten horns]** gave him **[the composite beast]** his power, his throne, and great authority.”*

Revelation 13:5, 7: After receiving the throne from Imperial Rome, the papacy speaks blasphemies, persecutes the saints and rules for 42 months:

*“And he was given a mouth speaking great things and **blasphemies**, and he was given authority to continue for **forty-two months** . . . It was granted to him to make **war with the saints** and to overcome them. And authority was given him over every tribe, tongue, and nation.”*

Revelation 13:10: At the conclusion of the 42 months the papacy received a deadly wound:

“He who leads into captivity shall go into captivity; he who kills with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.”

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Revelation 13:14: The wound was given to the papacy with **the sword**:

*“And he deceives those who dwell on the earth by those signs which he was granted to do in the sight of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast who **was wounded by the sword** and lived.”*

Romans 13:1-4: The sword that wounded the beast was the **civil power of France**:

*“Let every soul be subject to the **governing authorities**. For there is no authority except from God, and God appoints the **authorities** that exist. 2 Therefore whoever resists the **authority** resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves. 3 For **rulers** are not a terror to good works, but to evil. Do you want to be unafraid of the **authority**? Do what is good, and you will have praise from the same. 4 For he is God's minister to you for good. But if you do evil, be afraid; for he does not bear **the sword in vain**; for he is God's minister, an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil.”*

Revelation 13:11: At the time that the papacy received its deadly wound another beast arose from the earth. The **earth** represents the **territory** of the United States that provided refuge to the persecuted ones in the Old World (Revelation 12:16) and the **beast** from the earth represents the **nation** that arose in that territory (Revelation 13:11).

There is a link between **Revelation 12:16** and **Revelation 13:11**:

Revelation 12:16: The **earth** helps the woman and then the **dragon** is then enraged with the remnant of the woman's Seed

Revelation 13:11: A beast rises from the **earth** with two horns like a lamb and ends up speaking like a **dragon**

“Then I saw another beast coming up out of the earth, and he had two horns like a lamb and spoke like a dragon.”

Revelation 13:12-18: Everything that this earth-beast does has the purpose of pleasing the first beast and restoring the power it lost in 1798:

- It speaks like the **dragon**
- It exercises all the **authority** of the first beast
- It commands all to **worship** the first beast

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- It makes an **image** of and to the first beast and commands all to worship it
- It imposes by force the **mark** of the first beast
- Everything it does is **in the presence** of the beast in its behalf

The first beast changed the times and the Law so this second beast must mirror these two characteristics.

Revelation 13:13; 16:13: Notably, the beast from the earth is called the **false prophet**. We are told that this false prophet will perform **signs and wonders**, even bringing fire down from heaven in the sight of men:

*"He performs **great signs**, so that he even makes fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men."*

*"And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs coming out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the **false prophet**."*

Characteristics of False Prophets

False prophets in Scripture bear **two salient characteristics**: They lead God's people astray from **God's commandments** and they change what **God says will occur**:

Deuteronomy 13:1-5: How to detect a false prophet in ancient Israel

*"If there arises among you a **prophet** or a dreamer of **dreams**, and he gives you a **sign or a wonder**, 2 and the **sign** or the **wonder** comes to pass, of which he spoke to you, saying, 'Let us go after other gods'—which you have not known—'and let us serve them,' 3 you shall not listen to the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams, for the Lord your God is testing you to know whether you **love the Lord your God** with all your heart and with all your soul. 4 You shall walk after the Lord your God and fear Him, and **keep His commandments** and **obey** His voice; you shall serve Him and hold fast to Him. 5 But that prophet or that dreamer of dreams shall be **put to death**, because he has spoken in order to **turn you away** from the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt and redeemed you from the house of bondage, to entice you from the way in which the Lord your God commanded you to walk. So you shall put away the evil from your midst."*

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Jeremiah 26:4-6: The law and the gift of prophecy are linked together

*"And you shall say to them, 'Thus says the Lord: "If you will not listen to Me, to **walk in My law** which I have set before you, 5 to heed the words of **My servants the prophets** whom I sent to you, both rising up early and sending them (but you have not heeded), 6 then I will make this house like Shiloh, and will make this city a curse to all the nations of the earth.'"*

Isaiah 8:20: The way to detect a counterfeit is by the **law** and the **testimony**.

*"To the **law** and to the **testimony!** If they do not speak according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."*

I Corinthians 14:32: The prophets must be subject to the prophets

"And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets."

Matthew 7:15, 21-23: False prophets are detected by their attitude toward the law of God

*"Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing [**look like a lamb**], but **inwardly** they are ravenous wolves [**speak like a dragon**]. "Not everyone who says to Me: 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does **the will of My Father** in heaven. 22 Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not **prophesied** in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' 23 And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who **practice lawlessness!** [**The same word that is used in I John 3:4 and is translated 'transgression of the law'**]"*

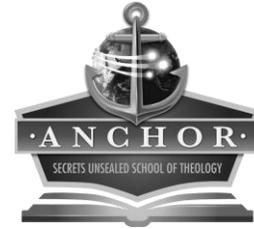
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by Pastor Stephen Bohr

LESSON #3 - PROPHETS AND TIME PROPHECIES

Introduction

The apostle Paul compares the **church to a body**. The **body is one** but it is composed of many members and each member of the body was created to fulfill a **different function**. In the same way the church should be in unity but each member has been called to fulfill a different function for the good of the body. For example, **the feet** represent the act of preaching the gospel of peace. **The mouth** represents the act of teaching. **The hands** that touch represent the kindness and caring of the church for others.

What do **the eyes** of the body represent? We catch a glimpse of their meaning in two Old Testament texts:

1 Samuel 9:9

*“(Formerly in Israel, when a man went to inquire of God, he spoke thus: “Come, let us go to the **seer**”; for he who is now called a prophet was formerly called a **seer**.)”*

Isaiah 29:10:

*“For the LORD has poured out on you the spirit of deep sleep, and has **closed your eyes, namely, the prophets**; and He has covered your heads, namely, the **seers**.”*

For this reason we are told that *“where there is no vision the people perish”* (**Proverbs 29:18**).

Is it just possible that the blindness of the **Laodicean Church** is due to her rejection of the prophetic voice that God has given in the person of Ellen G. White?

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Certainly God has given a precious message to the Seventh-day Adventist Church through the ministry of Ellen G. White. But how can we be certain that she was called of God to be the eyes of the Remnant Church? In this study we will pursue only one avenue that will help us see that she was raised up at just the **right time** with the **right message** for the **right people!**

God's *Modus Operandi*

In this study we are going to analyze several **time prophecies** of the Bible. All of these time prophecies are found in the **Old Testament**. The **first three** point to events that transpired in Old Testament times. The **last two** point to events that occurred in New Testament times. In each of these time prophecies we will find that there is a **common modus operandi** that God uses to convey the reliability of His message. His method of operation is as follows:

- God calls a **prophet**
- God imparts a **message** to that prophet
- The message is one of **judgment**
- Linked with the message is as **time prophecy**
- The message is **not present truth** for that time

When the time period is about to (or has) **come to an end**, God operates in the following fashion:

- He calls **another prophet**
- He imparts the **same message** to this prophet as he gave to the first one
- The message is one of **judgment**
- The message explains that the **time prophecy** is coming (or has come) to an end
- The message given to the original prophet becomes **Present Truth**
- A **remnant** is always drawn out and guided by the mission of this prophet

No Measly Events

We will find that these time prophecies do not point to **insignificant events** in salvation history. We will find that they relate to the **great markers** of salvation history:

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- The calling of the **first prophet**
- The **global flood** in the day of Noah
- The **call of Abraham**
- The **Exodus** of Israel from Egypt
- The **Babylonian captivity** and Israel's **restoration** to her land
- The **baptism** and **death** of the Messiah and the **close of probation** for the Jewish theocracy
- The beginning of the **final judgment**

Enoch and Noah

The first prophet that who is explicitly mentioned in the Bible was Enoch. We are told in **Jude 14, 15**:

*"Now Enoch, the seventh from Adam, **prophesied** about these men also, saying, "Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of His saints, to **execute judgment** on all, **to convict** all who are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have committed in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him."*

Notice that Enoch was the **first prophet** and he was given a message of **judgment**. The question is: To **what event** did this message of judgment apply? The answer is two-fold. In **Matthew 24:37-39** Jesus compared two great events—the flood and His coming:

*"But as the **days of Noah** were, so also will the **coming of the Son of Man** be. 38 For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, 39 and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, **so also will** the coming of the Son of Man be."*

The first event that Enoch's message was pointing to was the wickedness of the world before the flood. Concerning this we are told in **Genesis 6:5, 11-13**:

*"Then the LORD saw that the **wickedness** of man was **great** in the earth, and that **every intent** of the thoughts of his heart was only **evil continually**. The earth also was **corrupt** before God, and the earth was filled with **violence**. So God looked upon the earth, and indeed it was **corrupt**; for all flesh had **corrupted** their way on the earth. And **God said to Noah**, "The end of all flesh has come*

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*before Me, for the earth is filled with **violence** through them; and behold, I will destroy them with the earth."*

So Enoch was describing Christ's coming to destroy the world for its wickedness at the second coming but he was also describing the destruction of the world for its wickedness **by the flood in the days of Noah**. Neither of these events took place during the time of Enoch so this message was **not Present Truth** for his generation.

Now, where is the **time prophecy** that pointed to the destruction of the world by a flood? In order to answer this question we must look **beneath the surface** of Scripture—we must appeal to the significance of names. More than **75 times** in the book of Genesis the **significance of names** is underlined. So let's take a look at the name of Enoch's son. What is the meaning of the name of Enoch's son? The book of Genesis informs us that Enoch had a son called Methuselah:

*"Enoch lived sixty-five years, and begot **Methuselah**." (Genesis 5:21)*

This name is a compound of two Hebrew words: **muwth** (Strong's # 4191) and **shalach** (Strong's # 7971). The word *muwth* has the meaning "**to die**" and the word *shalach* means, "**to send**". Thus the meaning of the name Methuselah is, "**when he dies it will be sent**." The question begs to be asked: When he dies, **what** will be sent? The answer is: The flood.

Jewish tradition affirms that Methuselah died just **ten days** before the flood. We cannot prove from the Bible that Methuselah died just ten days before the flood but we can confirm that he died the **very year of the flood**.

Let's do a little bit of math. From the time that Methuselah was born till the time that his son Lamech was born **187 years** passed (Genesis 5:22). Then from the time that Lamech was born until his son Noah was born, **182 years** transpired (Genesis 5:28). And Noah was **600 years** old when the flood came (Genesis 7:11). Now let's add up the figures:

$$187 + 182 + 600 = 969$$

So, from the time that Methuselah was born till the flood came a period of **969 years** transpired. And how old was Methuselah when he died? The answer is in **Genesis 5:27**—he was 969!

*"So all the days of Methuselah were **nine hundred and sixty-nine years**; and **he***

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died." (Genesis 5:27)

Unequivocally, Methuselah died the **very year of the flood**. Thus his name was a **time prophecy**—it announced the very year the world would be destroyed by the flood!

In summary: God called His **prophet**, Enoch, and gave him a message of **judgment**. Connected with the message of judgment was a **time prophecy** but the message was **not present truth** for Enoch's generation.

Significantly, when the time prophecy was **about to reach its end**, God called **another prophet** to make the message of Enoch **Present Truth**. Of course we know that the name of that prophet was **Noah**. Notice what we are told about Noah in **II Peter 2:5** and **Hebrews 11:7**:

*" . . . and did not spare the ancient world, but saved Noah, one of eight people, a **preacher of righteousness**, bringing in the flood on the world of the **ungodly** . . ."*

*"By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household, by which he **condemned the world** and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith."*

Interestingly, the word 'strive' in Genesis 6:3 is most frequently translated 'judge' in the rest of the Old Testament. Thus Noah's message was one of judgment!

Was Noah a **prophet**? Yes. Was the message of Noah a message of **judgment**? Yes. Did the message of Noah culminate when the **time prophecy** came to an end? Yes. Did Noah make Enoch's message **Present Truth** for the ungodly of his generation? Again, yes! And was a **remnant saved** as a result of the message of Noah? Yes, he and his family were saved from the destruction.

Abraham and Moses

In **Genesis 20:7** we are told that when Abraham went to the city of **Gerar** and fearing for his life, he convinced his wife to tell king **Abimelech** the half truth that she was his sister. That very evening, God gave Abimelech a dream where He revealed to him the complete truth. God explained that Sarah was also Abraham's wife and that Abraham was **a prophet** and commanded him to return Sarah to her husband:

*"Now therefore, restore the man's wife; for **he is a prophet**, and he will pray for*

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you and you shall live. But if you do not restore her, know that you shall surely die, you and all who are yours."

The question is: Did God give Abraham a message of **judgment** linked with a **time prophecy**? The answer is yes. In **Genesis 15:13, 14** we find the prophecy about the sojourn of the children of Israel in Egypt for 400 years:

*"Then He said to Abram: "Know certainly that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, and will serve them, and they will afflict them **four hundred years**. And also the nation whom they serve **I will judge**; afterward they shall come out with great possessions."*

This prophecy was **not Present Truth** for the days of Abraham because the patriarch was promised in **Genesis 15:15, 16**:

*"Now as for you, you shall go to your fathers **in peace**; you shall be buried at a **good old age**. But in the **fourth generation** they shall return here, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete."*

In summary: God called His **prophet**, Abraham, and gave him a **message of judgment**. Linked with the message of judgment was a **time prophecy** but the message was **not present truth** for his generation.

When the 400 years were about to end, God raised up **another prophet** who spoke to the **same issue** as Abraham did. In fact, we are told that on the very day that the **time prophecy** came to an end, God delivered His people from bondage to the Egyptians.

*"Now the sojourn of the children of Israel who lived in Egypt was **four hundred and thirty** years. And it came to pass at the end of the four hundred and thirty years--**on that very same day**--it came to pass that all the armies of the LORD went out from the land of Egypt." (Exodus 12:40, 41)*

Thus the message of Abraham became **Present Truth** in the generation of Moses. In **Hosea 12:13** Moses is specifically called **a prophet**:

*"**By a prophet** the LORD brought Israel out of Egypt, and by a prophet he was preserved."*

Did God use Moses to save and **lead a remnant** out of bondage? The answer again is yes—the children of Israel.

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Jeremiah and Daniel

In **Jeremiah 1:5** we are told that Jeremiah was called to be **a prophet** while he was still in the womb. Was Jeremiah given a specific **time prophecy** along with a message of **judgment**? Yes indeed! The time prophecy is found in **Jeremiah 25:11, 12**:

*“And this whole land shall be a desolation and an astonishment, and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon **seventy years**. ‘Then it will come to pass, when **seventy years are completed**, that I will **punish** the king of Babylon and that nation, the land of the Chaldeans, for their iniquity,’ says the LORD; ‘and I will make it a perpetual desolation.”*

Here Jeremiah was told that the captivity of Judah in Babylon would last a period of seventy years after God would intervene to deliver Judah and take her back to the land of Israel. This message was **not Present Truth** for the days of Jeremiah for he died before the captivity began and ended.

But **near the conclusion** of the seventy years God called **another prophet** to make the message of Jeremiah **Present Truth**, and that prophet was Daniel. God had just **judged Babylon** the year before as he had promised and now Daniel wondered whether **God’s people would go back** to their land as promised. Notice **Daniel 9:1, 2**:

*“In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the lineage of the Medes, who was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans—in the first year of his reign I, Daniel, understood **by the books** the number of the years specified by the word of the LORD through **Jeremiah the prophet**, that He would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem. “*

Notably, Daniel was studying **the very prophecy** that God had given Jeremiah. When Cyrus entered Babylon on the night of its fall, Daniel showed **Cyrus** the prophecies of Isaiah concerning himself (Isaiah 45:1), and then Cyrus gave the decree **exactly seventy years** after the captivity began (see Ezra 1:1-4). Thus Daniel made the prophecy of Jeremiah **Present Truth** and under the leadership of Daniel **God’s remnant people** were able to go back to their land to rebuild the temple and eventually the walls and the city.

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Daniel and John the Baptist

God gave Daniel the time prophecy of the **seventy weeks**. This prophecy contemplated **three great events** that would transpire during the final seven years: The **anointing** of Messiah, **His death** and the **close of probation** for the nation that rejected him. Here is the prophecy:

*"**Seventy weeks** are determined for your people and for your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sins, to make reconciliation for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy. "Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the command to restore and build Jerusalem Until **Messiah the Prince**, there shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublesome times. "And after the sixty-two weeks **Messiah shall be cut off**, but not for Himself; and the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end of it shall be with a flood, and till the end of the war desolations are determined. Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; but in the **middle of the week He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering**. And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate, even until the consummation, which is determined, is **poured out on the desolate**."*

Notably, at the very beginning of the last seven years, **John the Baptist** made the message of Daniel **Present Truth** by addressing the exact same issues. First of all, John the **Baptist baptized** and introduced Jesus. It was at his baptism that Jesus was anointed as the Messiah:

Shortly after His baptism when He began the Spirit of the Lord anointed Him (Luke 4:16). In the same manner Peter affirmed on the Day of Pentecost that God anointed Jesus with the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38) and it was at His baptism that the Holy Spirit fell upon Jesus (Matthew 3:16)

Matthew 3:15, 16, 17

"Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him . . . When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him. 17 And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

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John also announced that Jesus was the **Lamb of God**. It was universally known among the Jews that lambs were slain in the sacrificial service of the Temple

John 1:29, 36

*"The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The **Lamb of God** who takes away the sin of the world . . . Again, the next day, John stood with two of his disciples. 36 And looking at Jesus as He walked, he said, "Behold the **Lamb of God!**"*

But John also announced the **third event**—the **judgment** that would fall upon the Jewish nation **if they rejected** the Messiah.

Matthew 3:7-12:

*"But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, "Brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the **wrath to come?** Therefore **bear fruits** worthy of repentance, and do not think to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' For I say to you that God is able to raise up **children to Abraham from these stones**. And even now the ax is laid to the **root of the trees**. Therefore every **tree** that does not bear good fruit is **cut down** and **thrown into the fire**. I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His **winnowing fan** is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather His **wheat** into the barn; but He will burn up the **chaff** with unquenchable fire."*

In this passage, John the Baptist compares the Jewish nation to a tree and he affirmed that if the tree did not produce fruit it would be cut down and thrown into the fire. This was a **message of judgment**.

It is worthy of note that **three years after** John the Baptist began preaching (and two and a half years after Jesus began His ministry), Jesus told the parable of a tree.

Luke 13:6-9:

*"He also spoke this parable: "A certain man had a **fig tree** planted in his vineyard, and he came **seeking fruit** on it and found none. 7 Then he said to the keeper of his vineyard, 'Look, for **three years [six months of John's message and two and a half years of Jesus' message]** I have come seeking fruit on this fig tree and find*

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none. **Cut it down**; why does it use up the ground?' But he answered and said to him, 'Sir, let it alone **this year** also [**only one year remained in the ministry of Jesus**], until I dig around it and fertilize it. 9 And if it bears fruit, well. But if not, after that you can **cut it down**.'

At the **end of the final year**, Jesus saw a fig tree in the distance and invited His disciples to go with Him to eat fruit from it but when he got there the tree had **no fruit** and therefore He cursed it:

Matthew 21:19

*"And when he saw **a fig tree** in the way, he came to it, and found nothing thereon, but leaves only, and said unto it: 'Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward **for ever**.'"*

The very next day Jesus and His disciples passed by the site where the tree was and discovered that it had **dried up at the roots**:

Mark 11:20, 21:

*"Now in the morning, as they passed by, they saw the fig tree **dried up from the roots**. And Peter, remembering, said to Him, "Rabbi, look! The fig tree which You cursed has withered away."*

As a result of the work of John the Baptist a **remnant** was prepared to receive Jesus. **Most of the disciples** of Jesus were previously disciples of John the Baptist. Paul spoke about this remnant when he said:

Romans 11:5:

*"Even so then, at this present time there is **a remnant** according to the election of grace."*

Summary: John the Baptist, who was **more than a prophet** preached a message of **judgment** and made the **time prophecy** of the seventy weeks **present truth** in his generation. He also prepared the **nucleus** of those who would become the disciples of Jesus and the founders of the Christian Church

Daniel and Ellen G. White

The **time prophecy** of the seventy weeks that was given to Daniel **the prophet** was merely the **first portion** of a larger prophecy—the 2300 days/years. This prophecy announces the beginning of the **final judgment** in the heavenly

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sanctuary in 1844:

*“And he said to me, ‘For **two thousand three hundred days**; then the sanctuary shall be cleansed.’*

According to Daniel 12:4, 9, this prophecy was **not present truth** in the days of Daniel:

Daniel 12:4, 9, 13

*““But you, Daniel, shut up the words, and **seal the book** until the time of the end; many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase.” . . . And he said, “Go your way, Daniel, for the **words are closed up and sealed** till the time of the end . . . But you, go your way till the end; for **you shall rest**, and will arise to your inheritance at the end of the days.”*

At the end of the **time prophecy** of the 2300 days an **intercontinental** and **interdenominational** movement arose to proclaim that the hour of **God’s judgment** had come. Thus the message of Daniel 8:14 became **Present Truth**. The central text they used was Daniel 8:14 and though they were wrong about the event they were correct about the timing of the event.

After the Great Disappointment God called and commissioned **Ellen G. White** to fully explain this prophecy. In her early visions her burden was to explain the prophecy of the 2300 days and the reason for the Great Disappointment. **She could have written about many subjects**. Why did she have a burden to explain what happened at the end of the 2300 days? Simply because she was making **Present Truth** the time prophecy that God had given 2300 years before. And with Ellen White’s guidance the **Remnant Church** was established.

Many Movements around 1844

New England during the Second Great Advent Awakening came to be known as **“the burned over district”** because of the many movements that arose during this time. The following are some of the movements and their champions that arose around this period both in the **United States** and in **Europe**:

- **Mormonism:** Joseph Smith
- **Christian Science:** Mary Baker Eddy
- **Theosophy, New Age:** Helena Blavatsky

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- **Baha'i:** Abdul Baha
- **Spiritualism:** Fox sisters, Andrew Jackson Davis
- **Pentecostalism:** Margaret McDonald
- **Jehovah's Witnesses:** Charles Taze Russell
- **Futurism:** John Nelson Darby, Edward Irving
- **Evolutionism:** Charles Darwin
- **Marxism:** Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels

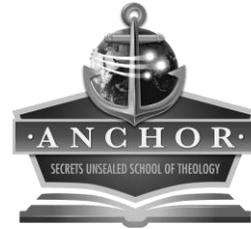
And how can we be sure that none of these movements were the genuine manifestation of the prophetic gift? The answer is that none of them addressed or even showed any interest in the **prophecy of the 2300 days**. They all had a central message but it had nothing to do with the 2300 days and 1844. In contrast, the Millerites and Ellen White centered their message on this prophecy. Ellen White thus became the founder of the Seventh-day Adventist Church—God's remnant with a special **judgment message** for the last days.

Attitudes toward Ellen G. White

- **Openly attack** her ministry and writings
- **Ignore her** by not reading her counsels
- **Undermine her** through **selective use** of her writings
- Using her to **pound people** over the head

Love, read and obey the counsels God gave through her

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LESSON #4 - MOSES AND THE PROPHETS

The Foundational Role of Moses: The Torah (the Law): Every fundamental truth of Scripture is found in seminal form in the writings of Moses

- Creation (Genesis 1, 2; Job 38-40)
- Sin and death (Genesis 2:15-17; 3:19; the entire book of Leviticus)
- Atonement by blood (Genesis 3:21; Genesis 4:1, 2; Genesis 22; the book of Leviticus)
- Stewardship (Genesis 2:15-17; Genesis 14:18-20; Genesis 28:20-22; Leviticus 27:30-32; Numbers 18:20, 21)
- Angels (Genesis 3:24; 19:1; 28:12; 32:1; Exodus 25:18-22; 36:8, 35)
- Marriage: Heterosexual and monogamous (Genesis 1:26-28; 2:22-24)
- Sexual deviations: Incest (Genesis 19); homosexuality (Genesis 19); adultery (Genesis 39), fornication (Genesis 34), polygamy (Jacob, Esau, Abraham, etc.), prostitution (Genesis 38)
- Law and grace (Exodus 1:14; 2:23-25; Ten Commandments preamble; Lev. 4, 5)
- The Godhead (Genesis 1:26-28; 3:22-24; Genesis 11:7)
- The hope of the resurrection (Job 14:7-15; 19:25-27)
- Translation of the righteous (Genesis 5:22-24 in the light of Hebrews 11:5)

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- The gift of tongues and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit (Genesis 11:1-9 in the light of Acts 2; Exodus 17:1-7 in the light of John 7:37-39)
- The final destruction of Satan (Genesis 3:15; Job 41)
- The Second coming (Genesis 6-9 in the light of Matthew 24:37-39)
- The Importance of the word of God (Showbread, Deuteronomy 8:3, 4; Exodus 16)
- Jesus the once for all sacrifice (Exodus 17:1-7 in the light of Isaiah 53)
- Jesus as our intercessor (Exodus 32:31-33; Genesis 28:12-15 in the light of John 1:51; the veil embroidered with angels)
- Church organization (twelve tribes, heads of thousands, hundred, fifties, tens and the seventy)
- Christian standards (Genesis 6:1-4; 35:4; Exodus 32:1-3; 33:3-6; 35:22)
- Satan and the origin of evil (Genesis 3; Job 41)
- The dos and don'ts of diet (Genesis 1:29, 30; Leviticus 3:17; Leviticus 11; Deuteronomy 14). Actually God created the eight laws of health in the creation story of Genesis 1, 2.
- The Law (Exodus 20)
- The Sabbath (Genesis 2:2, 3; Exodus 16; Exodus 20:8-11; Exodus 31:12-18; Deuteronomy 5:12-15)
- The Heavenly Sanctuary (Exodus 25:40; Hebrews 8:5)
- The state of the dead (Genesis 2:7; Genesis 3:4, 5, 19, 22-24)
- The Investigative judgment (Leviticus 16; Genesis 3:9-13; 4:9; Genesis 11:5; Genesis 18:21; cities of refuge; the entire book of Job is an investigative judgment scene)
- Hell (Genesis 19:24-28 in the light of Jude 7)
- The Three angels' messages (Genesis 18:1, 2, 22; 19:1, 14, 24)
- The Great Controversy (Genesis 3:15)
- Armageddon and the battle over obedience and worship (Cain and Abel in Genesis 4)
- The 144,000 from the twelve tribes (Genesis 49)
- The Messiah's calendar of salvation events (Leviticus 23)
- Revelation's Babylon and the call to come out (Genesis 11:1-9; Genesis

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12:1-3)

- The rest of Jesus in the tomb on Sabbath (Exodus 16)
- The Spirit of Prophecy (Deuteronomy 18:15-18; Numbers 12:6; 13:1-5 [characteristics of false prophets])

1400: Joshua appeals to Moses (58 times in the book of Joshua)

The book of Joshua refers back to the writings of Moses 58 times. That is to say, he appeals to the immediately preceding revelation but **does not add to it**. Joshua **confirms, amplifies, explains** and **applies** the foundational writings of Moses to the **generation of his day** but does not add, subtract or contradict previous truth.

Joshua 1:1-3, 5, 7, 13, and 17: Moses is referred to repeatedly in the **first chapter** of Joshua:

*“After the death of Moses the servant of the Lord, it came to pass that the Lord spoke to Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' assistant, saying: 2 "Moses My servant is dead. Now therefore, arise, go over this Jordan, you and all this people, to the land which I am giving to them — the children of Israel. 3 Every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon I have given you, **as I said to Moses**. 5 No man shall be able to stand before you all the days of your life; **as I was with Moses**, so I will be with you. I will not leave you nor forsake you. 7 Only be strong and very courageous, that you may observe to do according to all the **law which Moses My servant commanded you**; do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper wherever you go. 12 And to the Reubenites, the Gadites, and half the tribe of Manasseh Joshua spoke, saying, 13 "**Remember the word which Moses** the servant of the Lord commanded you, saying, 'The Lord your God is giving you rest and is giving you this land.' 14 Your wives, your little ones, and your livestock shall remain in the land that **Moses gave you** on this side of the Jordan. But you shall pass before your brethren armed, all your mighty men of valor, and help them, 15 until the Lord has given your brethren rest, as He gave you, and they also have taken possession of the land which the Lord your God is giving them. Then you shall return to the land of your possession and enjoy it, which **Moses the Lord's servant gave you** on this side of the Jordan toward the sunrise. 16 So they answered Joshua, saying, "All that you command us we will do, and wherever you send us we will go. 17 Just as we **heeded Moses in all***

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things, so we will heed you. Only the Lord your God be with you, as **He was with Moses.**

Joshua 4:10, 12: The priests bore the **Ark of the Covenant** as Moses had commanded:

*“So the priests who bore the ark stood in the midst of the Jordan until everything was finished that the Lord had commanded Joshua to speak to the people, **according to all that Moses had commanded Joshua**; and the people hurried and crossed over. . . And the men of Reuben, the men of Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh crossed over armed before the children of Israel, as **Moses had spoken to them.**”*

Joshua 8:30, 31, 32-35: When Israel gathered at **Mount Ebal and Mount Gerizim** they followed the instructions of Moses with precision:

*“Then Joshua built an altar unto the LORD God of Israel in mount Ebal, **as Moses the servant of the LORD commanded** the children of Israel, as it is written in the book of the **law of Moses**, an altar of whole stones, over which no man hath lift up any iron: and they offered thereon burnt offerings unto the LORD, and sacrificed peace offerings . . . 32 And there, in the presence of the children of Israel, he wrote on the stones a **copy of the law of Moses**, which he had written. 33 Then all Israel, with their elders and officers and judges, stood on either side of the ark before the priests, the Levites, who bore the ark of the covenant of the Lord, the stranger as well as he who was born among them. Half of them were in front of Mount Gerizim and half of them in front of Mount Ebal, **as Moses the servant of the Lord had commanded before**, that they should bless the people of Israel. 34 And afterward he **read all the words of the law**, the blessings and the cursings, according to all that is **written in the Book of the Law**. 35 There was not a word of all that **Moses had commanded** which Joshua did not read before all the assembly of Israel, with the women, the little ones, and the strangers who were living among them.”*

Joshua 11:12, 15, 20, 23: The **nations of Canaan** were destroyed just as Moses had commanded:

*“So all the cities of those kings, and all their kings, Joshua took and struck with the edge of the sword. He utterly destroyed them, as **Moses the servant of the Lord had commanded**. 15 As the Lord had **commanded Moses his servant**, so **Moses commanded Joshua**, and so Joshua did. He **left nothing undone** of all that the*

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Lord had **commanded Moses**. 20 For it was of the Lord to harden their hearts, that they should come against Israel in battle, that He might utterly destroy them, and that they might receive no mercy, but that He might destroy them, **as the Lord had commanded Moses**. 23 So Joshua took the whole land, according to **all that the Lord had said to Moses**; and Joshua gave it as an inheritance to Israel according to their divisions by their tribes. Then the land rested from war.”

Joshua 14:5: The **land was divided** just as Moses had commanded:

“As the Lord had commanded Moses, so the children of Israel did; and they divided the land.”

Joshua 22:4, 5 Joshua admonished Israel to be **faithful to the teachings of Moses**:

“And now the LORD your God hath given rest unto your brethren, as he promised them: therefore now return ye, and get you unto your tents, and unto the land of your possession, which **Moses the servant of the LORD** gave you on the other side Jordan. But take diligent heed to do the commandment and the law, which **Moses the servant of the LORD** charged you, to love the LORD your God, and to walk in all his ways, and to keep his commandments, and to cleave unto him, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul.”

Joshua 23:4, 5: Before his death, Joshua admonished Israel to **follow the writings of Moses**

Words of Joshua to Israel before his death: “And the Lord your God will expel them from before you and drive them out of your sight. So you shall possess their land, as the Lord your God promised you. 6 Therefore be very courageous to keep and to **do all that is written in the Book of the Law of Moses**, lest you turn aside from it to the right hand or to the left, 7 and lest you go among these nations, these who remain among you.”

1300-1100: The Judges Appeal to Moses

Although the period of the Judges was a time during which there was **little revelation from God**, nevertheless, God expected Israel to live according to what **Moses had written**. The trials that Israel suffered during this period were due to the fact that they did not follow the instructions that God had given through Moses. In fact, the system of organization that God had given Moses was abandoned and therefore everyone did what was right in his own eyes. We

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find in Judges a few references that appeal to the immediately preceding revelation. As with the book of Joshua, the book of Judges confirms what Moses said but does not add to it.

Judges 1:20

*“And they gave Hebron to Caleb, **as Moses had said**. Then he expelled from there the three sons of Anak.”*

Judges 2:20-22

*“Then the anger of the Lord was hot against Israel; and He said, “Because this nation has transgressed **My covenant which I commanded their fathers**, and has not heeded My voice, 21 I also will no longer drive out before them any of the nations which Joshua left when he died, 22 so that through them I may test Israel, whether they will **keep the ways of the Lord, to walk in them as their fathers kept them**, or not.”*

Judges 3:4-7:

*“And they were to prove Israel by them, to know whether they would hearken unto the commandments of the LORD, which he commanded their fathers by **the hand of Moses**. Thus the children of Israel dwelt among the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. 6 And they took their daughters to be their wives, and gave their daughters to their sons; and they served their gods. 7 So **the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord**. They forgot the Lord their God, and served the Baals and Asherahs.”*

1 Samuel 3:1: To a great degree the revelation of the past had been **ignored and forgotten** and for that reason the word of God was precious:

*“And the child Samuel ministered unto the LORD before Eli. And the word of the LORD was **precious** [rare] in those days; there was no open vision.”*

Judges 14:3: **Samson’s parents** knew that Moses had commanded the Israelites not to marry unbelievers:

*“Then his father and mother said to him [to Samson]: “Is there no woman among the daughters of your brethren, or **among all my people**, that you must go and get a wife from the uncircumcised Philistines?”*

1000-605 B. C.: The Hebrew Monarchy

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The righteous Kings of Israel offered **sacrifices**, brought **tithes** and **offerings** and **taught the people** according to the writings of Moses and we are told that Israel and Judah were **taken into captivity** because they rejected the revelation that God had given **through Moses**

1 Kings 2:3: David admonished **Solomon** to be faithful to the Law of Moses:

*“And keep the charge of the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, to keep his statutes, and his commandments, and his judgments, and his testimonies, **as it is written in the law of Moses**, that thou mayest prosper in all that thou doest, and whithersoever thou turnest thyself.”*

2 Chronicles 8:12, 13: Solomon’s **sacrifices** were according to the specifications of Moses:

*“Then Solomon offered burnt offerings unto the LORD on the altar of the LORD, which he had built before the porch even after a certain rate every day, offering **according to the commandment of Moses**, on the sabbaths, and on the new moons, and on the solemn feasts, three times in the year, even in the feast of unleavened bread, and in the feast of weeks, and in the feast of tabernacles.”*

1 Kings 8:53, 56: Solomon’s **prayer to God** and **speech to Israel** hearkens back to Moses:

*“For You separated them from among all the peoples of the earth to be Your inheritance, as You **spoke by Your servant Moses**, when You brought our fathers out of Egypt, O Lord God.” 56 “Blessed be the Lord, who has given rest to His people Israel, according to all that He promised. There has not failed one word of all His good promise, which He promised **through His servant Moses**.”*

2 Kings 14:6: King **Amaziah** refused to follow the counsel of Moses:

*“But the children of the murderers he did not execute, according to **what is written in the Book of the Law of Moses**, in which the Lord commanded, saying: “Fathers shall not be put to death for their children, nor shall children be put to death for their fathers; but a person shall be put to death for his own sin.”*

2 Kings 18:6: King **Hezekiah was faithful** to the instructions of Moses:

“For he held fast to the Lord; he did not depart from following Him, but kept His commandments, which the Lord had commanded Moses.”

2 Kings 18:11, 12: The **Assyrian Captivity** came because Israel did not obey

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Moses:

*“And the king of Assyria did carry away Israel unto Assyria, and put them in Halah and in Habor by the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes: Because they obeyed not the voice of the LORD their God, but transgressed his covenant, and **all that Moses the servant of the LORD commanded**, and would not hear them, nor do them. . .”*

2 Kings 21:7, 8: **Manasseh** was particularly **wicked** because he did not follow the Law of Moses:

*“He even set a carved image of Asherah that he had made, in the house of which the Lord had said to David and to Solomon his son: “In this house and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel, I will put My name forever; 8 and I will not make the feet of Israel wander anymore from the land which I gave their fathers—only if they are careful to do according to all that I have commanded them, and **according to all the law that My servant Moses commanded them.**”*

2 Kings 22:11-13: **Josiah** discovered the book of the law and was alarmed because Israel deserved the covenant curses given to Moses:

*“Now it happened, when the king heard the words of the **Book of the Law**, that he tore his clothes. 12 Then the king commanded Hilkiah the priest, Ahikam the son of Shaphan, Achbor the son of Michaiah, Shaphan the scribe, and Asaiah a servant of the king, saying, 13 “Go, inquire of the Lord for me, for the people and for all Judah, concerning the **words of this book** that has been found; for great is the wrath of the Lord that is aroused against us, because our fathers have **not obeyed the words of this book**, to do according to all that is written concerning us.”*

2 Kings 23:25: **Josiah** ruled according to the specifications given by God through Moses:

*“And like unto him was there no king before him, that turned to the LORD with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his might, according to all **the law of Moses**; neither after him arose there any like him.”*

1 Chronicles 15:15: The **Levites bore the ark** as God commanded Moses:

*“And the children of the Levites bore the ark of God on their shoulders, by its poles, **as Moses had commanded** according to the word of the Lord.”*

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1 Chronicles 22:13: David admonished Solomon to rule according to the teachings of Moses:

“Then you will prosper, if you take care to fulfill the statutes and judgments with which the Lord charged Moses concerning Israel. Be strong and of good courage; do not fear nor be dismayed.”

2 Chronicles 17:9: The **Levites** taught God’s people from the **book of the Law** given through Moses:

“And they taught in Judah, and had the book of the law of the LORD with them, and went about throughout all the cities of Judah, and taught the people.”

2 Chronicles 23:18: The Levites **offered sacrifices** according to Moses:

“Also Jehoiada appointed the oversight of the house of the Lord to the hand of the priests, the Levites, whom David had assigned in the house of the Lord, to offer the burnt offerings of the Lord, as it is written in the Law of Moses, with rejoicing and with singing as it was established by David.”

2 Chronicles 24:9: Offerings were given according to the specifications of Moses

“And they [the Levites] made a proclamation throughout Judah and Jerusalem to bring to the Lord the collection that Moses the servant of God had imposed on Israel in the wilderness.”

850-587: The Major and Minor Prophets Sought to Bring the People Back to the Writings of Moses

The prophets were actually God’s **attorneys in divorce court**. They were **not innovators** but rather **restorers**. It is true that they **added details** and **expanded** upon (for example, Isaiah 53) the writings of Moses but did not add **new fundamental truths** that we not already contained in the writings of Moses. They corrected Israel for **going astray** from Moses and **called them to come back** to the foundational truths. The prophet **Jeremiah** repeatedly appeals to the book of Deuteronomy in rebuking Judah for her unfaithfulness.

2 Chronicles 36:16: Israel **disobeyed** the **Prophets**

“But they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of the LORD arose against his people, till there was no remedy.”

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Daniel appealed to **Moses** and the **Prophets** because when Daniel wrote the former prophets had already prophesied. In fact, Daniel was studying the book of Jeremiah before his intercessory prayer (Daniel 9:1, 2).

Daniel 9:11, 13: The **Babylonian captivity** came about because Israel disobeyed Moses:

*“Yea, all Israel have transgressed thy law, even by departing, that they might not obey thy voice; therefore the curse is poured upon us, and the oath that is **written in the law of Moses** the servant of God, because we have sinned against him. . . As it is written in the Law of Moses, all this disaster has come upon us; yet we have not made our prayer before the Lord our God, that we might turn from our iniquities and understand Your truth.”*

Daniel 9:6: **Daniel** complained that Israel refused to listen to the prophets who sought to bring people **back to the writings of Moses**:

*“Neither have we hearkened unto **thy servants the prophets**, which spake in thy name to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, and to all the people of the land.”*

Zachariah 7:7, 12: The **Babylonian captivity** came about because Israel disobeyed the **former prophets** who in turn sought to bring the people back to the writings of Moses:

*“Should you not have obeyed the words which the Lord proclaimed through the **former prophets** when Jerusalem and the cities around it were inhabited and prosperous, and the South and the Lowland were inhabited?” . . . “Yea, they made their hearts as an adamant stone, lest they should hear the law, and the words which the LORD of hosts hath sent in his spirit by **the former prophets**: therefore came a great wrath from the LORD of hosts.”*

The former and latter prophets added **nothing of substance** to what Moses taught. Their role was to comfort, encourage, rebuke, correct, confirm, explain, amplify and invite the people to **come back** to the old landmarks established by Moses. The prophets constantly use the word “**return**” (Jeremiah 3:22; 4:1; 5:3; 8:5; 15:7; 18:11; 24:7; 35:15; 36:3, 7; Malachi 3:7, 18; Hosea 6:1; 7:10; 14:1). By way of example, Jeremiah did not give any new truth concerning the Sabbath but rather called Israel to return to its proper observance in order to prevent the destruction of Jerusalem (Jeremiah 17:19-27).

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2 Chronicles 24:18, 19: The prophets were called to bring the people **back to the Lord**

*“And they left the house of the Lord God of their fathers, and served groves and idols: and wrath came upon Judah and Jerusalem for this their trespass. Yet **he sent prophets to them, to bring them again unto the Lord**; and they testified against them: but they would not give ear.”*

539–425: After the Babylonian Captivity, Ezra and Nehemiah Continued to Appeal to the Writings of Moses

Ezra 3:2: The people built an altar as **Moses had commanded**

Ezra 6:18: The priests and Levites **organized** as Moses had commanded

Ezra 9:11: Ezra forbade **mixed marriages** based on the writings of Moses

Nehemiah 10:28-29: The people **promised to obey** the law of God given by Moses

Ezra 5:2 The **prophets of God helped** in the **reestablishment** of Israel to her former religious observances after the captivity:

*“Then rose up Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Jeshua the son of Jozadak, and began to build the house of God which is at Jerusalem: and with them were the prophets of God [Haggai and Zachariah] **helping them**.”*

Nehemiah 1:7-9: **Nehemiah** complained that Israel had not kept the commandments that God gave through Moses:

*“We have acted very corruptly against You, and have not kept the commandments, the statutes, nor the ordinances which **You commanded Your servant Moses**. 8 Remember, I pray, the word that **You commanded Your servant Moses**, saying: 'If you are unfaithful, I will scatter you among the nations; 9 but if you return to Me, and keep My commandments and do them, though some of you were cast out to the farthest part of the heavens, yet I will gather them from there, and bring them to the place which I have chosen as a dwelling for My name.’*

Nehemiah 8:1-3, 8, 9 and 13-15: After the Jerusalem wall was rebuilt the

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religion of Israel was reestablished at the Feast of Tabernacles by the reading of the writings of Moses”

“Now all the people gathered together as one man in the open square that was in front of the Water Gate; and they told Ezra the scribe to bring the **Book of the Law of Moses**, which the Lord had commanded Israel. 2 So Ezra the priest brought the Law before the assembly of men and women and all who could hear with understanding on the first day of the seventh month. 3 Then he read from it in the open square that was in front of the Water Gate from morning until midday, before the men and women and those who could understand; and the ears of all the people were attentive to **the Book of the Law**. . . So they read distinctly **from the book, in the Law of God**; and they gave the sense, and helped them to understand the reading. 9 And Nehemiah, who was the governor, Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who taught the people said to all the people: “This day is holy to the Lord your God; do not mourn nor weep.” For all the people wept, when **they heard the words of the Law**. . . Now on the second day the heads of the fathers' houses of all the people, with the priests and Levites, were gathered to Ezra the scribe, in order to understand **the words of the Law**. 14 And they **found written in the Law, which the Lord had commanded by Moses**, that the children of Israel should dwell in booths during the feast of the seventh month, 15 and that they should announce and proclaim in all their cities and in Jerusalem, saying, “Go out to the mountain, and bring olive branches, branches of oil trees, myrtle branches, palm branches, and branches of leafy trees, to make booths, **as it is written**.”

Nehemiah 10:28, 29

“Now the rest of the people — the priests, the Levites, the gatekeepers, the singers, the Nethinim, and all those who had separated themselves from the peoples of the lands **to the Law of God**, their wives, their sons, and their daughters, everyone who had knowledge and understanding—29 these joined with their brethren, their nobles, and entered into a curse and an oath to walk in **God's Law, which was given by Moses the servant of God**, and to observe and do all the commandments of the Lord our Lord, and His ordinances and His statutes.”

Nehemiah 13:1-3: The **mixed multitude** was banished from Israel as Moses had commanded:

“On that day they read from the **Book of Moses** in the hearing of the people, and in it was found written that no Ammonite or Moabite should ever come into the

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assembly of God, 2 because they had not met the children of Israel with bread and water, but hired Balaam against them to curse them. However, our God turned the curse into a blessing. 3 So it was, when they had heard the Law, that they **separated all the mixed multitude from Israel.**"

Nehemiah 13:17-19: The **Sabbath** was restored as Moses had commanded:

*"Then I contended with the nobles of Judah, and said to them, "What evil thing is this that you do, by which you profane the Sabbath day? 18 Did not **your fathers do thus** and did not our God bring all this disaster on us and on this city? Yet you **bring added wrath on Israel by profaning the Sabbath.**" 19 So it was, at the gates of Jerusalem, as it began to be dark before the Sabbath, that I commanded the gates to be shut, and charged that they must not be opened till after the Sabbath. Then I posted some of my servants at the gates, so that no burdens would be brought in on the Sabbath day."*

Malachi 4:4-6: The Old Testament ends by a command to pay heed to the writings of Moses. The prophet Elijah will be sent to bring the people back to the faith of their fathers.

*"Remember ye the **law of Moses my servant**, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments. Behold, I will send you **Elijah the prophet** before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD. And he shall turn the **heart of the fathers** to the children, and the heart of the **children to their fathers**, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse."*

In the Old Testament, Elijah was called to restore **the religion of his fathers**. This is why he mentioned the names of **Abraham, Isaac and Jacob** in his prayer on Mt. Carmel. This is also the reason why he **rebuilt the altar** of the Lord that had been torn down. Elijah was not an innovator. He was called to **restore the covenant** that had been broken by God's people. He was to call the people **back** to the religion of the fathers (see I Kings 18:30; Matthew 17:11; Luke 1:16, 17; I Kings 19:10).

The New Testament: Christ's Life and Mission (27-31)

The New Testament writers **amplify, confirm, unfold** and **explain** the writings of Moses and the amplification by the Prophets. The New Testament **does not add** or **contradict** any of the previous revelation but rather **explains, expands** and **magnifies** it. In fact, there is scarcely anything in the life of Christ that was not choreographed in the Old Testament by Moses and the prophets (as

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examples, the Hebrew Feasts and the Sanctuary)

1 Peter 1:10-12: The Old Testament prophets searched to find out **when and how** the Messiah would come:

*"Of this salvation **the prophets have inquired and searched carefully**, who **prophesied** of the grace that would come to you, 11 **searching** what, or **what manner of time**, the Spirit of Christ who was in them was indicating when He **testified beforehand** the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow. 12 **To them it was revealed** that, not to themselves, but to us they were ministering the things which now have been reported to you **through those who have preached the gospel** to you by the **Holy Spirit sent from heaven** — things which angels desire to look into."*

Matthew 17:1-2: (alluding to Malachi 4:4, 5) Moses and Elijah appeared to Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration:

*"Now after six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother led them up on a high mountain by themselves; 2 and He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light. 3 And behold, **Moses and Elijah** appeared to them, talking with Him."*

Luke 16:16: **Two categories** of Revelation in the Old Testament were the Law and the prophets:

*"The **law** [Moses] and the **prophets** were until John."*

Matthew 22:40: **Two categories** of Revelation in the Old Testament:

*"On these two commandments hang all the **Law** [Moses] and the **Prophets**."*

Luke 16:29-31: **Two categories** of Revelation in the Old Testament

*"Abraham said to him: 'They have **Moses and the prophets**; let them hear them.' 30 And he said, 'No, father Abraham; but if one goes to them from the dead, they will repent.' 31 But he said to him: 'If they do not hear **Moses and the prophets**, neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead.'"*

John 1:45: **Nathanael** testified to Christ in Moses and the Prophets:

*"Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him: We have found him, of whom **Moses in the law**, and **the prophets**, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph."*

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John 5:45-47: Moses wrote about Jesus:

*“Do not think that I shall accuse you to the Father; there is one who accuses you — Moses, in whom you trust. 46 For if you believed **Moses**, you would believe Me; for **he wrote about Me**. 47 But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?”*

Luke 24:25-27: Jesus directed the thoughts of the disciples on the Road to Emmaus to the writings of Moses and the Prophets:

*“Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that **the prophets** have spoken: Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at **Moses and all the prophets**, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.”*

Luke 24:44, 45: Jesus appealed to the writings of Moses and the prophets

*“Then He said to them: “These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the **Law of Moses and the Prophets** and the Psalms concerning Me.” 45 And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures.”*

The Old Testament Prophecies Choreographed the Life of Christ

1. John the Baptist’s Mission (Matthew 3:3; Isaiah 40:1-3)
2. John the Baptist’s call to be the Messenger (Matthew 11:10; Malachi 3:1)
3. Birth of Jesus announced by a star (Numbers 24:17; Matthew 2:2)
4. Born of a virgin (Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:22)
5. Born in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2; Matthew 2:5)
6. Circumcised on the eighth day as Moses commanded (Leviticus 12:3; Luke 2:22-24)
7. Fled to Egypt (Hosea 11:1; Matthew 2:15)
8. Infants slain when born (Jeremiah 31:15; Matthew 2:17)
9. Beginning of His ministry (Isaiah 9:1, 2; Matthew 4:14-16)
10. Reading of Scripture at Nazareth (Isaiah 49:8, 9; 61:1, 2; Luke 4:21)
11. He bore out diseases (Isaiah 8:17; Matthew 8:17)
12. Leper to do as Moses had commanded (Leviticus 13:1-3; Luke 5:14)

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13. Servant of the Lord prophecy (Isaiah 42:1-4; 49:3; Matthew 12:17)
14. The sign of Jonah (Jonah 1:17; Matthew 12:40)
15. One greater than Solomon's temple (Mathew 12:42)
16. Why He spoke in parables (Isaiah 6:9, 10; Matthew 13:14, 15)
17. The people honored Him only with their lips (Isaiah 29:13; Matthew 15:8, 9)
18. Entered Jerusalem on a donkey (Zechariah 9:9; Matthew 21:4, 5)
19. Words at the Triumphal Entry (Zechariah 9:9; John 12:15)
20. Cleansed the temple (Isaiah 56:7; Jeremiah 7:11; Matthew 21:13)
21. Songs of the children at the Triumphal Entry (Psalm 8:2; Matthew 21:16)
22. The stone that was rejected (Psalm 118:22, 23; Isaiah 28:16; Matthew 21:42)
23. The two great commandments (Deuteronomy 6:5; Leviticus 19:8; Matthew 22:37, 39)
24. To sit at the Father's right hand (Psalm 110:1; Matthew 22:44)
25. Abomination of desolation (Daniel 9:27; Matthew 24:15)
26. Strike the shepherd and the sheep are scattered (Zechariah 13:7; Matthew 26:31)
27. All done that the Scriptures might be fulfilled (Matthew 26:56)
28. Sold for 30 pieces of silver and the Potter's Field (Zechariah 11:12; Jeremiah 32:6-9; Matthew 27:9, 10)
29. Cast lots on His garments (Psalm 22:18; Matthew 27:35)
30. "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" (Psalm 22:1; Matthew 27:46)
31. Numbered with transgressors (Isaiah 53:12; Mark 15:28)
32. Zeal for God's house consumed Him (Psalm 69:9; John 2:17)
33. Serpent in the wilderness (Numbers 21; John 3:14)
34. The living Manna (Exodus 16; John 6)
35. The water from the rock (Exodus 17:1-7; John 4:13, 14; 7:37-39)
36. Judas' betrayal (Psalm 41:9; John 3:18)
37. They hated Him without cause (Psalm 35:9; John 15:25)
38. The Son of Perdition prophecy (Psalm 109:8; John 17:12)

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39. The words "I thirst" (Psalm 22:15; John 19:28)
40. No bones broken (Exodus 12:46; John 19:46)
41. They shall look on Him whom they pierced (Psalm 22:16; John 19:37)

The Book of Acts and the Writings of the Apostles: 31-95 A. D.

Acts 1:16-17: The apostasy of Judas was predicted in the Psalms (Psalm 41:9; 69:25; Psalm 109:8)

*"Men and brethren, **this Scripture had to be fulfilled**, which the Holy Spirit spoke before by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus; 17 for he was numbered with us and obtained a part in this ministry."*

Acts 2:16:

*"But this is what was spoken by the **prophet Joel** . . ." Peter then goes on to quote **Joel 2:28-32***

Acts 2:25

*"For **David says** concerning Him . . ." Peter then goes on to quote **Psalm 16:8-11***

Acts 2:30

According to this text, God had promised David that a **descendant from his flesh** would occupy the throne. This promise was made to David in **2 Samuel 7:12-16**

Acts 2:34-35

*"For **David** did not ascend into the heavens, but he says himself: 'The Lord said to my Lord, 'Sit at My right hand, till I make Your enemies Your footstool.'"*

Acts 3:24-26: **All the prophets** pointed to Jesus

*"Yes, and all the **prophets**, from Samuel and those who follow, as many as have spoken, have also foretold these days. 25 You are sons of the **prophets**, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying to Abraham, 'And in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed.' 26 To you first, God, having raised up His Servant Jesus, sent Him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from your iniquities."*

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Acts 7:51-53: Stephen rebuked the Sanhedrin for rejecting **the prophets**:

*"You stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears! You always resist the **Holy Spirit**; as your fathers did, so do you. Which of **the prophets** did your fathers not persecute? And they killed those who **foretold the coming of the Just One**, of whom you now have become the betrayers and murderers, 53 who have received **the law by the direction of angels** and have not kept it."*

Acts 15:15-17: The mission **to the Gentiles** was prophesied in the Old Testament:

*"And with this **the words of the prophets agree**, just as it is written: 16 'After! this I will return and will **rebuild** the tabernacle of David, which has fallen down; I will **rebuild** its ruins, and I will set it up; 17 So that the rest of mankind may seek the Lord, even all the Gentiles who are **called by My name**, says the Lord who does all these things."*

Romans 3:21 **Paul's theology** of righteousness by faith was based on **Moses and the prophets**:

*"But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by **the law and the prophets**."*

I Corinthians 5:7

Paul identified Christ as **our Passover**, clearly alluding to **Exodus 12**

I Corinthians 15:20

Paul identified **Christ as the first fruits**, clearly alluding to the feast of **first fruits in Leviticus 23**

Acts 24:14: **Paul** testified before Felix that he believed all things in the **law and the prophets**:

*"But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written **in the law and in the prophets**."*

Acts 26:22: **Paul taught only** what the law and the prophets said about Jesus:

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*“Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which **the prophets and Moses** did say should come.”*

Acts 28:23, 24: Paul’s theological source was the law and the prophets

*“And when they had appointed him a day, there came many to him into his lodging; to whom he expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of **the law of Moses**, and **out of the prophets**, from morning till evening.”*

Galatians 3:16 Paul’s concept of the Seed is firmly based on Genesis 3:15 and Genesis 22:18

The **book of Hebrews** reveals how the entire Old Testament cultus was fulfilled in Christ.

Revelation 5:5 clearly alludes to the prophecy of **Genesis 49:9-12**

Crucial Questions for the Last Days

In the light of what we have studied, let’s ask a few questions:

- If God were to call an end time prophet, what would that **prophet’s role** be?
- What would that **prophet speak and write?**
- Would the prophet bring to light **new truths** not already contained in Moses, the prophets and the New Testament?
- Or would that prophet **confirm, explain, expand, amplify and develop** the truths that had already been given?
- Would that prophet **correct those who err** from Bible truth?

*“In every age there is a **new development** of truth, a message of God to the people of that generation. The **old truths** are all essential; **new truth** is not independent of the old, but an **unfolding of it**. It is only as the old truths are understood that we can comprehend the new. When Christ desired to open to His disciples the truth of His resurrection, He began “at Moses and all the prophets” and “expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning Himself.” Luke 24:27 But it is the light which shines in the fresh **unfolding of truth** that glorifies*

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the old. He who rejects or neglects the new does not really possess the old. For him it loses its vital power and becomes but a lifeless form.” COL 127, 128

Ellen White’s writings function like a microscope. She does not add to the Bible, she simply amplifies and magnifies what is already contained in the Bible

Ellen White confirms, explains, amplifies, expands upon, exalts and unfolds the revelation already contained in Scripture. She adds **nothing of substance**. She brings to light **no new doctrines**. She is not another Bible or an addition to the Bible. She does not contradict the Bible but she does correct those who err from Bible truth:

*“God has, in that Word, promised to give visions in the “last days”; **not for a new rule** of faith, but for the comfort of His people, and to **correct** those who err from Bible truth.” Early Writings, p. 78*

Ellen White always leads back to the Bible. She does exactly what the New Testament writers did with Moses and the prophets. Each generation **makes explicit** that which is **already implicit** in earlier revelations. She amplifies and magnifies that which is already contained in the Bible. This is called **progressive revelation**. When she is called a ‘lesser light’ we are not to understand that she is an **inferior** light or that she has **less authority** than the Bible writers. It is just that her function, like that of all the Bible writers is to lead men and women to Christ, the greater light. The **source of light** of the Scriptures and Ellen White’s writings is the same but their **function** is different. In fact, the terminology ‘lesser light’ and ‘greater light’ comes from Genesis 1:16 where the roles of the sun and moon are described. The moon exalts the glory of the sun and leads men to it. So, the glory of the writings of Ellen White (and the Bible, for that matter) comes from Christ and leads to Him.

Like some in the Seventh-day Adventist church today, the Sadducees believed the prophets were of **lesser inspiration** and therefore of **lesser authority** than the writings of Moses. They did not believe in the resurrection or angels because they claimed that they could not find these ideas explicitly in the writings of Moses. If they had studied Scripture they would have clearly found the resurrection in the writings of Moses. You see, some Adventist scholars today are committing the same mistake as the Sadducees. They are saying: “*Why do we need Ellen White when we have the Bible?*” The Sadducees said as

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much when they said: *“Why do we need the prophets when we have Moses?”*

As the prophets were meant to **bring people back** to the foundational truths in the writings of Moses, so, Ellen White was called to bring people back to the Scriptures. You see, people today have a tendency to rationalize and explain away some of the teachings of the Bible that cramp their lifestyle. If people studied the Bible with a sincere desire to practice the truths there contained, the writings of Ellen White would not be necessary. As Ellen White once stated:

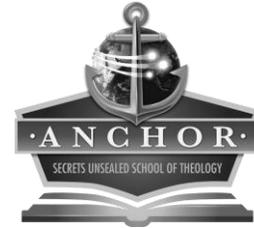
*“The word of God is sufficient to enlighten the most beclouded mind and may be understood by those who have any desire to understand it. But notwithstanding all this, some who profess to make the Word of God their study are found living in direct opposition to its plainest teachings. Then, to leave men and women **without excuse**, God gives plain and pointed testimonies, **bringing them back** to the word that they have neglected to follow. The word of God abounds in **general principles** for the formation of correct habits of living, and the testimonies, general and personal, have been calculated to call their attention **more especially to these principles.**” *Counsels to the Church*, p. 92*

Would God leave His people without any guidance in the most dangerous period of this world’s history when Christians are ignoring and twisting the Scriptures? I rather doubt it.

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by Pastor Stephen Bohr

LESSON # 5 - TWO PROPHETS AND TWO BOOKS

There is a remarkable parallel between John’s visionary experience on Patmos when he received his great controversy vision and the visionary experience of Ellen White when she received hers. Let’s begin by analyzing John’s visionary experience on Patmos:

John had the testimony of Jesus or the spirit of prophecy

Revelation 1:2:

John *“bore witness to the word of God, and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, to all things that he saw.”* (See also 1:9; 21:16)

Revelation 19:10

“And I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me, “See that you do not do that! I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren who have the testimony of Jesus. Worship God! For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.”

The testimony was for the churches

Revelation 22:16; Revelation 2:7:

“I, Jesus, have sent my angel to testify to you these things in the churches . . . He that has an ear let him hear what the Spirit says the churches . . . ”

John fell as dead while he was in vision

Revelation 1:17:

“And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. But He laid His right hand on me, saying to me, “Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last.”

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Note: In similar fashion, when Daniel was in vision he did not breathe—it was as if he was dead. But then the angel put his hand upon Daniel and he was strengthened (see Daniel 10:5-8, 10, 17-19).

John frequently used expressions such as “I saw” and “I will show you” (cf. 1:1; 4:1; 17:1; 21:9; 22:6)

More than **50 times** in his book John uses the expression **“I saw” “I will show you”**. John was shown vivid **panoramic views of heavenly realities** and of the conflict between good and evil (for example, the cosmic battle in Revelation 12).

The Holy Spirit through the ministration of an angel imparted the message to John

Revelation 2:11; 22:16:

*“He who has an ear let him hear what the **Spirit** says to the churches . . . “I, Jesus, have sent **My angel** to testify to you these things in the churches.”*

Note: Even though the Holy Spirit inspired the prophets (2 Peter 1:20, 21), the message was imparted through the instrumentality of an angel. This is true of the **book of Daniel** as well. The angel **Gabriel** was the angel who gave the visions to Daniel.

John was ordered to write while he was in vision

Revelation 1:11 (also 1:19; 19:9; 21:5):

*“I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last,” and, **“What you see, write in a book and send it to the seven churches which are in Asia: to Ephesus, to Smyrna, to Pergamos, to Thyatira, to Sardis, to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea.”***

Both Daniel and John conversed with their angel

Daniel 7:16:

*“I came near to one of those who stood by, and **asked him** the truth of all this. So **he told me** and **made known to me** the interpretation of these things.”*

Revelation 10:9

*“So I went to the angel and **said to him**, “Give me the little book.” And **he said to***

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***me**, "Take and eat it; and it will make your stomach bitter, but it will be as sweet as honey in your mouth."*

John spoke with other heavenly beings

Revelation 7:13, 14:

*"Then one of **the elders** [see Revelation 4 and 5] answered, **saying to me**, "Who are these arrayed in white robes, and where did they come from?" **14** And **I said to him**, "Sir, you know. "So he said to me, "These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."*

Jesus also spoke to John

Revelation 1:12:

*"Then I turned to see the voice that **spoke with me**. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands, **13** and in the midst of the seven lampstands One like **the Son of Man**, clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band."*

John's angel transported him to distant places in heaven and on earth (1:10; 4:2; 17:1, 3; 21:9, 10)

Revelation 21:9, 10:

*"Then **one of the seven angels** who had the seven bowls filled with the seven last plagues came to me and talked with me, saying, "Come, I will show you the bride, the Lamb's wife." **10** And he **carried me away in the Spirit** to a great and high mountain, and showed me the great city, the holy* Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God."*

John's visionary experience was so very real to him that he thought that he was bodily transported

Though John's body remained on earth, his **mind seemed to be in heaven** and the scene was **so real** that he actually thought that he was there. This is described as **caught up by the Spirit** and also caught up **by the angel**. In other words, the Holy Spirit accomplishes His work through the **ministration of the angels**:

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Revelation 17:3

*“So he [the angel] **carried me away in the spirit** into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet colored beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns.”*

Revelation 21:10

*“And he [the angel] **carried me away in the Spirit** to a great and high mountain, and showed me the great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God.”*

2 Corinthians 12:2-4: The apostle Paul had a similar experience when he was **caught up** to the third heaven. He was not sure whether God took him there bodily or only in his mind. There he heard words that could not be uttered. This sounds very similar to John’s experience in Revelation 10 where he heard what the seven thunders uttered but he was forbidden by the powerful angel to repeat them.

*“I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago—whether **in the body** I do not know, or whether **out of the body** I do not know, God knows—such a one was **caught up** to the **third heaven**.³ And I know such a man—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows—how he was **caught up** into **Paradise** and heard inexpressible words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.”*

Note: The noted commentator **Albert Barnes** had this to say about the meaning of the phrase ‘inexpressible words’:

*“Paul meant to say that he could **not attempt by words to do justice to what he saw and heard**. The use of the word “words” here would seem to imply that he heard the language of exalted praise; or that there were truths imparted to his mind which he could **not hope to convey in any language spoken by people**.” **Barnes’ Notes**, “2 Corinthians 12:4” Electronic Database, Copyright © 1997, 2003, 2005, 2006 by BibleSoft.*

Several versions do not translate ‘which it is not lawful to speak’ but rather ‘that are not possible to speak. The emphasis, then is not on the lawfulness of describing what was seen but rather on the possibility of expressing it.

Barnes goes on to remark:

*“The transaction here referred to is very remarkable. It is **the only instance** in the Scriptures of anyone who was taken to heaven, either **in reality or in vision**,*

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and who returned again to the earth and was then qualified to communicate important truths about the heavenly world from personal observation.” Barnes’ Notes, Electronic Database, Copyright © 1997, 2003, 2005, 2006 by Biblesoft.

This statement by Barnes is **enigmatic** because in the **book of Revelation** John was certainly transported to heaven in vision. Also, we will note that **Ellen White was transported to heaven and came back** as well, and the scenes were so real that she could not find the words to describe what she had seen. It is significant, however, that Barnes recognized that the expression ‘*in the body or out of the body*’ simply means ‘in **reality [in person]** or in **vision**.’

John struggled for words to describe what he saw in heaven

Revelation 21:10, 11 (see also Revelation 15:2; 21:18, 21)

*“And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, **11** having the glory of God. Her light was **like** a most precious stone, **like** a jasper stone, clear **as** crystal.”*

Note: The best that John could do was use earthly things to describe the realities of heaven.

John’s Literary Sources

No doubt the Holy Spirit inspired the book of Revelation. But **what sources** did the Spirit employ to impart the information to **John**? The book of Revelation seems to consist of **three** sources of information:

First, John borrowed **words, phrases, and sentences** from previously **inspired** sources. There are **hundreds** of allusions to the **Old Testament** (for example, Revelation 14:7). Many ideas also come from other inspired **New Testament** sources (for example, Revelation 1:7 with Matthew 24:30)

Second, John also borrowed words, phrases and sentences from other **non-inspired** sources that existed in his day. It seems like John occasionally employed the language of **Enoch and Tobit**.

Does this mean that the books of Enoch and Tobit **were inspired**? No! It simply means that the language of these books was **common jargon** in John’s day and God **gave him permission** to use the language that was common in his day, a language with which his readers were undoubtedly acquainted. But once the language was included in the book of Revelation it became **part of the inspired record**. Of many examples that could be cited, let’s notice just

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three:

Enoch 40:1 *“After that [Revelation 7:9] I saw thousands of thousands and ten thousand times ten thousand [Revelation 5:11], I saw a multitude beyond number and reckoning [Revelation 7:9] who stood before the Lord of spirits.”*

Enoch 91:16 *“And the first heaven shall depart and pass away, and a new heaven shall appear” [Revelation 21:1]*

Enoch 90:26 *“ . . . They were judged and found guilty and cast into the fiery abyss” [Revelation 20:15].*

Third, John received much information in **visions and dreams** that were original and were not available in any other **extant source** of his day.

John’s Literary Ethics

Believe it or not, John did not directly quote any of the sources that he used. He generally **paraphrased** his sources and **alluded** to them.

John never provided any **source credit** in the book of Revelation although he **borrowed prolifically** from other inspired sources and less frequently from **non-inspired** sources.

Might we say that John was a **plagiarist** because he did not credit his sources? Someone might argue: “But the **literary ethics of John’s day** did not require authors to credit their sources.”

This is not necessarily true because **Matthew**, in contrast to John, is very careful to credit his sources (1:22; 2:15, 17, 23; 3:3; 4:14; 8:17; 12:17; 13:35; 21:4; 22:31; 24:15; 27:9, 35). Other New Testament writers also commonly affirmed that they **borrowed from the Scriptures**.

Though John **borrowed** material from other sources, his book is a **totally new literary production**. In fact, those who have carefully studied the **literary structure** of this book have concluded that it is a **literary masterpiece**. It is a book that was **meticulously and intricately structured** around the **Hebrew sanctuary**. In fact, it follows the precise order of the sanctuary service. Like a **mosaic**, each part of the book is **linked beautifully** with every other part.

We could use the following example: Suppose that **ten** different contractors go to **Home Depot** and each of them buys the necessary materials to build a house. They all buy **nails, lumber, concrete, sand, drywall, tile, shingles, doors, windows, electrical wiring, light fixtures, etc.** But when each of

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them finishes his house, there are **ten totally different** houses. They all used the **same materials** but they put them together differently.

Revelation's Symbolic Character

The book of Revelation presents God's end time message in **symbolic, coded** language that must be **decoded or deciphered**. The book describes the **dragon, the beast, the false prophet, the harlot, the wine, the twelve stars, the waters, the earth, the two witnesses, the seal of God, the mark of the beast, the 1260 days, the seven horns, the seven eyes, etc.** But what do these symbols mean? In order to comprehend the book it is necessary to **decode** or **decipher** this symbolic language.

The Central Thesis and Theme of Revelation

It is obvious that the central theme of Revelation is the **great controversy between Christ and Satan** with **Christ being the final victor!** This theme is clearly revealed in chapters **12 and 13** where Christ and Satan are in a death struggle. This battle is constantly in the **background of the entire book**. Revelation unveils the history that is being written **behind history**.

Revelation's Two Halves

Chapters 1-9: The **first half** of Revelation (the churches, the seals and the trumpets) is of **historical** emphasis and each section concludes with an eschatological climax. The **churches, the seals and the trumpets** all begin in the days of the apostles, flow throughout history and climax in the end time.

Chapters 12-22: The **second half** of Revelation centers primarily on **end time events** with some historical background to give a frame of reference. The second half of the book describes the powers that will **oppose God's people** (chapters 12, 13), the **warning** against these powers (chapter 14) **close of human probation** (chapter 15), the **plagues** (chapters 16-18), the **second coming** (chapter 19), the **millennium** (chapter 20) and the **earth made new** (chapters 21, 22).

Chapters 10, 11: In the **heart of the book** is the episode about the **little book** (Revelation 10) and the opening of the **Most Holy Place** for the final judgment (Revelation 11:19)

Satan attempted to kill John before he wrote Revelation

Christian tradition has it that during the reign of the emperor **Domitian**, John was thrown into a **cauldron** of boiling oil but was miraculously

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delivered, as were the **three young men** who were thrown into the fiery furnace in the days of Daniel. After this event, John was exiled to the isle of Patmos and wrote the book of Revelation. Ellen White supports the reliability of this historical tradition:

“John was cast into a cauldron of boiling oil, but the Lord preserved the life of His faithful servant, even as He preserved the three Hebrews in the fiery furnace.” Acts of the Apostles, p. 569

Ellen G. White’s Visionary Experience

Ellen White had the testimony of Jesus

Revelation 12:17:

*“And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the **testimony of Jesus Christ.**” (19:10; 22:8, 9)*

Note: Ellen White frequently called her messages “**the testimonies**” because she had the Testimony of Jesus (Revelation 12:17). The four-volume precursor of the five-volume ‘Conflict Series’ was called “The Spirit of Prophecy”. According to Revelation 19:10 the testimony of Jesus is the Spirit of Prophecy.

*“The **Testimonies are of the Spirit of God**, or of the devil. As the Lord has manifested Himself through the **Spirit of prophecy**, past, present, and future have passed before me.” Counsels to the Church, p. 93*

*“This prophecy [**Revelation 12:17**] points out clearly that the **remnant church** will acknowledge God in His law and will have the **prophetic gift**. Obedience to the law of God, and the **spirit of prophecy** has always distinguished the true people of God, and the test is usually given on present manifestations.” Loma Linda Messages, p. 33*

Ellen White’s visions were given primarily for the church

Ellen White’s message, like that of John the Baptist was primarily **for the church**. She wrote an entire series of nine volumes called, **Testimonies for the Church**.

1 Corinthians 14:22:

*“Therefore tongues are for a sign, not to those who believe but to unbelievers; but **prophesying is not for unbelievers but for those who believe.**”*

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Ellen White was as dead when she was in vision

*“They **thought that I was dead**, and there they watched and cried and prayed so long, but to me it was heaven, it was life.” Manuscript 16, 1894*

Note: Ellen White did not breathe when she entered a vision and perhaps this is the reason why those who were present thought that she was dead.

‘I saw’ and ‘I was shown’

In the earliest edition of the great controversy story (**Spiritual Gifts**), Ellen White used the expression **“I saw”** or **“I was shown”** an average of about **once per page**.

God showed Ellen White the vivid scenes of the great controversy in panoramic views. Later, in the book The Great Controversy, the expressions ‘I saw’ and ‘I was shown’ were **dropped** because the book was used for the general public and Ellen White did not want to **prejudice** them against the book.

Ellen White was inspired by God’s Spirit but the information was imparted by an angel

Though Ellen White’s message was given to her by inspiration of the **Holy Spirit**, an angel whom she called “my guide”, (CET 26) ‘my instructor’ (7MR 347) or ‘my accompanying angel’ (EW 38) imparted it to her.

Ellen White was ordered to write while she was in vision

*“**While in vision**, I was **commanded by an angel to write** the vision. I obeyed, and wrote readily.” (Testimonies, volume 1, p. 73)*

Ellen White asked her angel questions

*“I **begged of my attending angel** to let me remain in that place. I could not bear the thought of coming back to this dark world again. Then **the angel said**, “You must go back, and if you are faithful, you, with the 144,000, shall have the privilege of visiting all the worlds and viewing the handiwork of God.” Early Writings, p. 40.*

*“I **asked my accompanying angel** the meaning of what I heard, and what the four angels were about to do. **He said to me** that it was God that restrained the powers, and that He gave His angels charge over things on the earth; that the four angels had power from God to hold the four winds, and that they were about to let them go; but while their hands were loosening, and the four winds*

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were about to blow, the merciful eye of Jesus gazed on the remnant that were not sealed, and He raised His hands to the Father and pleaded with Him that He had spilled His blood for them. Then another angel was commissioned to fly swiftly to the four angels and bid them hold, until the servants of God were sealed with the seal of the living God in their foreheads.” Early Writings, p. 38

In the famous “**train vision**,” she **asked her angel** who the conductor was to which the **angel replied** that it was Satan disguised as an angel of light. (Early Writings, p. 88)

Ellen White spoke with other heavenly beings

God took her in vision to another world where she asked **one of the inhabitants** why they were so **much lovelier** than those on the earth to which the person replied:

“We have lived in strict obedience to the commandments of God, and have not fallen by disobedience, like those on the earth.” (Christian Experience and Teaching, p. 98)

Ellen White once saw **Enoch** on a planet with seven moons. She asked Enoch if this was the place to which he was translated from the earth to which he said:

“It is not, the city is my home, and I have come to visit this place.” (Christian Experience and Teaching, p. 98)

Note: Is this idea of Enoch speaking to Ellen White really so **preposterous**? The Bible says that Enoch was **translated to heaven** from among the living. Hebrews 11 says that the Old Testament heroes **looked forward to the city** whose builder and maker is God and Enoch is **one of those listed**.

Ellen White also spoke with Jesus

Ellen White once asked Jesus if the Father had **a form** such as Himself. Jesus answered that He did and then added:

“If you should once behold the glory of His person, you would cease to exist.” (Early Writings, p. 54)

Ellen White witnessed future events as if they were transpiring in the present

Ellen White was sometimes **transported to the future** where she witnessed events as if they were transpiring while she was in vision. For example, she once carried on a conversation with brothers **Fitch and Stockman** under the

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tree of life. Of course, Fitch and Stockman died before the Great Disappointment of 1844 (Christian Experience and Teaching, p. 61)

In Ellen White's first vision (EW 13-23) she vividly describes Jesus giving her a tour of the future heavenly land along with the redeemed from the earth. So real was this participation in the future event that she begged her angel to let her stay there rather than come back to the earth. She actually believed that she was physically in heaven!

Ellen White's angel transported her to heaven

*"Soon I was lost to earthly things and was wrapped in a vision of God's glory. I saw an angel flying swiftly to me. **He quickly carried me** from the earth to the Holy City. In the city I saw a temple, which I entered."* (Early Writings, p. 32)

Ellen White's experience while in vision

*"As inquiries are frequently made as to my state in vision, and after I come out, I would say that when the Lord sees fit to give a vision, I am **taken into the presence of Jesus and angels**, and am entirely **lost to earthly things**. I can see no farther than **the angel** directs me. My attention is often directed to scenes transpiring upon earth."* Selected Messages, volume 1, p. 36.

Inadequate language for her to describe what she saw

*"**No words** can describe the scene which took place as the Son of God was publicly reinstated in the place of honor and glory which He voluntarily left when He became a man." 5BC 1146*

*"The wonderful things I there saw **I cannot describe**. Oh, that I could talk in the language of Canaan, then could I tell a little of the glory of the better world." (Early Writings, p. 19)*

*"**Language is altogether too feeble** to attempt a **description of heaven**. As the scene rises before me, I am lost in amazement. Carried away with the surpassing splendor and excellent glory, I lay down the pen, and exclaim, "Oh, what love! What wondrous love!" The **most exalted language** fails to describe the glory of heaven or the matchless depths of a Savior's love." Early Writings, p. 289.*

Ellen White's Literary Sources

A significant part of The Great Controversy consists of **words, phrases and sentences** from the **Old and New Testaments**. The Scripture references at the **end of the book** reveal her profound knowledge and use of Scripture.

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Ellen White also borrowed some material from **non-inspired sources**. In the **first editions** (Spiritual Gifts and Spirit of Prophecy) of what is now The Great Controversy, she used quotations from **other authors** and did **not give them credit**. Some have accused her of **literary piracy or plagiarism**. We must remember, however that the literary ethics of the **19th century** were different than they are today.

Ellen White **did not try to hide** the fact that she used non-canonical sources. She readily announces this in the **Introduction** to The Great Controversy (which is really the introduction to the entire Conflict Series):

*“In some cases where a historian has so grouped together events as to afford, in brief, a comprehensive view of the subject, or has summarized details in a convenient manner, his words have been quoted; but in some instances **no specific credit has been given**, since the quotations are not given for the purpose of citing that writer as authority, but because his statement affords a ready and forcible presentation of the subject. In narrating the experience and views of those carrying forward the work of reform in our own time, similar **use has been made** of their published works.” The Great Controversy, p. xi.*

Much of the material in The Great Controversy is **original** with Ellen White and came to her directly through **visions and dreams**. Chapters such as **“God’s People Delivered,” “The Desolation of the Earth”** and **“The Controversy Ended”** came to her directly in visions and dreams.

Ellen White took what she **found in Scripture**, what God gave her in **visions** and dreams and what she researched in **non-inspired sources** and she **wove them** the material into a **literary masterpiece** totally **unlike anything** which has ever been written! What John developed in **22 chapters**, Ellen White amplified in **678 pages**.

A Decoded Book of Revelation

Ellen White decodes the symbols of Revelation in matter-of-fact language. She **decodes** the meaning of the **dragon, the beast, the false prophet, the harlot, the wine, the twelve stars, the waters, the earth, the two witnesses, the seal of God, the mark of the beast, the 1260 days, the seven horns, the seven eyes, etc.** In order to comprehend the book it is necessary to **decode or decipher** this symbolic language and Ellen White has done just that.

For example, the symbolic language in Revelation 4 and 5 is interpreted in

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matter-of-fact language (DA 833-835):

- One seated on the throne = God the Father
- 4 Living Creatures = Cherubim and Seraphim
- 24 elders = Representatives of the worlds
- Seven lamps of fire = The Holy Spirit
- The Lamb = Jesus

The Central Theme

The Great Controversy is **not an ordinary history book**. It is actually a **philosophy of history**. In it she sees the history that is being **written behind history**. She discerns the **real causes** of visible historical events. She is allowed **to look behind the veil** into the invisible world to discern the battle between **two supernatural forces** vying for world dominion. She sees what the **most able historian** is not able to see. This is what makes her **book unique** and unrivalled.

For example, she writes about **natural disasters** that will become more frequent and terrible (GC 589, 590). The historian would simply describe that these events **occurred** and **where they occurred** and **how many people** were killed. Ellen White explains the **real reason** for them—who caused them and why. The reason is that Satan ultimately wants to blame God's people for these calamities.

Some get all hung up because Ellen White wrote that the **bell of the palace** in Paris was the signal for the beginning of the **St. Bartholomew Massacre**. Most historians think it was the **bell of the Cathedral** that gave the signal. Those who get all hung up on this fail to realize that Ellen White's role was **not to define which bell** tolled but rather who was behind the massacre and why—**Satan wanted to stomp out the Reformation in France**. So don't get all hung up over a bell!!

The book's two halves and center

The **first half** of The Great Controversy is of **historical** emphasis (pp. 17-316). These pages cover what is found in the series of the **churches, the seals and the trumpets** (Revelation 1-9)

The **second half** of Revelation (Revelation 12-22) majors in **end time events** (pp. 419-612). These events include trial over **Sabbath and Sunday** and how

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the **three angels' messages** will reveal to the world the real issues in the controversy. She then describes the **close of probation**, the **plagues**, the time of **Jacob's trouble**, the **second coming** of Jesus, the **millennium** and the **earth made new**.

Even a cursory glance reveals that she is expounding upon the events of Revelation **in their proper order**.

At the **center** of the book (Revelation 10, 11; pp. 317-408) is a description of the **Millerite movement**, their **bittersweet experience** and Christ's opening of the **heavenly temple** to begin the judgment. This is also at the very **center of the book of Revelation**.

Satan Attempted to Kill Ellen G. White

On **March 14, 1858**, Ellen White received her great controversy vision at **Lovett's Grove, Ohio**. On the way back home James and Ellen laid plans to publish what she had seen. They decided to stop over at the **Palmer home** in **Jackson, Michigan**. Ellen White describes what happened next:

"After I came out of vision, the afflicted friends and a portion of the congregation bore the body to its resting-place, and great solemnity rested upon those who remained. Two days after this occurrence, we took the cars at Fremont for Jackson, Mich. While on the cars we arranged our plans for writing and publishing the book called 'The Great Controversy' immediately on our return home. I was then as well as usual. On the arrival of the train at Jackson, we went to Bro. Palmers'. We had been in the house but a short time, when, as I was conversing with Sister Palmer, my tongue refused to utter what I wished to say, and seemed large and numb. A strange, cold sensation struck my heart, passed over my head, and down my right side. For a time I was insensible but was I aroused by the voice of earnest prayer. I tried to use my left limbs, but they were perfectly useless. For a short time I did not expect to live. It was my third shock of paralysis, and although within fifty miles of home, I did not expect to see my children again. I called to mind the triumphant season I had enjoyed at Lovett's Grove, and thought it was my last testimony, and felt reconciled to die." Life Sketches, p. 338.

Was this just a common ordinary stroke?

"At the time of the Conference at Battle Creek, in June, 1858, Sister Hutchins, who now sleeps in Jesus, was sorely afflicted with sickness, and we all felt that she would go down to the grave unless the Lord should raise her up. While praying for

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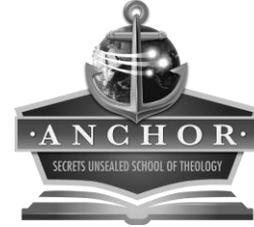
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her, the power of God rested upon us all, and as it came upon me, I was taken off in vision. In that vision it was shown that in the sudden attack at Jackson, Satan intended to take my life, in order to hinder the work I was about to write; but angels of God were sent to my rescue. I also saw, among other things, that I should be blest with better health than before the attack at Jackson.” Life Sketches, p. 339.

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Secrets Unsealed ANCHOR School of Theology Class

“Believe His Prophets: Prophetic Guidance in the Advent Movement”

by Pastor Stephen Bohr

LESSON #6 - THE LESSER LIGHT

Satan’s Rage against the Remnant

Revelation 12:17:

*“And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and **have the testimony of Jesus Christ.**”*

Revelation 19:10:

*“And I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me: “See that you do not do that! I am your **fellow servant**, and of your brethren who have the **testimony of Jesus**. Worship God! For the **testimony of Jesus** is the **spirit of prophecy.**”*

Revelation 22:8, 9:

*“Now I, John, saw and heard these things. And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel who showed me these things. Then he said to me: “See that you do not do that for I am your **fellow servant** and of your **brethren the prophets** and of those who keep the words of this book. Worship God.”*

When, Where and to Whom

Revelation 12:13-17 explains the rise of the prophetic gift **in the end time:**

When: After the 1260 years

Where: On the earth (the territory of the United States)

Among whom: The remnant

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Characteristics: Keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ

Meaning of Terms

In the writings of John, the word for 'have' (*exoo*) expresses the idea of **possession** (for examples see Revelation 1:18; John 5:26; Revelation 3:1). This means that at the end of time the remnant of Jesus will **possess** the testimony of Jesus.

The gift is called 'the **spirit** of prophecy' because prophecy is one of the gifts imparted by the Holy Spirit (I Peter 1:10-12; Zachariah 7:12; II Peter 1:21; Revelation 2:11)

Ellen White's use of the expression 'spirit of prophecy':

The four-volume precursor of the five volume set of the Conflict of the Ages series was called '**Spirit of Prophecy**'

*"It was Christ that spoke to His people through the **prophets**. The apostle Peter, writing to the Christian church, says that the **prophets** "prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow." 1 Peter 1:10, 11 It is the voice of Christ that speaks to us through the Old Testament. "The **testimony of Jesus** is the spirit of prophecy." Revelation 19:10." Patriarchs and Prophets, pp. 366, 367*

*"Through **holy angels** God revealed to Enoch His purpose to destroy the world by a flood, and He also opened more fully to him the plan of redemption. By the **spirit of prophecy** He carried him down through the generations that should live after the Flood, and showed him the great events connected with the second coming of Christ and the end of the world." Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 85*

Regarding Simeon:

*"The **spirit of prophecy** was upon this man of God, and while Joseph and Mary stood by, wondering at his words, he blessed them, and said unto Mary, 'Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against; (yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also,) that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.'" The Desire of Ages, p. 55*

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“Yet now when I send you a testimony of warning and reproof, many of you declare it to be merely the opinion of Sister White. You have thereby insulted the Spirit of God. You know how the Lord has manifested Himself through the spirit of prophecy. Past, present, and future have passed before me. I have been shown faces that I had never seen, and years afterward I knew them when I saw them. I have been aroused from my sleep with a vivid sense of subjects previously presented to my mind; and I have written, at midnight, letters that have gone across the continent and, arriving at a crisis, have saved great disaster to the cause of God. This has been my work for many years. A power has impelled me to reprove and rebuke wrongs that I had not thought of. Is this work of the last thirty-six years from above or from beneath?” Testimonies for the Church, volume 5, pp. 64, 65

In 1 Corinthians 12 the apostle Paul compares the gifts of the Spirit with different parts of the body. The gift of prophecy is the ‘eyes’ of the church:

- 1 Corinthians 12:14, 18, 27, 28: Church is compared to a **body**
- 1 Samuel 9:9: Prophets were called ‘**seers**’
- Proverbs 29:18: Where there is no **vision** the people perish
- Isaiah 29:10: When the gift is ignored the people are **blind**
- Revelation 3:18: Laodicea is **blind**

The gift of prophecy is **for God’s people** and is generally rejected by them: I Corinthians 14:22; II Chronicles 36:15, 16; Isaiah 30:8-11; Matthew 23:29, 30

Some **will be martyred** at the end for hanging on to the testimony of Jesus (Revelation 20:4)

Introduction

During the last several years I have had the privilege of preaching in several evangelistic meetings at the church I pastor in Fresno California. Having been the pastor of the church for the better part of nineteen years I have had to find new ways of presenting the same good old time message each time I do a series. A few years ago I decided to present a series titled ‘*What Jesus Said*’. The objective of the series was to present the full message of the Bible from the perspective of the four Gospels and the book of Acts. It was actually quite easy to find abundant information on all the doctrines of the Bible in these five books—that is, except one doctrine.

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As I prayed and meditated on how best to present the gift of prophecy I kept on coming to a dead end. Don't get me wrong. As I researched the four Gospels and the book of Acts I found much information about prophets, both false and true. But I was particularly interested in presenting the subject matter from the perspective of the **end time gift** as it would exist in the **remnant church**.

I struggled with this for several weeks and then one day as the deadline for the meetings was drawing ever closer, I was sitting in my office, praying and reflecting upon this, when suddenly a thought came across my mind. It was almost like I heard a voice saying: '*Study the life, message and mission of John the Baptist.*' So I went to **Strong's Concordance** and looked up each and every reference to John the Baptist. As I studied along I discovered a striking parallel between John the Baptist and the prophet that God raised up to guide the end time remnant church. This book draws that parallel.

Chapter One: The Message and Mission of John the Baptist

Great Advent Revival

It was the **spring and summer** of the **year 27 A. D.** and momentous events were taking place in and around Jerusalem. A great **religious revival** was transpiring among God's people. They were aware of the fact that significant events were about to take place. The **final week** of the seventy-week prophecy was about to begin and there was a great revival and **expectancy** among the people. **Multitudes flocked** to John the Baptist in the wilderness, confessing their sins and being baptized by him. This is how Matthew described it:

Matthew 3:5, 6:

*"Then **Jerusalem, all Judea, and all the region** around the Jordan went out to him and were baptized by him in the Jordan, **confessing their sins**"*

There can be little doubt that one reason for the excitement was that the **final week** of the seventy- week prophecy was **about to begin** (see Daniel 9:24-27). Furthermore, the **Old Testament ended** with the promise that God would **send Elijah** before the great and terrible Day of the Lord. John the Baptist **seemed to fit** the description of Elijah. He lived in the **desert** like Elijah, he **ate** what Elijah ate, he **clothed** like Elijah and he called the people **to repentance** like Elijah did. Immediately before beginning His ministry in Galilee, **Jesus alluded to the prophecy** of the seventy weeks when He said:

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Mark 1:15:

"The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel."

The reason why Jesus stated that the time was fulfilled is because his anointing at His baptism had **just taken place** in harmony with the prophecy of the seventy weeks and the kingdom of God was at hand because he was about to **officially begin** His ministry public ministry.

Not the Prophet

John the Baptist was a **humble and modest man**. He did not seek to attract attention to himself. His main function was to give **testimony to Jesus**. When the Jews sent priests and Levites to ask him if he was the Christ or Elijah or the prophet, he responded: *"I am not"* (**John 1:19-21**). Notably, though John stated that he was not Elijah or the prophet, Jesus identified him as the **greatest of the prophets** and also called him **Elijah**. The fact is that John did not claim to be a prophet.

Messenger of the Lord

If John did not claim to be a prophet, what was his title? Bible prophecy indicated that he was **the messenger of the Lord** (**Malachi 3:1**). That is, his mission and title had already been predicted over four hundred years **before his was born**.

Luke 7:27:

*"This is he of whom it is written: 'Behold, I send **My messenger** before Your face, who will prepare your way before you.'"*

More than a Prophet

Jesus not only said that John the Baptist was a prophet but he said that John was **as great as any** of the prophets. He was **more than a prophet** because he was the **connecting link** between the two dispensations:

Luke 7:26

*"But what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I say to you, and **more than a prophet**."*

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Matthew 11:11

*"Assuredly, I say to you, among those born of women there has **not risen one greater** than John the Baptist; but he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he."*

*"Aside from the joy that John found in his mission, his life had been one of sorrow. His voice had been seldom heard except in the wilderness. His was a lonely lot. And he was not permitted to see the result of his own labors. It was not his privilege to be with Christ and witness the manifestation of divine power attending the **greater light**. It was not for him to see the blind restored to sight, the sick healed, and the dead raised to life. He did not behold the light that shone through every word of Christ, shedding glory upon the promises of prophecy. The least disciple who saw Christ's mighty works and heard His words was in this sense **more highly privileged** than John the Baptist, and therefore is said to have been **greater than he.**" DA 220*

No Miracles

John the Baptist was not a miracle worker. The Jews were impressed with signs and wonders. They were always asking for a sign to prove whether the messenger was from the Lord or not (Matthew 12:38, 39; 16:4; John 2:18; 4:48; 6:30; 12:18). Notably, we are told that John the Baptist performed no sign:

John 10:41, 42:

*"Then many came to Him and said, "John performed **no sign**, but all the things that **John spoke** about this Man were true." 42 And many believed in Him there."*

It was the truthfulness of **John's words** that authenticated him as the Lord's messenger, not the miracles that he performed.

The Testimony of Jesus

John the Baptist had the testimony of Jesus:

John 5:31-34

*"If I bear **witness** of Myself, My **witness** is not true. 32 There is another who bears **witness** of Me, and I know that the **witness** which He **witnesses** of Me is true. 33 You have sent to John, and he has borne **witness** to the truth."*

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Not the Light

John denied that he was the light:

John 1:6-9

*“There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷ This man came for a **witness**, to **bear witness** of the Light that all through him might believe. ⁸ **He was not that Light**, but was sent to **bear witness** of that Light. ⁹ That was the true Light that gives light to every man coming into the world.”*

A Lesser Light

The purpose of John was to bear witness to the light. Yet Jesus called **John a bright and shining lamp** (*luchnos*: lamp or candle; John 5:35). In other words, John the Baptist was a **lesser light** which was to lead men and women to the **greater light**—Jesus Christ (see John 5:36 where Jesus actually uses the word ‘greater’ to refer to Himself).

John 5:35, 36:

*“He was the burning and shining **lamp [luchnos]**, and you were willing for a time to rejoice in **his light**. ³⁶ But I have a **greater witness** than John's; for the works which the Father has given Me to finish ó the very works that I do ó bear witness of Me, that the Father has sent Me.”*

The Scriptures a Lesser Light

But notice that the **Scriptures also gave witness** to Jesus. Thus there were **two sources that gave witness** concerning Jesus: the **written** Scriptures of the Old Testament and **John the Baptist**. There was a **canonical** and a **non-canonical** source that gave witness to Jesus.

No book can **fully reveal Jesus Christ** in all of His glory. The Bible is merely a **pale reflection** of Jesus, the person. The greater light is the sun and the lesser light is the moon (Genesis 1:16). The light of the moon has the purpose of reflecting the light of the sun to the earth in the darkness of the night.

John 5:39

“You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these

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are they which testify of Me."

Why Two Lesser Lights?

The question immediately suggests itself: Why did the people need a non-canonical source if they had the written Scriptures of the Old Testament? Or, even further, why would they need a lesser light if the greater light would be in their midst immediately after John the Baptist?

The answer is quite simple. During the period between the Testaments, the people had fallen into gross darkness and had gone astray because of their neglect and misinterpretation of the written Scriptures. All kinds of false teachings and practices came in during this period and therefore they needed a lesser light to point the people to the Greater Light who would soon be in their midst.

Isaiah 60:1, 2:

"Arise, shine; for your light has come! And the glory of the LORD is risen upon you.² For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and deep darkness the people; but the LORD will arise over you, and His glory will be seen upon you."

Matthew 4:16

"The people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, and upon those who sat in the region and shadow of death Light has dawned."

If I enter a dark room where I have never been before and I need to find the light switch, it would help if I had the 'lesser light' of a flashlight to lead me to the light switch to turn on the 'greater light'.

No New Light

The role of John was not to bring new light but rather to turn the attention of the people to the light already given. He was to awaken interest, amplify and explain Old Testament prophecy. That is to say, the role of John was not supplementary but rather complementary.

You see, those who claimed to be God's people and boasted of having the written Scriptures of the Old Testament were violating every principle of the Word of God. They professed to be waiting for the Messiah. They professed

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to love God. They claimed to have a close relationship with Him and yet they **ended up crucifying their Messiah** because they misunderstood the written Scriptures of the Old Testament and rejected the **clarifying light** given by the lesser light, John the Baptist! Because they **rejected the lesser light** (John) they ended up **rejecting the Greater Light** (Jesus)! You can just imagine the people boasting: “*We have Moses,*” and yet they did not **understand or practice** his teachings. The Jews **boasted of their knowledge** of the Scriptures and yet they did not understand or obey them. The role of John was to **attract the attention** of the people to the **Scriptures already given.**

John 5:39, 45-47

*“You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which **testify of Me.** Do not think that I shall accuse you to the Father; there is one who accuses you—Moses, in whom you trust. **46** For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he **wrote about Me.** **47** But if you do not **believe his writings,** how will you **believe My words?**”*

I am of the firm belief that **if the Jews** had understood and obeyed the writings of Moses, God would **never have called** John the Baptist!

John drew attention to the **Old Testament prophecies** that pointed to the Messiah. He pointed out Jesus as the **Lamb of God**, a clear reference to the **sanctuary service** and **Isaiah 53**. He took from the Old Testament and showed how it was being fulfilled in Jesus. He exalted the Old Testament and **made it vivid and alive.** He expanded, **rebuked, reprovved and corrected** but he did not add anything of substance.

Even **baptism** was known in the days of John. Certainly the Jews knew that in the **sanctuary water** was used for cleansing. They knew about the **story of Naaman.** They knew that **leprosy** was a symbol of sin and that Naaman had been cleansed by submerging himself in the Jordan River **seven times.** The apostle Paul even wrote about the baptism of Israel in the **Red Sea** (1 Corinthians 10:1-4)

A Pain in the Neck

John was a **fly** in the ointment, a **pain** in the neck, a **speck** in the eye. He was **no pushover** (Matthew 11:7, 8). He was not **politically correct** but told it like it is! He **rebuked sin** fearlessly and played no favorites and of course this **won him**

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enemies.

Matthew 11:7, 8: John **rebuked Herod** to his face for committing adultery with his brother's wife and **lost his head** as a result. John was **totally unafraid** of speaking the truth.

*"As they departed, Jesus began to say to the multitudes concerning John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A **reed shaken by the wind?** **8** But what did you go out to see? A man clothed in **soft garments?** Indeed, those who wear soft clothing are in kings' houses."*

Restorer and Preparer

The role of John was to **prepare a people** for the first coming of Jesus (Luke 1:17; Matthew 3:1-3; Malachi 3:1). By **repentance, revival and reformation** (bearing fruit) the people were to **wait expectantly** for the bridegroom. John was the **connecting link** or **liaison** between Israel (the bride) and Christ (the groom). He was called to prepare the way for the wedding (**John 3:28-30**).

Jesus affirmed that John was Elijah so we must also understand the role of Elijah in the Old Testament. Elijah was the **great restorer**. He did not introduce any **new truths**. He simply called Israel to **repent and return** to the religion of the **fathers**. This is why he **built the altar** of the Lord and invoked the **God of the covenant founders** of the Old Testament—Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. In Malachi 4 we are once again told that the end time Elijah will be a **great restorer**. In **Matthew 17:12** we are told that Elijah (John the Baptist) came to restore all things:

Luke 1:16-17

*"And he **will turn** many of the children of Israel **to the Lord** their God. **17** He will also go **before Him** in the spirit and power of Elijah, **'to turn the hearts** of the fathers to the children,' and the disobedient **to the wisdom** of the just, to **make ready** a people prepared for the Lord."*

Matthew 3:1-3

*"In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, **2** and saying, "**Repent**, for the kingdom of heaven is **at hand!**" **3** For this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah, saying: "The voice of one crying in the wilderness: **'Prepare the way** of the LORD; make His paths straight.'*

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Matthew 17:11

*“Jesus answered and said to them, “Indeed, Elijah is coming first and will **restore** all things.”*

In New Testament times, the **friend of the bridegroom** was responsible for making all the preparations for the wedding so that all was ready when the groom should come (see Matthew 22:1-14). The friend of the bridegroom was not to take any **glory for himself**. The glory was for the groom who was to marry the bride. The best man in a wedding is not the center of attraction. The friend of the bridegroom **decreases** so that the groom can **increase**.

The Old Testament contained prophecies about the bridegroom coming to marry his bride. The matchmaker (John the Baptist) had come to **make all the arrangements** for the wedding but the **bride rejected** the invitation. By rejecting the **preparatory work** of the matchmaker they rejected the bridegroom as well. The very people that he came to serve mistreated John the Baptist.

Despised and Rejected

Matthew 11:18: John was accused of being **demon possessed**:

*“For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, ‘**He has a demon.**’”*

Matthew 21:32: Jesus rebuked the chief priests and the elders:

*“For John came to you in the way of righteousness, and **you did not believe him**; but tax collectors and harlots **believed him**; and when you saw it, you did not afterward relent and **believe him.**”*

Luke 7:29-30: The **scholars** and the **ministers** of His day rejected John. The problem was mostly with the leadership!

*“And when all **the people** heard Him, even the tax collectors justified God, having been baptized with the baptism of John. 30 But the **Pharisees** and **lawyers** rejected the will of God for themselves, not having been baptized by him.”*

The **religious leaders knew Him not** (the same expression as **John 1:10-11**). They did with John **as they pleased** and therefore they **treated Jesus in the same way**. And these were the very people who claimed to understand and teach the Scriptures!! By rejecting the **lesser light**, they rejected the **greater**

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light!!

Matthew 17:12-13:

*"Jesus answered and said to them, "Indeed, Elijah is coming first and will **restore** all things. 12 But I say to you that Elijah has come already, and they **did not know him** but did to him **whatever they wished**. **Likewise** the Son of Man is also about to suffer at their hands." 13 Then the disciples understood that He spoke to them of **John the Baptist**."*

The people to whom they are sent **never love true prophets**. In fact, those who professed to be God's chosen people **hated them**. Before the Babylonian captivity God told Israel:

2 Chronicles 36:15, 16

*"And the Lord God of their fathers sent warnings to them by His messengers, rising up early and sending them, because **He had compassion** on His people and on His dwelling place. 16 But they **mocked the messengers** of God, **despised His words**, and **scoffed at His prophets**, until the wrath of the Lord arose against His people, till there was **no remedy**."*

And Jesus rebuked the **scribes and Pharisees**:

Matthew 23:37

*"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who **kills the prophets** and **stones [like Stephen]** those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing!"*

Jeremiah was thrown into the dungeon, **Elijah** was hunted like a wild beast, **Isaiah** was sawn asunder in a hollow log, **John** was beheaded, **Jesus** was crucified, **Stephen** was stoned and the list goes on and on.

Not Omniscient

Prophets are **not omniscient or infallible**. They were always weak human beings in need of the grace of God. Prophets **grew in their understanding** of truth. At first they might **not have fully understood** the message that God was attempting to relay to them. John the Baptist did not fully understand the kingdom at the beginning of his ministry. He believed that there would be only **one coming** of the Messiah

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“His winnowing fan is in His hand, and He [the coming Messiah] will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather His wheat into the barn; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.” (See also verses 7 and 10)

Ellen White makes these incisive remarks about **John’s incomplete knowledge** of the Messiah’s coming when he began to preach in the desert:

“John did not fully understand the nature of the Messiah's kingdom. He looked for Israel to be delivered from her national foes; but the coming of a King in righteousness, and the establishment of Israel as a holy nation, was the great object of his hope.” The Desire of Ages, p. 103

“During the weeks that followed [the baptism of Jesus], John with new interest studied the prophecies and the teaching of the sacrificial service. He did not distinguish clearly the two phases of Christ's work—as a suffering sacrifice and a conquering king—but he saw that His coming had a deeper significance than priests or people had discerned.” The Desire of Ages, p. 136

When Jesus did not appear to measure up to his expectations John sent a message to Jesus asking Him **if He was the expected Messiah** or they were to wait for another (**Matthew 11:1-3**). **Was John a false prophet** because he did not fully understand the work of the Messiah? Was his work as a prophet **any less trustworthy** because his knowledge and understanding were limited due to his own misconceptions? Notably, when the disciples of John brought back the report from the lips of Jesus, **John finally understood** but it took him time to clearly grasp the truth.

Chapter Two: The Life, Message and Mission of Ellen G. White

Ellen White was not a **miracle worker**:

“Some declare their unbelief in the work that the Lord has given me to do because, as they say, “Mrs. E. G. White works no miracles.” But those who look for miracles as a sign of divine guidance are in grave danger of deception.” 2SM 53, 54

No Claim to be a Prophet

Ellen White preferred not to be called a prophet although she was:

“During the discourse, I said that I did not claim to be a prophetess. Some were surprised at this statement, and as much is being said in regard to it, I will make

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an explanation. Others have called me a prophetess, but I have **never assumed that title**. I have not felt that it was my duty thus to **designate myself**. Those who boldly assume that they are prophets in this our day are often a reproach to the cause of Christ." 1SM 35, 36

"When I was last in Battle Creek, I said before a large congregation that I **did not claim to be a prophetess**. Twice I referred to this matter, intending each time to make the statement, "I **do not claim to be a prophetess**." If I spoke otherwise than this, let all now understand that what I had in mind to say was that I **do not claim** the title of prophet or prophetess." 1SM 35

The Lord's Messenger

What, then, was Ellen White? The answer is that she repeatedly referred to herself as the **Lord's messenger**:

'Early in my youth I was asked several times: Are you a prophet? I have ever responded, I am the Lord's **messenger**. I know that many have called me a prophet, but I have made no claim to this title. My Savior declared me to be **His messenger**.' ISM 32.

'I have had no claims to make, only that I am instructed that I am the **Lord's messenger**; that He called me in my youth to be **His messenger**, to receive His word, and to give a clear and decided message in the name of the Lord Jesus.' ISM 32.

'To claim to be a prophetess is something that I have never done. If others call me by that name, I have no controversy with them. But my work has covered so many lines that I cannot call myself other than a **messenger**, sent to bear a message from the Lord to His people, and to take up work in any line that He points out.' ISM 34

More than a Conventional Prophet

The work of Ellen White was **far greater** than that of a conventional prophet (1SM 32, 34, 36). She was more in the **line of Moses** who had a long trajectory in leading God's people out of Egyptian bondage. God chose her to **restore the truth** in all the dimensions of life. She herself stated:

'My work includes **much more** than this name [prophetess] signifies. I regard myself as a messenger, entrusted by the Lord with messages for His people . . . My

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*commission embraces the work of a prophet, but it does not end there. It embraces **much more** than the minds of those who have been sowing the seeds of unbelief can comprehend.' 1SM 37*

*"Why have I not claimed to be a prophet? Because in these days many who boldly claim that they are prophets are a reproach to the cause of Christ; and because my work includes **much more** than the word 'prophet' signifies." 1SM 32*

*"Early in my youth I was asked several times: **Are you a prophet?** I have ever responded, I am the **Lord's messenger**. I know that many have called me a prophet, but I have **made no claim to this title**. My Savior declared me to be **His messenger**. "Your work," He instructed me, "is to bear My word." 1SM 32*

*"To claim to be a prophetess is something that I have never done. If others call me by that name, I have no controversy with them. But my work has **covered so many lines** that I cannot call myself other than a messenger, sent to bear a message from the Lord to His people, and to take up work in any line that He points out." 1SM 3493*

Ellen White wrote on a broad range of subjects. Our institutions and our personal lives would be far better if we followed her counsel in the following books:

- Medical (MH, CH, CDF, MM)
- Educational (ED, FCE)
- Publishing (CM)
- Administration of the work (TM)
- Ministerial (GW)
- Evangelism (EV)
- Theology (Conflict Series)
- Home and Marriage (AH)
- Psychology (MCP)
- Devotional life (DA)
- Children (CG)
- Finances (CS)
- Health (MH, CH, CDF)

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The Testimony of Jesus

Ellen White had the **Testimony of Jesus** (Revelation 12:17; 19:10; 22:9)

*“And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the **testimony of Jesus Christ**.”*

*“And I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me: “See that you do not do that! I am your fellow servant, and of **your brethren** who have the **testimony of Jesus**. Worship God! For the testimony of Jesus is the **spirit of prophecy**.”*

*“Now I, John, saw and heard these things. And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel who showed me these things. 9 Then he said to me: “See that you do not do that for I am your fellow servant, and of **your brethren the prophets** and of those who keep the words of this book. Worship God.”*

*“This prophecy [Revelation 12:17] points out clearly that the **remnant church** will acknowledge God in His law and will have **the prophetic gift**. Obedience to the law of God and the **spirit of prophecy** has always distinguished the true people of God, and the test is usually given on present manifestations.” Loma Linda Messages, p. 33*

A Lesser Light

Ellen White was a lesser light chosen by God to lead men and women to the greater light, **Jesus Christ**:

“Little heed is given to the Bible and the Lord has given a lesser light to lead men and women to the greater light.” 3SM 30

What did Ellen White mean when she referred to ‘the greater light’ and the ‘lesser light’? Was ‘the greater light’ the Bible and ‘the lesser light’ her writings, as has been traditionally believed? Let’s allow Ellen White to explain Ellen White by going elsewhere in her writings:

*“The prophet John was the connecting link between the two dispensations. As God’s representative he stood forth to show the relation of the law and the prophets to the Christian dispensation. He was the **lesser light**, which was to be **followed by a greater**. The Holy Spirit illuminated the mind of John that he might*

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shed light upon his people; but **no other light ever has shone or ever will shine so clearly** upon fallen man as that which **emanated from the teaching and example of Jesus**. Christ and His mission had been but **dimly understood** as typified in the **shadowy** sacrifices. Even John had not fully comprehended the future, immortal life through the Savior.” DA 220

“The religion of the Jews, in consequence of their departure from God, consisted mostly in ceremony. John was the **lesser light**, which was to be followed by a **greater light**. He was to shake the confidence of the people in their traditions, and call their sins to remembrance, and lead them to repentance; that they might be prepared to appreciate **the work of Christ**.” (Review and Herald, volume 41, number 17, April 8, 1873)

“It was not his [John’s] privilege to be with Christ and witness the manifestation of divine power attending the **greater light**.” Conflict and Courage, p. 279

“With the first advent of Christ there was ushered in an era of **greater light and glory**; but it would indeed be sinful ingratitude to despise and ridicule **the lesser light** because a fuller and more glorious light had dawned. Those who despise the blessings and glory of the **Jewish age** are not prepared to be benefited by the **preaching of the gospel**. The brightness of the Father’s glory, and the excellence and perfection of His sacred law, are only understood through the atonement made upon Calvary by His dear Son; but even the atonement loses its significance when the law of God is rejected.” TDG 246

Traditionally it has been taught that **the Bible is the greater light** and the writings of Ellen White are the lesser light. Some have taken the word ‘lesser’ to mean ‘**inferior**’, ‘less inspired’ and of ‘lesser authority’. That is, they believe that Ellen White was less inspired than the Biblical prophets and that therefore she had less authority.

But those who believe this miss the point. As we have shown, **both** the Bible and Ellen White **are lesser lights** that lead to Jesus Christ the Greater Light. Ellen White’s inspiration and authority is equal to that of the Biblical prophets but she was called for a **different function**. She was not called to bring forth **new truth** but rather to amplify the truths already revealed and to correct those who go astray from the truth to bring them back to the truth.

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Why Two Lesser Lights?

As in the times of John, today two sources give witness to Jesus, one **canonical** (the Bible) and the other **non-canonical** (the writings of Ellen G. White). As with John, the purpose of the writings of Ellen White is to focus attention **on the written Scriptures** that had been **misinterpreted and buried** in the dark ages. If God's people had studied the Word of God with the sincere desire to know God's will and obey it, God would never have called Ellen White. Christians today who **claim to follow the Bible**, keep **Sunday** as the day of rest, **eat pork**, believe that the **dead are not dead**, that the wicked will **burn in hell forever**, that we should **baptize infants** by sprinkling, etc. God called Ellen White to restore that which had been torn down during the period of papal dominion.

Ellen White clarified the purpose of her writings in **Testimonies for the Church**, volume 2, pp. 663-66:

*"Brother J would confuse the mind by seeking to make it appear that the light God has given through the Testimonies is **an addition** to the word of God, but in this he presents the matter in a false light. God has seen fit in this manner to bring the minds of His people **to His word**, to give them a **clearer understanding** of it. The **word of God is sufficient** to enlighten the most beclouded mind and may be understood by those who have any desire to understand it. But notwithstanding all this, **some who profess** to make the word of God their study are found living in direct opposition to its plainest teachings. Then, to leave men and women **without excuse**, God gives plain and pointed testimonies, **bringing them back to the word** that they have neglected to follow. **The word of God** abounds in **general principles** for the formation of correct habits of living, and the testimonies, general and personal, have been calculated to **call their attention more especially to these principles.**"*

*"If you had made **God's word your study**, with a **desire to reach the Bible standard and attain to Christian perfection**, you would **not have needed the Testimonies**. It is because you have neglected to acquaint yourselves with **God's inspired Book** that He has sought to reach you by simple, direct testimonies, **calling your attention to the words of inspiration which you had neglected to obey**, and urging you to fashion your lives in accordance with its pure and elevated teachings.*

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*"The Lord designs to warn you, to reprove, to counsel, through the testimonies given, and to impress your minds with the importance of the **truth of His word**. The written testimonies are **not to give new light**, but to impress vividly upon the heart the **truths of inspiration already revealed**. Man's duty to God and to his fellow man has been distinctly specified **in God's word**, yet but few of you are obedient to the light given. **Additional truth is not brought out**; but God has through the Testimonies **simplified** the great truths already given and in His own chosen way brought them before the people to **awaken and impress** the mind with them, that all may be left **without excuse**."*

*"Above all other books, the **Word of God** must be our study, the great textbook, the basis of all education." FLB 295*

*"The Testimonies are **not to belittle** the Word of God, but to exalt it and **attract minds to it**, that the beautiful simplicity of truth may impress all." FLB 295*

God called Ellen White to be a **restorer** of the truths of Scripture that had been lost during the **dark ages**. It is significant that John the Baptist is called Elijah on three separate occasions in the Gospels. As we have seen, Elijah did not present **any new truths**. He was called to call the people **back** to the true worship of Jehovah and to **restore** the teachings that they had gone astray from. This is the reason why he built the altar of the LORD that had been broken down. That is why he invoked the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in his prayer.

John the Baptist also called the people to repentance. He did not bring any new truths but sought to **restore, clarify and amplify the truth**. This is what is explicitly stated in **Matthew 17:11**. He came to bring people back to the faith of the fathers in order to prepare a people for the first coming of Jesus. Likewise Ellen White was chosen to restore the truth and thus prepare a people for the **second coming of Jesus**.

Isn't Scripture Sufficient?

Why do we need Ellen White if we have the Bible? For the same reason that the **Jews needed John** even though they had the Old Testament. The Jews did not understand or obey the Scriptures so God in His mercy gave them **a helping hand** by **simplifying** and **amplifying** the truths already given. Ellen White is not a source of new light but rather one who amplifies and simplifies the old

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light. She **corrects** those who err from Bible truth bringing them **back to the Word**.

I was once listening to a call-in religious radio talk show in Albuquerque, New Mexico. A pastor was receiving questions from callers and answering them on the air. As I listened, a person called and asked a two-part question: *“Is it a sin to smoke and will God send me to hell for smoking?”* I was captivated by the questions and curious to see how the pastor would answer them. To the first question the pastor answered: *“I can assure you that it is not a sin to smoke because the Bible does not say: ‘Thou shalt not smoke.’”* And the pastor answered the second question: *“With regards to your second question I can assure you that you will not go to hell but rather you will make it to heaven quicker!”*

My question was: Had the pastor forgotten that the Bible says: *“Thou shalt not kill”*? Did he not remember that the Bible states that God will destroy those who **defile the body temple**?

An Example

Around the same time that God called Ellen White, another person arose claiming to have the prophetic gift. He purportedly found and translated some **gold plates** in **Palmyra, New York**, written in an ancient **Egyptian dialect**. The result is what we know today as **The Book of Mormon**. The Mormons refer to this book as *‘another Testament of Jesus Christ.’* It is considered a **supplement** or addition to the Word of God (along with **The Pearl of Great Price** and **Doctrine and Covenants**). The Mormons, **without apology**, affirm that these books contain truths that are **not found in the Bible**. One wonders why there is **no manuscript trail** of the book of Mormon and why Joseph Smith translated the plates into **King James English!!**

When the Latter Day Saints pay a visit to a home, their first task is to convince the prospective convert that Joseph Smith was a true prophet and that **The Book of Mormon** must be studied as a **supplement** to the Bible. As the studies continue, the Bible and the Book of Mormon are used together.

Ellen White and the Bible

With Seventh-day Adventists the **process is reversed**. The catechumen is taught the truth from the **Bible alone** and once all the doctrines have been clearly presented from the Bible and then the Spirit of Prophecy is presented,

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not as a supplement but rather as a **complement** of the Bible. This is not done because the Spirit of Prophecy is of **lesser inspiration**, **authority** and **importance** that the written Scriptures but rather because the **purpose** of the writings of Ellen White is to complement, not supplement, Scripture.

Ellen White admonished us never to place the Testimonies before or ahead of the Bible:

*“The testimonies of Sister White should not be carried **to the front**. **God's Word** is the unerring standard. The Testimonies are not to **take the place of the Word** . . . Let all prove their positions **from the Scriptures** and substantiate every point they claim as truth from the revealed **Word of God**.” Letter 12, 1890 *Evangelism*, p. 256*

*“The more we look at the promises of the **Word of God**, the brighter they grow. The more we practice them, the deeper will be our understanding of them. Our position and faith is **in the Bible**. And never do we want any soul to bring in the Testimonies **ahead of the Bible**.” Manuscript 7, 1894 *Evangelism*, p. 256*

An yet she also warned that if you lose confidence in the Testimonies you will also lose confidence in the Scriptures:

*“If you lose confidence in the Testimonies you will **drift away from Bible truth**.” *Counsels to the Church*, p. 94*

*“Besides the instruction in His Word, the Lord has given **special testimonies** to His people, **not as a new revelation**, but that He may set before us the plain lessons **of His Word**, that errors may be corrected, that the right way may be pointed out, that every soul may be **without excuse**.” Letter 63, 1893 *3SM* 31*

*“The Bible must be your counselor. Study it and the testimonies God has given; for they **never contradict His Word**.” Letter 106, 1907 *3SM* 32*

Ellen White magnifies, explains, amplifies, corrects, simplifies and highlights the great truths of Scripture but **does not add** any new truth. Elder A. G. Daniells compared the writings of Ellen White to a **microscope or a telescope**. The pieces of equipment do not **create reality**; they merely **magnify** it and help us see it more clearly!

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Despised and Rejected

In the course of time Ellen White has been accused of **mesmerism**, **demon possession** and **epileptic seizures**. Sad to say, sometimes the **leaders and scholars** of the church are Ellen White's greatest critics.

Is it just possible that many persons in the Seventh-day Adventist Church today who say: "*I don't need Ellen G. White because I have the Bible*" are really violating every principle of God's Word? The fact is that many within the church despised Ellen G. White as much as was John the Baptist by the Jews. In some churches when Ellen White is **quoted from the pulpit**, certain members **cringe** but they don't mind at all when **Max Lucado**, **Rick Warren** or **Richard Foster** are quoted.

Former pastors and scholars of the church write books such as The White Lie and Ellen G. White: Prophetess of Health to undermine confidence in the prophetic gift. **Internet sites** lambast Ellen White with vitriolic hatred, all under the pretense that because we have the Bible we don't need Ellen White! Sounds familiar, doesn't it? Ellen White foresaw all of this. She assured us that the **very last deception** of Satan would be to make of **non-effect** the testimony of the Spirit of God. If this is Satan's very last deception, then we must be close to the end because we can see this hatred being exhibited now!

*"The **very last** deception of Satan will be to make of **none effect** the testimony of the Spirit of God. "Where there is no vision, the people perish" (Proverbs 29:18). Satan will work ingeniously, in different ways and through different agencies, to **unsettle the confidence** of God's remnant people in the true testimony." Letter 12, 1890 1SM 48*

I learned something long ago and it is this: I never form an opinion of someone based on what his **enemies** say about him because the enemies tend to distort the truth. On the other hand I don't form an opinion of a person on the basis of what his **friends** say because they tend to embellish the truth.

For example, some non-Adventist scholars have stated that Seventh-day Adventists believe that Satan is their savior because of Ellen White's interpretation of the scapegoat ceremony. But any impartial and fair-minded observer will see that Azazel bears sins that have already been forgiven in the sanctuary. Others claim that Ellen White taught that keeping the Sabbath saves us; clearly a false statement! If you want to know the truth about Ellen White,

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go directly to the source, read her writings for yourself—get the information first hand!

Preparer and Restorer

The fact is that God called Ellen White to **prepare a people** for the second coming as John prepared a people for the first. As in the days of Christ there will be a **small remnant** that will take the message to heart. Ellen White described a group of Adventists who had no shelter in the time of trouble and the reason why:

*“I saw the state of some who stood on present truth, but **disregarded the visions**—the way God had chosen to teach in some cases, those who **erred from Bible truth**. I saw that in **striking against the visions** they did not strike against the worm—the feeble instrument that God spake through—but against the Holy Ghost. I saw it was a small thing to speak against the instrument, but it was dangerous to slight the words of God. I saw if they were in error and God chose to show them their errors **through visions**, and they disregarded the teachings of God **through visions**, they would be left to take their own way, and run in the way of error, and **think they were right**, until they would find it out too late. Then in the time of trouble I heard them cry to God in agony, “Why didst Thou not show us our wrong, that we might have got right and been ready for this time?” Then an angel pointed to them and said, “My Father taught, but you would not be taught. He spoke **through visions**, but you disregarded His voice, and He gave you up to your own ways, to be filled with your own doings.” Broadside, “To Those Who Are Receiving the Seal of the Living God”, Jan. 31, 1849 1SM 40*

*“There will be a hatred kindled **against the testimonies** which is satanic. The workings of Satan will be to **unsettle the faith** of the churches in them, for this reason: Satan cannot have so clear a track to bring in his deceptions and bind up souls in his delusions if the warnings and reproofs and counsels of the Spirit of God are heeded.” 1SM 48.*

*“Those who have most to say **against the testimonies** are generally those who have not read them, just as those who boast of their disbelief of the Bible are those who have little knowledge of its teachings. They know that it condemns them, and their rejection of it gives them a feeling of security in their sinful course.” 1SM 45, 46*

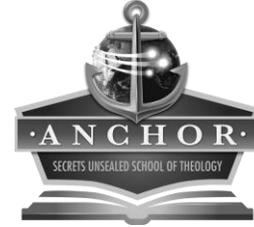
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Not Omniscient or Infallible

Ellen White was not perfect nor omniscient nor infallible. **She made mistakes** (for example the shut door). She **grew in her understanding** of truth as time went by (for example, compare Spiritual Gifts with the Conflict series. Does this make Ellen White less than a trustworthy prophet? Not any more than John the Baptist!

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LESSON # 7 - TESTING A BIBLICAL PROPHET

Jesus warned that at the very end of time false prophets would arise to deceive, if possible, the very elect (Matthew 24:23, 24). For this reason we must be able to distinguish between the counterfeit and the genuine. The question is: How can we distinguish between a true prophet and a counterfeit? In other words, what are the **tests of a true prophet**?

The teachings of a true prophet will be in harmony with the **previously revealed Scriptures**. That is, a true prophet will speak and write ‘to the law and to the testimony (Isaiah 8:20). True prophets are not **innovators** but **restorers**. They take old truths and amplify them and make them applicable in a new context. They do not **change** or revoke previous revelations given by God. As the apostle Paul expressed it, prophets **must be subject to the prophets** (I Corinthians 14:32, 33).

True prophets will call God’s people to be **obedient to the Law**. False prophets will perform signs and wonders but at the same time they will encourage people to be disobedient to God’s Law (see Deuteronomy 13:1-5 and Matthew 7:21-23)

The **personal life** of a true prophet will reveal the **fruit of the Holy Spirit** (Matthew 7:15-20; Galatians 5:22-26). The ministry of a true prophet must bring glory to God (Matthew 5:14-16) and bear good fruit (John 15:8)

A true prophet will be categorical that Jesus came to this world and **became flesh of our flesh**, bone of our bones and blood of our blood (I John 4:1-3; Hebrews 2:14-18; Luke 24:36-43; John 1:14). That is to say, a true prophet will teach that Jesus was a **real man**.

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The **predictions** of a person who claims to be a prophet **must come true** (Jeremiah 28:9; Deuteronomy 18:22) unless there is some **element of conditionality** in the prediction (for example, the preaching of Jonah at Niniveh). True prophets do not predict **mere curiosities**. They deal with real life and death issues. Their perspective is purely spiritual and never merely secular (Amos 3:7).

True prophets will **exalt Jesus Christ** and give Him all the glory. Self will be hidden behind the Man of Calvary. They will be **humble** and will not attract attention to themselves. True prophets will bear witness to Christ (John 20:31). See the example of John the Baptist in John 1:8, 9, 26-29. See also John 5:39, 46; Luke 24:25-27, 44 and 45.

True prophets will **tear the mask off of Satan** and identify him as the great deceiver and destroyer (Mark 3:24-26). They will unveil Satan's wiles and methods and reveal him for who he truly is (II Corinthians 11:3, 12, 13)

True prophets will be certain of their call and **openly rebuke sin** without fearing the consequences. They will even be **willing to die** in order to remain true to God's message. Examples of this are many. Daniel who faced the lion's den, Nathan who rebuked David for adultery and murder; Elijah who rebuked Ahab and Jezebel; Jeremiah who rebuked Jehoiakim and Zedekiah; Isaiah who rebuked Ahaz and Hezekiah; John the Baptist who rebuked Herod; John the apostle who rebuked Emperor Domitian and as a result was thrown into a cauldron of boiling oil and then exiled to Patmos.

True prophets will often experience certain **supernatural physical phenomena** while they are in vision such as not breathing, receiving supernatural strength, being transported to far-away places, being totally unconscious of their surroundings, having their eyes open while in vision and being lost to earthly things and falling as dead (see Daniel 10:5-8, 10, 17-19; Numbers 24:4; 2 Corinthians 12:2-4; Revelation 1:17)

True prophets will be **hated and persecuted** by those to whom they deliver God's message. The prophetic office is a **difficult task** (see as examples, Moses, Jeremiah, Isaiah, Jonah, John the Baptist, Elisha and John the Apostle). Jesus warned that the **false prophets** would be loved: *"Woe to you when all men speak well of you, for so did their fathers to the false prophets."* He also warned that **true prophets** would be hated (Matthew 5:12; 23:29-31, 34-37). True prophets do not seek the office nor will they pride themselves because they

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have the office. In fact, true prophets will frequently shun the call (as examples, Moses and Jeremiah). Generally true prophets would rather not be prophets. True prophets are usually considered strange and eccentric. They do not seek money, popularity or fame for themselves.

True prophets do not take a **course of study** to become prophets. They are called and chosen by God and inspired by the Holy Spirit (2 Peter 1:19-21). Quite frequently prophets have **little or no formal education** because in this way they allow themselves to be used of God instead of leaning on their own learning and wisdom.

The prophetic office **crosses the gender line**. God has chosen many women for the prophetic office including Miriam (Exodus 15:20), Deborah (Judges 4:4), Hulda (2 Kings 22:14), Noadiah (Nehemiah 6:14), Anna (Luke 2:36) and the four daughters of Philip (Acts 21:9).

A prophet **does not need to contribute a book to the Biblical canon** to be a true prophet. Many of the prophets never wrote a Bible book such as Abraham (Genesis 20:7); Gad (2 Samuel 24:11) Nathan (2 Samuel 12:25), Elijah (1 Kings 18:36), Oded (2 Chronicles 15:8), Jehu (1 Kings 16:7), Elisha (1 Kings 19:16), Ahijah (1 Kings 14:2), Shemaiah (2 Chronicles 12:5) Iddo (2 Chronicles 13:22) and John the Baptist (Matthew 11:9).

Although prophets are not scientists, their writings must be **in harmony with sound scientific information**. Notice the following biblical examples:

- The earth is round (Isaiah 40:22)
- The earth hangs upon nothing (Job 26:7)
- The universal law of gravity (Job 38:8-11; Colossians 1:17)
- Wind has weight (Job 28:25)
- The heavens cannot be measured (Jeremiah 31:37)
- The water cycle (Ecclesiastes 1:7)
- The cycles of the wind (Ecclesiastes 1:6)
- The crucial importance of blood for the sustainment of life (Leviticus 17:11)
- The danger of eating the fat and blood of animals (Leviticus 3:17)

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True prophets will help people face the **perils and dangers of life** in a sinful, rebellious world and will prepare them for a life in the world to come. The true prophet will **warn of the judgment to come** and the need to prepare a life that will successfully pass the judgment (note especially the roles of **Moses** in leading Israel from Egypt to Canaan, **Elijah** in bringing the people back to the Lord, **John the Baptist** who was to prepare a people to receive the Messiah and the **final Elijah** movement whose role will be to prepare a people for the second coming of Jesus)

It is a **very serious matter** to reject the message of a true prophet. To reject the message means **to reject Jesus Christ** because the spirit of prophecy is the testimony of Jesus (Revelation 12:17; 19:10; 22:8, 9). In this context it might well to remember the stories of **Korah's rebellion**, the children who made fun of **Elisha** and Miriam and Aaron who were critical of **Moses**. God takes personally the rejection of the message He sends through His prophets. It is a serious matter indeed to question the authority of a true prophet.

True prophets will **not employ forbidden methods** to acquire their information. Crystal ball gazing, palm reading, astrology and necromancy (channeling) are strictly forbidden by God (Deuteronomy 18:9-12; Revelation 21:8; 22:15)

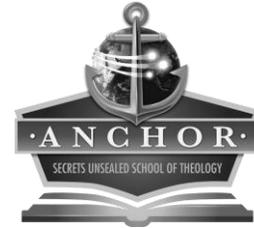
True prophets will **edify, comfort and exhort the faithful** (I Corinthians 14:3). They will keep God's people from becoming lawless. Where there is no vision the people 'cast off restraint' (NIV), 'are unrestrained' (NASB), 'they run wild' (NLT), 'are uncontrolled' (New Century) (Proverbs 29:18) as can be seen during the period of the judges when everyone did as was right in their own eyes because the word of God was precious or scarce in those days. The results of not having the prophetic voice can also be seen during the **dark ages** when revelation was scarce and as a result people wallowed in sickness and ignorance.

God will call prophets at critical crossroads in the historical flow of time (for example, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Moses, David, Elijah, Jeremiah, Daniel, Zechariah, Haggai and John the Baptist).

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“Believe His Prophets: Prophetic Guidance in the Advent Movement”

by Pastor Stephen Bohr

LESSON # 8 - TESTING ELLEN WHITE'S PROPHETIC GIFT: PRIMARY TESTS

Introduction

*“There will be those who will claim to have visions. When God gives you **clear evidence** that the vision is from Him, you may accept it, but do not accept it on any other evidence; for **people are going to be led more and more astray** in foreign countries and in America.” *The Review and Herald, May 25, 1905**

Jesus warned us that there will be false prophets at the end.

Matthew 24:11, 24

*“Then many **false prophets** will rise up and deceive many . . . For false christs and **false prophets** will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect.”*

Matthew 7:15, 22, 23

*“Beware of **false prophets**, who come to you in **sheep's clothing**, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves . . . Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven.*

*22 Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not **prophesied in Your name**, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’*

*23 And then I will declare to them, 'I **never** knew you; depart from Me, you who **practice lawlessness** [a better translation is: “you who transgress the law]!’*

Deuteronomy 13:1-5: The true prophet will lead people to respect and **keep God's law**.

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*"If there arises among you a prophet or a dreamer of dreams, and he gives you a **sign or a wonder**,² and the sign or the wonder comes to pass, of which he spoke to you, saying, 'Let us go after other gods—which you have not known—and let us serve them,'³ you shall **not listen to the words of that prophet** or that dreamer of dreams, for the LORD your God is testing you to know whether you love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul.⁴ You shall walk after the LORD your God and fear Him, and **keep His commandments and obey His voice**; you shall serve Him and hold fast to Him.⁵ But that prophet or that dreamer of dreams shall be put to death, because he has spoken in order **to turn you away from the LORD** your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt and redeemed you from the house of bondage, to entice you from the way in which the LORD your God commanded you to walk. So you shall put away the evil from your midst."*

Note: Clearly God tells us that in the last days false prophets will arise. So the big question is this: What Biblical indicators do we have to determine if an individual is a true prophet? How can we know for sure that Ellen White was a true prophet? In this document we will examine the primary and secondary characteristics of a true prophet.

1 Thessalonians 5:19-21

*"Do not quench the Spirit, **do not despise prophecies**.²¹ **Test all things**; hold fast what is good.²² Abstain from every form of evil.*

There is only one way to detect a counterfeit and that is to know the characteristics of the genuine. An experience in Medellin a few years ago proved this point to me first hand.

Four Primary Tests

Test #1: To the Law and to the Testimony

Isaiah 8:20

"To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, it is because there is no light in them. "

Any person who purports to be a prophet must be in full harmony with the testimony of all the previous Biblical prophets.

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The apostle Paul affirms as much in **1 Corinthians 14:32**:

“And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets.”

What did Ellen White have to say about the Bible? Did she ever place her writings above the written Scriptures or on the same level such as Joseph Smith?

*“I take the Bible **just as it is**, as the Inspired Word. I believe its utterances in **an entire Bible**.” Selected Messages, volume 1, p. 17*

Ellen White last spoke at a **General Conference Session in 1909**. She raised a Bible in her hand and stated: “Brothers and sisters I recommend unto you this book.”

In The Great Controversy, Ellen White wrote about her high view of Scripture:

*“But God will have a people upon the earth to maintain the Bible, and **the Bible only**, as the standard of all doctrines and the basis of all reforms. The opinions of **learned men**, the **deductions of science**, the **creeds or decisions** of ecclesiastical councils, as numerous and discordant as are the churches which they represent, the **voice of the majority--not one nor all** of these should be regarded as evidence for or against any point of religious faith. Before accepting any doctrine or precept, we should demand a plain “Thus saith the Lord” in its support.” GC 595*

“We have a Bible full of the most precious truth. It contains the alpha and the omega of knowledge.” Gospel Workers, p. 309

*“The Bible, **just as it reads**, is to be our guide. Nothing is so calculated to enlarge the mind and strengthen the intellect as the study of the Bible. No other study will so elevate the soul and give vigor to the faculties as the study of the living oracles. The minds of thousands of ministers of the gospel are dwarfed because they are permitted to dwell upon commonplace things, and are not exercised in searching for the hidden treasure of the Word of God. As the mind is brought to the study of God's Word, the understanding will enlarge and the higher powers will develop for the comprehension of high and ennobling truth.” 1MCP 93*

*“The Bible is the revelation of God to our world, telling us of the character we must have in order to reach the paradise of God. We are to esteem it as God's disclosure to us of eternal things—the things of most consequence for us to know. By the world it is thrown aside, as if the perusal of it were finished, but **a***

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***thousand years of research** would not exhaust the hidden treasure it contains. Eternity alone will disclose the wisdom of this book. The jewels buried in it are inexhaustible; for it is the wisdom of an infinite mind. “FE 444*

*“The words of the **Bible and the Bible alone** should be heard from the pulpit. [In the context of the traditions of men, church creeds, Sabbath breaking theology, the sayings and doings of men, human wisdom, false prophets]” Counsels on Sabbath School Work, p. 626*

Notice the balancing statement:

*“I recommend to you, dear reader, the Word of God as the rule of your faith and practice. By that Word we are to be judged. God has, in that Word, **promised to give visions** in the “last days”; **not for a new rule of faith**, but for the **comfort** of His people, and to **correct** those who err from Bible truth. Thus God dealt with Peter when He was about to send him to preach to the Gentiles. (Acts 10).” EW 78*

Does this mean that Ellen White’s writings cannot be quoted from the pulpit? Not any more than you can only read verses from the Bible and not use any words other than those of Scripture.

Ellen White was always faithful to this test of faith and practice. The **doctrines** of the Seventh-day Adventist Church are not based on the writings of Ellen White. They were all discovered as a result of **careful Bible study** and then God gave Ellen White visions and dreams to **confirm, amplify** them and **correct** those who erred from Bible truth.

The Adventist doctrine of the sanctuary did not originate with Ellen White. Before she had her first vision three individuals, **O. R. L. Crozier, Hiram Edson and Hahn** wrote a groundbreaking article proving all of the basics of the SDA sanctuary doctrine, including the pre-advent investigative judgment.

Ellen White did not bring the **doctrine of the Sabbath** into the Adventist Church. It came from an **intensive Bible study** done by **Frederick Wheeler, Rachel Oakes Preston, Thomas Preble and Joseph Bates**. For a significant period of time Ellen White could see no special importance to the Sabbath, even after Joseph Bates had written a book on its importance. God gave Ellen White a vision that convinced her that the Sabbath was of great significant to God’s remnant people (see Early Writings, pp. 32, 33)

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Another example of how Bible study led the pioneers to hammer out our belief system independently of the Spirit of Prophecy is found in the debate over the correct **hour to begin the Sabbath**. Up to the year **1855** there was **no uniform practice** among Adventists. Joseph Bates and Ellen White among others began the Sabbath **at 6 o'clock** in the afternoon. Others began the Sabbath **at midnight** and still others began it **at sunrise** (based on Matthew 28:1).

As a result of this controversy and confusion, James White asked **J. N. Andrews** to do a Biblical study of the matter and publish an article on the matter. Andrews studied the matter from Scripture alone and concluded by the use of **nine texts** from the Old Testament and **two** from the New that the Sabbath begins **at sundown**.

After Andrews published his powerful article the majority of believers began keeping the Sabbath at sundown but Ellen and James White and Joseph Bates saw no light in it. God then gave Ellen White a vision that confirmed that Andrews was right. Thus the hour to begin the Sabbath was not determined by a vision but rather by intensive Bible study and then confirmed by a vision.

In **1848** in New York, Connecticut and Maine there was a series of so-called **Sabbath** where several of the **pioneers** gathered to hammer out the belief system of what would become the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Rocky Hill, Connecticut, April 20-24, at Albert Belden's home. Attendance: about 50. Speakers: H. S. Gurney, Joseph Bates (the Sabbath and the law), and James White (the dawning significance of the third angel's message, its scope, and specifications).

Volney, New York, August 18, in David Arnold's carriage house. Attendance: about 35. Speakers: Joseph Bates (the Sabbath), and James White (the parable of Matthew 25:1-13).

Port Gibson, New York, August 27 and 28, in Hiram Edson's barn. No specific details available.

Rocky Hill, Connecticut, September 8 and 9, in Albert Belden's home. No specific details available.

Topsham, Maine, October 20-22, in the Stockbridge Howland home. Discussion centered on the possibility of publishing a paper, but since the participants were without funds, no concrete action was taken.

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Dorchester, Massachusetts, November 18, Otis Nichols' home. A further discussion on publishing a paper took place, and Ellen White received affirmative counsel from the Lord regarding this literature ministry.

Ellen White who participated in them vividly described the process that was followed

*“Many of our people do not realize how firmly the foundation of our faith has been laid. My husband, Elder Joseph Bates, Father Pierce, Elder [Hiram] Edson, and others who were keen, noble, and true, were among those who, after the passing of the time in 1844, searched for the truth as for hidden treasure. I met with them, and we **studied and prayed earnestly**. Often we remained together until late at night, and sometimes through the entire night, praying for light and studying the Word. Again and again these brethren came together **to study the Bible**, in order that they might know its meaning, and be prepared to teach it with power. When they came to the point in their study where they said, “We can do nothing more,” **the Spirit of the Lord would come upon me**, I would be taken off in vision, and a **clear explanation of the passages** we had been studying would be given me, with instruction as to how we were to labor and teach effectively. Thus light was given that **helped us to understand the scriptures** in regard to Christ, His mission, and His priesthood. A line of truth extending from that time to the time when we shall enter the city of God was made plain to me, and I gave to others the instruction that the Lord had given me.*

*During this whole time I could not understand the reasoning of the brethren. My mind was locked, as it were, and **I could not comprehend the meaning of the scriptures** we were studying. This was one of the greatest sorrows of my life. I was in this condition of mind until all the **principal points of our faith** were made clear to our minds, in **harmony with the Word of God**. The brethren knew that when not in vision, I could not understand these matters, and they accepted as light direct from heaven the revelations given. For two or three years my mind continued to be locked to an understanding of the Scriptures. In the course of our labors, my husband and I visited Father Andrews, who was suffering intensely with inflammatory rheumatism. We prayed for him. I laid my hands on his head, and said, “Father Andrews, the Lord Jesus maketh thee whole.” He was healed*

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instantly. He got up, and walked about the room, praising God, and saying, "I never saw it on this wise before. Angels of God are in this room." The glory of the Lord was revealed. Light seemed to shine all through the house, and an angel's hand was laid upon my head. From that time to this I have been able to understand the Word of God." 1SM 206, 207

"Our first conference was at Volney in **Brother Arnold's barn**. There were **about thirty-five present**, all that could be collected in that part of the State. There were hardly two agreed. Each was strenuous for his views, declaring that they were according to the Bible. All were anxious for an opportunity to advance their sentiments, or to preach to us. They were told that we had not come so great a distance to hear them, but had come to teach them the truth. Bro. Arnold held that the 1000 years of Revelation 20 were in the past; and that the 144,000 were those raised at Christ's resurrection. And as we had the emblem of our dying Lord before us and were about to commemorate his sufferings, Brother A. arose and said he had no faith in what we were about to do; that the Sacrament was a continuation of the Passover, to be observed but once a year.

These strange **differences of opinion** rolled a heavy weight upon me, especially as Brother A spoke of the 1000 years being in the past. I knew that he was in error, and great grief pressed my spirits; for it seemed to me that God was dishonored. I fainted under the burden. Brethren Bates, Chamberlain, Gurney, Edson, and my husband, prayed for me. Some feared I was dying. But the Lord heard the prayers of his servants, and I revived. The light of Heaven rested upon me. I was soon lost to earthly things. My accompanying angel presented before me **some of the errors of those present**, and **also the truth** in contrast with their errors. That these discordant views, which they claimed to be according to the Bible, were only according to their opinion of the Bible, and that their errors must be yielded, and they unite upon the third angel's message. Our meeting ended victoriously. Truth gained the victory." 2SG 97-99

"We are to be established in the faith, in the light of the truth given us in our early experience. At that time one error after another pressed in upon us; ministers and doctors brought in new doctrines. **We would search the**

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Scriptures with much **prayer**, and the Holy Spirit would bring the truth to our minds. Sometimes **whole nights** would be devoted to **searching the Scriptures**, and earnestly asking God for guidance. Companies of devoted men and women assembled for this purpose. The power of God would come upon me, and I was **enabled clearly to define what is truth and what is error.**" GW 302

James White, Review and Herald, October 5, 1854:

*"The position that the Bible and the Bible alone is the rule of faith and duty does not shut out the gifts which God set in the church. **To reject them is shutting out that part of the Bible that presents them.** We say: "Let us have a whole Bible, and let that and that alone, be our rule of faith and duty. Place the gifts **where they belong** and all is in harmony."*

The above quotations show clearly the relationship between **the Bible and the visions** of Ellen White in the formation of the doctrines of the Seventh-day Adventist Church:

- The pioneers **prayed fervently** for God to help them understand the Bible
- They **searched the Scriptures** with humility and perseverance, sometimes all night, in order to discover God's truth
- When they had done **all that they could**, and there were still discordant views among the students, God would **give Ellen White a vision to explain** the passages and bring harmony among the brethren
- Thus the nascent church was saved from **dangerous errors** and was able to hammer out the doctrines of the Seventh-day Adventist Church

But someone might ask: Why do we need the writings of Ellen White if we have the Bible? After all, doesn't Ellen White herself tell us that all our belief and practice should be based on the Bible and the Bible only?

Ellen White had these words of explanation as to why God raised up the gift of prophecy in these last days:

*"I recommend to you, dear reader, the Word of God as the rule of your faith and practice. By that Word we are to be judged. God has, in that Word, promised to give visions in the "last days"; **not for a new rule of faith**, but for the comfort of His people, and to **correct those who err from Bible truth.** EW 78*

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*“Little heed is given to the Bible, and the Lord has given a **lesser light** to lead men and women to the **greater light**.” The Review and Herald, Jan. 20, 1903*

The inspiration of Ellen White is **not of lesser quality** than that of the Bible writers. Neither are her writings of **lesser authority**. Her writings have a **different function** than Scripture. We will study this later. The expression ‘lesser light’ is not to be understood **as ‘inferior’**. Both the Bible and the writings of Ellen White reflect the same light of Christ, the Sun of righteousness. The moon reflects the light of the sun and brings glory to the sun. This is why the sun is called the greater light and the moon is called the lesser light in Genesis 1.

Let’s give a practical illustration. Let’s suppose that I go into a room where I have never entered before. It is midnight and the darkness is intense. Being that I have never been in the room, I do not know where the light switch is. I run my fingers across the wall looking for the light switch to no avail. I stumble upon chairs and tables but still no light switch!

Suppose, on the other hand that I have a flashlight. Wouldn’t it be ridiculous for me to say: “I don’t need the lesser light of the flashlight because I have the greater light on the ceiling? If I have a lesser light I need to use it to find the greater light! During the **1260 years** of the dark ages, the Bible message was to a great degree lost. When the year **1844 came around** there were **very few who understood** the Bible message. The law, the Sabbath, the state of the dead, healthful living and the sanctuary had all been obscured by the papacy. God, seeing this darkness, decided to give a ‘flashlight’ (the Spirit of Prophecy) so that the full Bible message could be understood and Christ could be found on the pages of the Bible once more. Who would be foolish enough to say: “*We have the greater light and therefore we do not need the lesser light?*”

Ellen White explained the relationship between her writings and the Bible:

*“Brother J would confuse the mind by seeking to make it appear that the light God has given through the Testimonies is **an addition** to the word of God, but in this he presents the matter in a **false light**. God has seen fit in this manner to bring the minds of His people **to His word**, to give them a **clearer understanding** of it.”* The **word of God is sufficient** to enlighten the most beclouded mind and may be understood by those who have any **desire to understand it**. But notwithstanding all this, some who profess to make the word of God their study are found living in

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direct opposition to its plainest teachings. Then, to leave men and women **without excuse**, God gives plain and pointed testimonies, **bringing them back** to the word that they have neglected to follow." The **word of God abounds** in general principles for the formation of correct habits of living, and the testimonies, general and personal, have been calculated to call their attention more especially to these principles." 5T 663, 664

"The written testimonies **are not to give new light**, but to impress vividly upon the heart the truths of inspiration **already revealed**. Man's duty to God and to his fellow man has been distinctly specified **in God's word**, yet but few of you are obedient to the light given. **Additional truth is not brought out**; but God has through the Testimonies **simplified** the great truths **already given** and in His own chosen way brought them before the people to awaken and impress the mind with them, that all may be left **without excuse**." 5T 665

Notice that Ellen White does not claim to bring any new light. She clearly affirms that her writings, amplify, clarify and expand upon the light already given in the Scriptures. In this case, the writings of Ellen White are like a **microscope** or a **telescope**. The Bible presents the principles and Ellen White applies the principles.

For example;, as we shall see later, the Bible does not say: "thou shalt not smoke." Does this mean that it is all right to smoke? Of course not! There are clear principles in Scripture that condemn smoking even though the specific habit is not mentioned.

Here is a composite view of the purpose of Ellen White's writings:

- **Comfort** God's people (EW 78)
- **Encourage** the desponding and fainting soul (Review and Herald, January 10, 1856)
- **Define, clarify and confirm** the truth (Letter 117, 1910)
- **Correct** those who err from Bible truth (EW 78)
- Correct specious errors (Letter 117, 1910)
- **Impress** upon minds the truths **already given** (5T 663, 665)
- Bring the minds of God's people **to the Word** (5T 663)
- **Simplify** the truths already given (5T 665)
- **Unite** God's people upon a platform of truth (3T 361)

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Ellen White even presents a scenario where her writings would not be needed:

*"If you had made God's Word your study, with a desire to reach the Bible standard and attain to Christian perfection, you **would not have needed the Testimonies**. It is because you have **neglected** to acquaint yourselves with **God's inspired Book** that He has sought to reach you by simple, direct testimonies, calling your **attention to the words of inspiration** which you had neglected to obey, and urging you to fashion your lives in accordance with its pure and elevated teachings." Counsels to the Church, p. 92*

Some individuals in the church have attempted to establish degrees of inspiration in the writings of Ellen White. They say that only when Ellen White stated: "I saw" or "I was shown" or "said the angel" can we consider those writings as fully inspired. Others affirm that some of her **books** were not inspired, that her **letters** were not inspired, that her **articles** were not inspired. Others state that the **compilations** cannot be trusted because in some cases the quotes are taken out of context. Even others claim that her personal counsel was just personal opinion and not any special revelation from the Lord. What can we say about this?

Her books:

*"Sister White is not the originator of **these books**. They contain the instruction that during her lifework God has been giving her. They contain the precious, comforting light that God has graciously given His servant to be given to the world." Colporteur Ministry, p. 125.*

Her articles:

*"I do not write one **article** in the paper expressing **merely my own ideas**. They are what God has opened before me in vision --the precious rays of light shining from the throne." It is true concerning the articles in our papers and in the many volumes of my books." 1SM 29*

Her letters:

*"You might say that this communication was **only a letter**. Yes, it was a letter, but prompted by the Spirit of God, to bring before your minds things that had been shown me. In these letters that I write, in the testimonies I bear, I am presenting to you that which the Lord has presented to me. I do not write one article in the paper expressing **merely my own ideas**" 5T 67*

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Paul' Experience with letters:

“Suppose--some would make it appear, incorrectly however--that I was influenced to write as I did by letters received from members of the church. How was it with the apostle Paul? The news he received through the household of Chloe concerning the condition of the church at Corinth was what caused him to write his first epistle to that church. Private letters had come to him stating the facts as they existed, and in his answer he laid down general principles which if heeded would correct the existing evils. With great tenderness and wisdom he exhorts them to all speak the same things, that there be no divisions among them.

*Paul was an inspired apostle, yet the Lord did not reveal to him at all times just the condition of His people. Those who were interested in the prosperity of the church, and saw evils creeping in, presented the matter before him, and from the **light that he had previously received** he was prepared to judge of the true character of these developments. Because the Lord had not given him **a new revelation** for that special time, those who were really seeking light did not cast his message aside as only a common letter. No, indeed. The Lord had shown him the difficulties and dangers that would arise in the churches, that when they should develop he might know just how to treat them.*

*He was set for the defense of the church. He was to watch for souls as one that must render account to God, and should he not take notice of the reports concerning their state of anarchy and division? Most assuredly; and the reproof he sent them was written **just as much under the inspiration of the Spirit of God as were any of his epistles.** But when these reproofs came, some would not be corrected. They took the position that God had not spoken to them through Paul, that he had merely given them his opinion as a man, and they regarded their own judgment as good as that of Paul. 5T 65-67*

Her personal experience:

*“You have evidenced your opinion of your own judgment--that it was more reliable than Sister White's. Did you consider that Sister White has been dealing with just such cases during her life of service for the Master; that cases **similar to your own** and many varieties of cases have passed before her that should make her know what is right and what is wrong in these things? Is a judgment that has been under the training of God for more than fifty years **of no preference** to those who have not had this discipline and education? Please consider these things.” 3SM 60*

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Compilations:

In her last will and testament Ellen White authorized the preparation of compilations of her writings when necessary. We must always be careful to look up the quotation in its original setting, however, to make sure that it has not be taken inadvertently out of context.

Picking and Choosing:

“Many times in my experience I have been called upon to meet the attitude of a certain class, who acknowledged that the testimonies were from God, but took the position that this matter and that matter were Sister White's opinion and judgment. This suits those who do not love reproof and correction, and who, if their ideas are crossed, have occasion to explain the difference between the human and the divine.

If the preconceived opinions or particular ideas of some are crossed in being reproved by testimonies, they have a burden at once to make plain their position to discriminate between the testimonies, defining what is Sister White's human judgment, and what is the word of the Lord. Everything that sustains their cherished ideas is divine, and the testimonies to correct their errors are human--Sister White's opinions. They make of none effect the counsel of God by their tradition.” Manuscript 16, 1889 (3SM 68)

Glenn Coon has provided a good example of how Ellen White **expands** upon the Scriptures and **fills out details** but without contradicting them (see my own biblical study, “The First Fruits” at the end of this syllabus):

The Two "Special Resurrections"

An illustration of how those writings give us not only additional details but also suggest new relationships between certain specific passages of Scripture is seen in the treatment Ellen White gives in her discussion of the two special resurrections spoken of in the Bible.

1. The special resurrection at Easter. Twice in the Bible, once in Matthew's Gospel and once in Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians, there is mentioned an intriguing subject with tantalizingly little detail: the special resurrection that took place on Easter Sunday morning and the amazing aftermath, 40 days later at the Ascension.

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These are the facts as they are found in Scripture: In Matthew 27:51-53 we are told that (a) there was **an earthquake** at the moment of Christ's death; (b) It **opened a number of graves**; (c) after Christ arose Sunday morning **"many" were raised** to life; (d) these persons were identified as **"saints"** (in the Bible a saint is not some super-righteous, miracle-working holy person, but rather an ordinary, garden-variety Christian, a sinner saved by grace); (e) the persons raised from the dead then **went into Jerusalem** ("the holy city"); (f) they **appeared to "many"** of the citizens of that place; and in Ephesians 4:8 (margin) we are further told that (g) they **ascended with Christ to heaven** 40 days after they were raised from the dead.

Ellen White, however, draws back the veil and gives nearly a dozen additional facts of identification and information:

- During their natural lifetimes they were **"co-laborers with God."** (DA 786)
- They were **martyrs**; "at the cost of their lives"(DA 786) "they had borne their testimony **unflinchingly for the truth.**" (1SM 304)
- They represented **"every age" of history** "from creation down even to the days of Christ." (EW 184) (Abel was the first martyr; John the Baptist the last martyr of record before Calvary.)
- They **differed in stature and form**, "some being more noble in appearance than others . . . Those who lived in the days of Noah and Abraham resembled the angels in form, comeliness, and strength." (EW 184) [Adam was more than twice the height of men now living; Eve a little shorter (her head came a little above his shoulders)]. (3SG, p. 34)
- These were **raised to immortality**; (1SM 304, 305) whereas the three persons that were raised during Christ's pre-Calvary ministry were not raised to eternal life, and subsequently died again. (DA 786)
- **Christ** was the One who **raised them** to life. (1SM 304; DA 786)
- Their work was to **witness to the resurrection of Christ**. They were witnesses that the priests could not silence. (DA 786) Their testimony contradicted the perjury of the bribed Roman soldiers. (1SM 305)

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- Their message was: The **sacrifice for man is now complete**; Jesus, whom the Jews crucified, is now arisen from the dead. (EW 184) The proof? "We be risen with Him." (EW 184; DA 786)
- They were the living fulfillment of the prophecy of **Isaiah 26:19**. (1SM 305)
- Jesus presented them in person **to His Father in heaven** as the first fruits of all the righteous dead who someday would be brought back to life. (1SM 306, 307)

It is true that in Ellen White's writings we have "no new topic, no new revelation, no new doctrine"; but we do have a great deal of **new information!**

2. The special resurrection just before the second coming of Christ. Four passages of Scripture speak, directly or by implication, of a special resurrection just before the second coming of Christ (Daniel 12:1, 2; Matthew 26:64; Revelation 1:7; 14:13). Ellen White interprets for us: There will be three classes of people--(a) all those who have died in the faith under the third angel's message, keeping the Sabbath; (b) the crucifiers of Jesus who did not find salvation before they died 19 centuries ago; and (c) the most violent opponents of Christ's truth and His people (Early Writings, p. 285; The Great Controversy, p. 637). Only the first two categories are reasonably inferred from Scripture, the third comes to us as additional, extra-biblical information, from the prophetic gift in our own time.

Uriah Smith's Parable

Uriah Smith used a very interesting parable to illustrate the relationship between the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy:

"Suppose we are about to start on a voyage. Before departure the ship's owner gives the crew a 'book of directions,' and assures them that its instructions are sufficient for the entire journey. If these instructions are heeded, the vessel will arrive safely at its destination.

So the crew sets sail, and opens the book to learn its contents. They discover that, in general, the author has laid down basic principles to govern the

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conduct of the crew during the voyage, and has touched on various contingencies that might arise. However, the author points out that the latter part of the voyage may be particularly hazardous, for "the features of the coast are ever changing by reason of quicksands and tempests." Because of this, the author has arranged for a pilot to join the crew to provide special help in guiding the ship safely into the final port.

The author also counsels the crew to give heed to the directions and instructions of the pilot, "as the surrounding circumstances and dangers may require."

At the appointed time, the pilot appears, as promised. But, inexplicably, as he offers his services to the captain and crew, some of the sailors rise up in protest, claiming that the original book of directions is sufficient to see them through. "We stand upon that, and that alone; we want nothing of you," they declare.

Smith then raises the rhetorical question, "Who now heed that original book of directions? Those who reject the pilot, or those who receive him, as that book instructs them? Judge ye."

Finally, anticipating the objection of some of his readers that he intended this parable to oblige the church to take Ellen White as their "pilot," the editor attempts to forestall such complaint with this postscript:

We say no such thing. What we do say is distinctly this: That the gifts of the Spirit are given for our pilot through these perilous times, and whenever and in whomsoever we find genuine manifestations of these, we are bound to respect them, nor can we do otherwise without in so far rejecting the Word of God, which directs us to receive them." Uriah Smith, *Review and Herald*, January 13, 1863

Test #2: By their Fruits ye shall know them

Matthew 7:16, 20

*"Beware of **false prophets**, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. **16** You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thorn bushes or figs from thistles? **17** Even so, every good tree bears*

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good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. **18** A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. **19** Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. **20** Therefore by their fruits you will know them.”

Ellen White agreed that prophets needed to be tested by their fruits:

“Let the Testimonies be **judged by their fruits**. What is the **spirit of their teaching**? What has been the **result of their influence**? All who desire to do so **can** acquaint themselves with the **fruits of these visions**. For seventeen years God has seen fit to let them survive and strengthen against the opposition of Satan's forces and the influence of human agencies that have aided Satan in his work. God is either teaching His church, reproving their wrongs and strengthening their faith, or He is not. This work **is of God, or it is not**. God does nothing in partnership with Satan. My work . . . bears the stamp of God or the stamp of the enemy. There is **no halfway work** in the matter. The Testimonies are of the Spirit of God, or of the devil. As the Lord has manifested Himself through the Spirit of prophecy, past, present, and future have passed before me. I have been shown faces that I had never seen, and years afterward I knew them when I saw them. I have been aroused from my sleep with a vivid sense of subjects previously presented to my mind; and I have written, at midnight, letters that have gone across the continent and, arriving at a crisis, have **saved great disaster to the cause of God**. This has been my work for many years. A power has impelled me to reprove and rebuke wrongs that I had not thought of. Is this work from **above or from beneath**?” *Counsels to the Church*, pp. 92, 93

When Ellen White was **nine years old** she had a terrible accident that was to affect her health for the rest of her life. One day, while she was returning home from school (where she was in the third grade), a classmate angrily threw a stone at her that hit her on the bridge of her nose. For three weeks it was thought that she would die and even if she did live she would be seriously **impaired for the rest of her life**.

Ellen was not able to continue her studies thus she did not have even three years of primary education. The strength that Ellen White had during her **87**

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years of life was derived from the Lord. The text that inspired Ellen White the most when she was going through periods of weakness and suffering was **1Corinthians 1:27-29**. She knew that in herself she could do nothing but that with God's help she could do everything.

In spite of her health challenges the fruits of her labors were extraordinary. It is calculated that she traveled close to **100,000 miles** during her lifetime. Most of those trips were made on horseback, wagon, walking, ship or train. She spent **1885-1887** in Europe and **1891-1900** in Australia. Though these trips lasted weeks, the Lord gave her strength and she died at the **ripe age of 87**.

Her literary products are even more extraordinary. For a woman who had only two years plus of primary education her literary accomplishments are amazing. It is calculated that she wrote some **100,000 pages** (25 million words) during her lifetime on a variety of subjects: Education, health, church organization, stewardship, publishing, religion, Bible, marriage and the home, science, etc.

To date **over 80 books** and compilations have been published. This is all extraordinary considering that she was called when she was **17 years old** with little education. Her literary products provide clear evidence that she was called by God to be a prophet. She had all the disadvantages that would make a person fail. She was a **woman, young, uneducated, with bad health, weak, poor, and was not able to speak**. Why would God even consider choosing someone with all of these disadvantages?

Perhaps if God had chosen a scholar, people might have reached the conclusion that the message was due to the scholar's intellectual capacity. But God chose the weakest of the weak to confound the wisdom of the wise.

We have briefly looked at her literary productions. But let's reflect for a few moments upon the personal fruit of her life and the fruit of her labors. After the Great Disappointment of 1844 there were scarcely **200 believers**. The influence of Ellen White in keeping these faithful saints united is extraordinary. Through the prophetic gift that God gave her, the Seventh-day Adventist Movement has become global, working in more countries than any other

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Protestant denomination and with a membership of almost twenty million.

As a result of Ellen White's counsel and guidance, the Seventh-day Adventist Church runs the largest protestant **parochial school system** in the world and has **health and publishing** houses all over the globe. Through God's guidance, the Seventh-day Adventist Church has been held together with a **common belief** and **organizational system**.

What about on a personal level? What was the fruit of her personal life like?

Ellen White had a **noble character**. She was not a St. Ellen, nor a super woman. She was a normal human being. She was always accessible to others. She had a normal family and with normal feelings. On January 9, 1859 Ellen White wrote in her diary:

"I have felt so homesick on the journey. I fear that I have not been willing to sacrifice the company of my husband and children to do others good . . . Have had a weeping time before the Lord." 3MR 138 (from her Diary, January 9, 1859)

Ellen White had **her struggles** like any normal human being. She had her spiritual battles, defeats and victories. Let's take diet as an example.

On **June 6, 1863** Ellen White received her famous **health reform vision**. At this time she and her family were meat eaters and it was extremely difficult for her to get used to a change to a vegetarian diet. She instructed her cook to put healthy food on the table and several times she came to the table and left without eating because the food did not appeal to her appetite. She explained:

"I suffered keen hunger, I was a great meat eater. But when faint, I placed my arms across my stomach, and said, "I will not taste a morsel. I will eat simple food, or I will not eat at all." Bread was distasteful to me. I could seldom eat a piece as large as a dollar. Some things in the reform I could get along with very well; but when I came to the bread, I was especially set against it. When I made these changes, I had a special battle to fight. The first two or three meals, I could not eat. I said to my stomach, "You may wait until you can eat bread." In a little while I could eat bread, and graham bread, too. This I could not eat before; but now it

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tastes good, and I have had no loss of appetite.” CD 483, 484

Many people think that Ellen White was always **austere, serious** and that she did not have a sense of humor. Yet those who knew her deny that this is the case. In several places of her writings we find that she loved to go sailing, walking in the midst of nature and she always enjoyed a good picnic. When the youth gathered around her she always had interesting and engaging stories to tell. She shared her **personal view of religion in 1867**:

“Do you ever see me gloomy, desponding, complaining? I have a faith that forbids this. It is a misconception of the true ideal of Christian character and Christian service that leads to these conclusions. It is the want of genuine religion that produces gloom, despondency, and sadness. Earnest Christians seek to imitate Jesus, for to be Christians is to be Christlike. It will be really essential to have correct conceptions of Christ's life, Christ's habits, that His principles may be reproduced in us who would be Christlike.” AH 431

Ellen White was always humble. She was not like some purported modern prophets who boast about their calling and are always preaching a prosperity gospel. She did not have any desire to be called a prophet for the same reason that Moses, Jeremiah and John the Baptist had not wanted to be called prophets. She was weak and did not know how to speak. She begged the Lord to afflict her physically if she ever became proud and the Lord did this at least once in her lifetime:

*“After I came out of this vision, I was exceedingly troubled. My health was very poor, and I was but seventeen years old. I knew that many had fallen through exaltation, and I knew that if I in any way became exalted, God would leave me, and I should surely be lost. I went to the Lord in prayer and **begged Him to lay the burden on someone else**. It seemed to me that I could not bear it. I lay upon my face a long time, and all the light I could get was, “Make known to others what I have revealed to you.”*

*“In my next vision I earnestly begged of the Lord that, if I must go and relate what He had shown to me, He would **keep me from exaltation**. Then He showed me*

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that my prayer was answered, and if I should be in danger of exaltation His hand would be laid upon me, and I would be afflicted with sickness. Said the angel, "If you deliver the messages faithfully, and endure unto the end, you shall eat of the fruit of the tree of life and drink of the water of the river of life." EW 21

Why didn't Ellen White desire to be called a prophet? She answers:

*"During the discourse, I said that I did not claim to be a prophetess. Some were surprised at this statement, and as much is being said in regard to it, I will make an explanation. Others have called me a prophetess, but I have never assumed that title. I have not felt that it was my duty thus to designate myself. Those who **boldly assume** that they are prophets in this our day are often a reproach to the cause of Christ." 1SM 35, 36*

Ellen White had severe health challenges during her lifetime and yet during her lifetime she was able to speak before crowds of thousands with no amplification system. According to some witnesses, her voice could be heard a mile away!

Ellen White consistently emphasized the need for ministers to cultivate their voice and she led by example. According to many eyewitnesses, Ellen White could be heard distinctly when she was speaking **a mile away** without any amplification! She frequently spoke for an hour and a half before audiences of thousands and never got hoarse. She stated that many ministers were going early to the grave for a failure to cultivate their voice. Of course she was fully aware that the Lord should get the credit for the strength of her voice. On some occasions Ellen White would go up to the pulpit to speak and she had no voice but after prayer she was able to speak clearly and with strength:

*"I thank God that He has **preserved my voice**, which in my early youth physicians and friends declared would be silent within three months. The God of heaven saw that I needed to pass through a trying experience in order to be prepared for the work He had for me to do." 3SM 39*

Ellen White loved the Lord, His cause and His people and this led her to tirelessly travel, write, counsel, preach, and reprove in spite of the fact that she frequently did so in great pain. She stated:

"I love the Lord. I love His cause. I love His people. I feel great peace and calmness of mind. There seems to be nothing to confuse and distract my mind, and with so much hard thinking, my mind could not be perplexed with anything without being overtaxed." Letter 13, 1876

Ellen White encouraged believers not to despair when they lost a loved one who died in the Lord and she practiced what she preached. Upon her husband's death she spoke the following words:

*"And, friends, we all want this hope. In Jesus Christ all our hopes of eternal life are centered, so then let us ever labor for him. He from henceforth is my Guide, and my Husband, and my Counselor, and my Friend. He will walk with me through the thorny paths of life, and at last we shall meet again, where there is no parting, where there is no separation, and where none shall any more say, "I am sick." I yield my precious treasure; I bid him farewell; **I do not go to his grave to weep.** Nor can I **shed any tears** over my youngest or my eldest son. The morning of the **resurrection is too bright.** And then I look to that morning when the broken family links shall be re-united, and we shall see the king in his beauty, and behold his matchless charms, and cast our glittering crowns at his feet, and touch the golden harp and fill all Heaven with the strains of our music and songs to the Lamb. We will sing together there. We will triumph together around the great white throne. Pamphlet: 168 In Memoriam: A Sketch of the Last Sickness and Death of Elder James White (1881)*

In spite of the fact that Ellen White was so busy traveling, speaking and writing, she was a **good homemaker**. The White household was happy and full of activity. When Ellen was home she dedicated a good part of her time to **gardening, cooking and sewing**. She was an **excellent shopper**. The story is told of a day when Ellen White went to the shop of a Mr. Skinner to purchase some fabric. Sister White found some fabric she liked and asked Mr. Skinner if it

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was 100% wool. Mr. Skinner assured her that it was but then Ellen looked as some loose threads on the edge of the fabric and discovered that it had some cotton as well. She said to Mr. Skinner: "Sir, you told me that this fabric is 100% wool, right? When Mr. Skinner answered "yes", Ellen said to him: "Don't I see some cotton in these threads?" Lowering his head he had to admit that she was right. This story illustrates how good a shopper Ellen White was.

Many times the White home was more **like a hotel**. In **1859** during a series of meetings, there were no less than **35 people eating** at the White home. The day after the meeting there was only a short note in her diary: "*We were all very tired.*"

The meals on the White table were simple but nutritious. Ellen White explained:

*"I have a **well-set table** on all occasions. I make no change for visitors, whether believers or unbelievers. I intend **never to be surprised** by an unreadiness to entertain at my table from **one to half a dozen extra** that may chance to come in. I have enough **simple, healthful** food ready to satisfy hunger and nourish the system. If any want more than this, they are at liberty to find it elsewhere. **No butter or flesh meats** of any kind come on my table. Cake is seldom found there. I generally have an ample supply of **fruits, good bread, and vegetables**. Our table is always well patronized, and all who partake of the food do well, and improve upon it. All sit down with no epicurean appetite, and eat with a relish the bounties supplied by our Creator." CD 486*

*"**I do not hold myself up as a criterion for them.** I leave each one to follow his own ideas as to what is best for him. I **bind no one else's conscience by my own.** One person cannot be a criterion for another in the matter of eating. It is impossible to make one rule for all to follow. There are those in my family who are very fond of beans, while to me beans are poison. Butter is never placed on my table, but if the members of my family choose to use a little butter away from the table, they are at liberty to do so. Our table is set **twice a day**, but if there are those who desire something to eat in the evening, there is **no rule that forbids** them from getting it. No one complains or goes from our table dissatisfied. A variety of food that is **simple, wholesome, and palatable**, is always provided."*

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The purpose of discipline in the White household was always remedial, never punitive. It was meant to strengthen character. On rare occasions physical punishment was administered but not in the heat of the moment:

*"I never allowed my children to think that they could plague me in their childhood. I also brought up in my family others from other families, but I never allowed those children to think that they could plague their mother. Never did I allow myself **to say a harsh word** or to **become impatient or fretful** over the children. They **never** got the better of me once--**not once**, to provoke me to anger. When my spirit was stirred, or when I felt anything like being provoked, I would say, 'Children, we shall let this rest now; we shall not say anything more about it now. Before we retire, we shall talk it over.'" Having all this time to reflect, by evening they had cooled off, and I could handle them very nicely." CG 253, 254*

Ellen White loved to work in the **flower and vegetable garden**. She frequently stated that God's people should have a vegetable garden and fruit trees in order to place nutritious food on the table and teach a work ethic to those who preferred to beg than to work.

When anyone in the White household got sick, natural remedies were applied. Ellen White's formula for recovering health was: **NATURAL REMEDIES + FAITH + PRAYER**. She knew the curative value of things such as Eucalyptus oil, grape juice, hydrotherapy, charcoal, etc.

The Whites frequently received unexpected guests without expecting any monetary compensation. In **1868 Seneca King** fractured his skull. The White family cared for him while his life hung in the balance. Day and night brother King required constant and intensive care. This cramped the daily life of the White family. The Whites would frequently visit homes of the needy to give them clothing that Ellen herself had sewn. She also visited homes to give classes to mothers on how to sew, cook and apply natural remedies.

The fruit of Ellen White's personal life clearly reveals that she passed the test of 'you shall know them by their fruits.'

Test #3: Jesus has come in the flesh

The Roman Catholic View:

According to Roman Catholic theology there are two reasons why Mary had to be conceived with an immaculate or sinless human nature. The first reason is because only an immaculate and sinless Mary could bring into the world an immaculate and sinless Jesus. Let's notice some remarks by Roman Catholic 'saints' and scholars:

Words of St. Bridget:

*"Mary was conceived **without sin**, that the divine Son might be born of her without sin." Liguori, The Glories of Mary, p. 296*

*"Corruption is a disgrace of human nature; and as Jesus was not subject of it, **Mary was also exempted**; for the flesh of Jesus is the **flesh of Mary**." Liguori, The Glories of Mary, p. 297*

*"For not only is it true that the Flesh of Jesus is the same as that of Mary, but the flesh of our Savior, even after his resurrection, remained the same that he **had taken from his Mother**." Liguori, The Glories of Mary, p. 297*

According to **St. Peter Damian** both Mary and Jesus took the unfallen nature of Adam:

*". . . the flesh of the Virgin, taken from Adam, **did not admit of the stain of Adam**." Liguori, The Glories of Mary p. 311*

*". . . the Blessed Virgin **never committed any actual sin**, not even a venial one. Otherwise, she would not have been a mother worthy of Jesus Christ; for the ignominy of the Mother would also have been that of the Son, for **he would have had a sinner for his mother**." Liguori, The Glories of Mary, p. 299*

*"Mary would have inherited sin and the penalties of sin, if God had not **preserved her from them**. As a result, hers was a condition similar to our first parents **before the fall**." Knights of Columbus, The Mother of Jesus, p. 25*

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The second reason why Mary had to be conceived immaculately according to Roman Catholic scholars is that only one who did not inherit a sinful nature or commit acts of sin could represent sinners as mediatrix before God. According to **Hebrews 7:26** it is argued, Jesus could represent us before the Father because he was sinless. How could Mary be an Advocate with Jesus if she was not also sinless?

St. Anselm states:

*“God could preserve angels in heaven spotless, in the midst of the devastation that surrounded them; was he, then, unable to **preserve the Mother** of his Son and the Queen of angels from the common fall of men?” Liguori, The Glories of Mary, p. 293*

*“St. Gregory says, ‘that an enemy cannot undertake to **appease** his judge, who is at the same time the injured party; for if he did, instead of appeasing him, he would provoke him to greater wrath.’ And therefore, as Mary was **to be the mediatrix** of peace between men and God, it was of the utmost importance that she should not herself appear as a sinner and as an enemy of God, but that she should appear in all things as a friend, and **free from every stain**.” Liguori, The Glories of Mary, p. 289*

What is the biblical view of Christ’s Humanity? Did he have the nature of Adam before the fall or did he come with Adam’s sinful nature?

1 John 4:1-3: Jesus came in human flesh

*“Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many **false prophets** have gone out into the world. ² By this you know the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ **has come in the flesh** is of God, ³ and every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ **has come in the flesh** is not of God. And this is the spirit of the Antichrist, which you have heard was coming, and is now already in the world.”*

John 1:14: We are informed that at the **incarnation** Jesus came in human flesh:

*“And the Word **became flesh** and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.”*

Hebrews 2:14-18: This passage tells us that Jesus was a flesh and blood human being and that He was made in all things like His brethren. He suffered the

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temptations of His brethren and therefore is able to help those who are tempted:

*“Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of **flesh and blood**, He Himself likewise shared in **the same**, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, **15** and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. **16** For indeed He does not give aid to angels, but He does give aid to the seed of Abraham. **17** Therefore, in **all things** He had to be made **like His brethren**, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. **18** For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, He is **able to aid those who are tempted.**”*

Luke 24:36-43: After the **resurrection** Jesus still conserved His human nature but in glorified form:

*“Now as they said these things, Jesus Himself stood in the midst of them, and said to them, “Peace to you.” **37** But they were terrified and frightened, and supposed they had seen a spirit. **38** And He said to them, “Why are you troubled? And why do doubts arise in your hearts? **39** Behold My **hands and My feet**, that it is I Myself. **Handle** Me and see, for a spirit does not have **flesh and bones** as you see I have.” **40** When He had said this, He showed them **His hands and His feet.** **41** But while they still did not believe for joy, and marveled, He said to them, “Have you any food here?” **42** So they gave Him a piece of a broiled fish and some honeycomb.* **43** And He took it and ate in their presence.”*

1 Timothy 2:5: In heaven Jesus is able to **mediate** for us because He is the man:

“For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus.”

Romans 8:3: What kind of flesh did Jesus? Did He have the sinless flesh of Adam before his fall?

*“For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the **likeness of sinful flesh**, on account of sin: He **condemned sin in the flesh**, **4** **that** the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the*

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Spirit.”

Ellen White concurs with the biblical testimony:

“The humanity of the Son of God is everything to us. It is the golden chain that binds our souls to Christ, and through Christ to God. This is to be our study. **Christ was a real man;** He gave proof of His humility in **becoming a man.** Yet He was God **in the flesh.** When we approach this subject, we would do well to heed the words spoken by Christ to Moses at the burning bush, “Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground” (Exodus 3:5). We should come to this study with the humility of a learner, with a contrite heart. And the study of the incarnation of Christ is a fruitful field, which will repay the searcher who digs deep for hidden truth. “1SM 244”

“We are too much in the habit of thinking that the Son of God was a being so entirely **exalted above us** that it is an impossibility for him to enter into our trials and temptations, and that he can have no sympathy with us in our weakness and frailties. This is because we do not take in the fact of his **oneness with humanity.** He took upon him the **likeness of sinful flesh,** and was made in **all points like unto his brethren,** that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God. He has engaged himself to save every son and daughter of Adam who will consent to be saved in God's appointed way.” Ellen G. White, Signs of the Times, May 16, 1895

“Adam was tempted by the enemy, and he fell. It was not **indwelling sin** that caused him to yield; for God made him pure and upright, in His own image. He was as **faultless** as the angels before the throne. There were in him **no corrupt principles, no tendencies** to evil. **But when Christ came** to meet the temptations of Satan, He bore ‘the likeness of sinful flesh.’ In the wilderness, weakened physically by a fast of forty days, He met His adversary. His dignity was questioned, His authority disputed, His allegiance to His Father assailed by the fallen foe.” Ellen G. White, Signs of the Times, Oct. 17, 1900

“In order to carry out the great work of redemption, the Redeemer must take the **place of fallen man.** Burdened with the sins of the world, he must go over the ground **where Adam stumbled.** He must take up the work just **where Adam**

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failed, and endure a test of the same character, but infinitely more severe than that which had vanquished him. It is impossible for man fully to comprehend Satan's temptations to our Savior. ***Every enticement to evil*** which men find so difficult to resist, was brought to bear upon the Son of God in as ***much greater degree*** as his character was superior to that of fallen man. Ellen G. White, General Conference Bulletin, February 25, 1895

“The great work of redemption could be carried out only by the Redeemer taking the place of ***fallen Adam***. With the sins of the world laid upon him, he would go over the ground where ***Adam stumbled***. He would bear the test which ***Adam failed*** to endure, and which would be almost infinitely more severe than that brought to bear upon Adam.” Ellen G. White, The Adventist Review and Sabbath Herald, February 24, 1874

“Christ has made an infinite sacrifice. He gave his own life for us. He took upon his divine soul the result of the transgression of God's law. Laying aside his royal crown, he condescended to step down, step by step, to the level of ***fallen humanity***.” Ellen G. White, General Conference Bulletin, April 23, 1901

“Think of Christ's humiliation. He took upon himself ***fallen***, suffering human nature, ***degraded and defiled by sin***. He took our sorrows, bearing our grief and shame. He endured all the temptations wherewith ***man is beset***.” Ellen G. White, The Youth's Instructor, December 20, 1900

“Though He had ***no taint of sin*** upon His character, yet He condescended to connect our fallen human nature with His divinity. By thus taking humanity, He honored humanity. Having ***taken our fallen nature***, he showed what it might become, by accepting the ample provision He has made for it, and by becoming partaker of the divine nature.” Letter 81, 1896 3SM 134

“It would have been an almost infinite humiliation for the Son of God to take man's nature, even when Adam stood in his innocence in Eden. ***But Jesus accepted humanity*** when the race had been weakened by four thousand years of sin. Like every ***child of Adam*** He accepted the results of the working of the great law of heredity. What these results were is shown in the history of His

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earthly ancestors [according to the genealogy of Matthew 1, those ancestors include the Abraham, Jacob, David, Rahab, Ruth, Manasseh and Ammon]. He came with such heredity to share **our** sorrows and temptations, and to give **us** the example of a sinless life. *The Desire of Ages*, p. 49

“But there must be no weakening or obscuring of the saving truth that the nature which God assumed in Christ is **identical with our nature** as we see it **in the light of the fall**. If it were otherwise, how could Christ **be really like us**? What concern would we have with Him? We stand before God characterized by the Fall, **God’s Son not only assumed our nature but He entered the concrete form of our nature under which we stand before God as men damned and lost.**” Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, volume 1, part 2, p. 153.

““As the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same.” He could not come in the form of an angel; for unless He met man as man, and testified by His connection with God that **divine power was not given to Him in a different way to what it will be given to us**, He could not be a **perfect example** for us.” Ellen G. White, *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, volume 7, p. 925

“The obedience of Christ to His Father was the **same obedience** that is required of man. Man cannot overcome Satan's temptations without **divine power to combine with his instrumentality**. So with Jesus Christ; He could lay hold of divine power. He came not to our world to give the obedience of a lesser God to a greater, but **as a man** to obey God's Holy Law, and in this way He is **our example**. The Lord Jesus came to our world, not to reveal what a God could do, but **what a man could do**, through faith in God's power to help in every emergency. Man is, through faith, to be a partaker in the divine nature, and to overcome every temptation wherewith he is beset. Ellen G. White, *Our High Calling*, p. 48

“Christ is the ladder that Jacob saw, the base resting on the earth, and the topmost round reaching to the gate of heaven, to the very threshold of glory. If that ladder had **failed by a single step** of reaching the earth, we should have been lost. But Christ reaches us where **we are**. He took **our nature** and

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overcame, that we through taking His nature might overcome. Made 'in the likeness of sinful flesh' (Rom. 8:3), He lived a sinless life. Now by His divinity He lays hold upon the throne of heaven, while by His humanity He reaches us. He bids us by faith in Him attain to the glory of the character of God. Therefore are we to be perfect, even as our "Father which is in heaven is perfect." The Desire of Ages, pp. 311, 312

"By His life and His death, Christ has achieved even more than recovery from the ruin wrought through sin. It was Satan's purpose to bring about an eternal separation between God and man; but in Christ we become more closely united to God than if we had never fallen. In taking **our nature**, the Savior has **bound Himself to humanity** by a tie that is **never to be broken**. Through the eternal ages He is linked with us. "God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son." John 3:16 He gave Him not only to bear our sins, and to die as our sacrifice; He **gave Him** to the fallen race. To assure us of His immutable counsel of peace, God gave His only-begotten Son to become **one of the human families forever to retain His human nature**. This is the pledge that God will fulfill His word. "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder." God has **adopted human nature** in the person of His Son, and has carried the same into the highest heaven. It is the "Son of man" who shares the throne of the universe. It is the "Son of man" whose name shall be called, "Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace" Isaiah 9:6. The I AM is the Daysman between God and humanity, laying His hand upon both. He who is "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners," is not ashamed to call us brethren Hebrews 7:26; 2:11. In Christ the family of earth and the family of heaven are bound together. Christ glorified is our brother. Heaven is enshrined in humanity, and humanity is enfolded in the bosom of Infinite Love." DA 25, 26

Test #4: Fulfilled Predictions

Jeremiah 28:9:

"As for the prophet who prophesies of peace, when the word of the prophet **comes to pass**, the prophet will be known as one whom the LORD has truly sent."

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Deuteronomy 18:22

*“And if you say in your heart, ‘How shall we know the word which the LORD has not spoken?’—When a prophet speaks in the name of the LORD, if the thing **does not happen or come to pass**, that is the thing which the LORD has not spoken; the prophet has spoken it presumptuously; you shall not be afraid of him.”*

Ellen White made several interesting predictions that were fulfilled or are in the process of being fulfilled. Here are some of them:

Labor Conglomerates:

Ellen White wrote substantially about the formation of **gigantic monopolies** (today we would call them corporations) and of powerful **labor unions** in the end time. In the times of Ellen White, labor unions had very little power. In spite of this, Ellen White made some remarkably specific and detailed predictions concerning the role of labor unions in the end time. In fact, she underlined that labor unions would be instrumental in causing a stupendous world crisis. Here are some of her predictions:

*“The work of the people of God is to prepare for the events of the future, which will soon come upon them with blinding force. In the world **gigantic monopolies will be formed**. Men will bind themselves together **in unions** that will wrap them in the folds of the enemy. A **few men** will combine to grasp all the means to be obtained in **certain lines of business**. **Trades unions** will be formed, and those who refuse to join these unions will be marked men.” Letter 26, 1903*

*“The trades unions and **confederacies** of the world are a snare. Keep out of them, and away from them, brethren. Have nothing to do with them. Because of these **unions and confederacies**, it will soon be very difficult for our institutions to carry on their work in the cities. My warning is: Keep out of the cities. Build no sanitariums in the cities. Educate our people to **get out of the cities** into the country, where they can obtain a small piece of land, and make a home for themselves and their children.” {2SM 142.3}*

*“These unions are one of the signs of the last days. Men are **binding up in bundles** ready to be burned. They may be church members, but while they belong to these*

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unions, they cannot possibly keep the commandments of God; for to belong to these unions means to disregard the entire Decalogue." Country Living, p. 11

The Publishing Ministry:

"After coming out of vision, I said to my husband: "I have a message for you. You must begin to print a **little paper** and send it out to the people. Let it be small at first; but as the people read, they will send you means with which to print, and it will be a success from the first. From this small beginning it was shown to me to be like **streams of light that went clear round the world.**" CET 128

The growth and proliferation of Spiritualism:

When Ellen White wrote Early Writings, spiritualism was in its **conception stage**. It was confined mainly to **Rochester, New York**. But she made some bold predictions about the growth and proliferation of spiritualism in the end time. Who can deny that Hollywood movies are saturated with spiritualism? And how about NDE'S and OBE's that more and more claim is proof of life during death?

"A train of cars was shown me, going with the speed of lightning. The angel bade me look carefully. I fixed my eyes upon the train. **It seemed that the whole world [in the light of Revelation 16:13, 14]** was on board, that there could not be one left. Said the angel: "They are binding in bundles ready to burn." Then he showed me **the conductor**, who appeared like a stately, fair person, whom **all the passengers looked up to and revered**. I was perplexed and asked my attending angel who it was. He said, "It is Satan. He is the conductor in the **form of an angel of light**. He has **taken the world captive**. They are given over to strong delusions, to believe a lie, that they may be damned. This agent, the next highest in order to him, is the engineer, and other of his agents are employed in different offices as he may need them, and they are all going with lightning speed to perdition." EW 88

Ellen White also warned that spiritualism would be instrumental in uniting apostate Protestantism with Rome:

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*“Through the two great errors, the **immortality of the soul** and Sunday sacredness, Satan will bring the people under his deceptions. While the former lays the foundation of spiritualism, the latter creates a bond of sympathy with Rome. The **Protestants of the United States** will be foremost in stretching their hands across the gulf to grasp the hand of spiritualism; they will reach over the abyss to clasp hands with the **Roman power**; and under the influence of this threefold union, this country will follow in the steps of Rome in trampling on the rights of conscience.” GC 588*

And Ellen White also warned the remnant church about the encroachments of spiritualism into our beloved **the SDA church** in a subliminal and seemingly **undetectable manner**. The present conflict in the church over the **One Project, Spiritual Formation** and **Contemplative Prayer** is an evidence of a **refined type** of spiritualism attempting to penetrate our church through the back door. The present crisis bears all of the characteristics of Ellen White’s predicted Omega (Secrets Unsealed carries seven books on this matter that every SDA should carefully read)

Ecumenism based on common points of doctrine:

*“The wide diversity of belief in the Protestant churches is regarded by many as decisive proof that no effort to secure a forced uniformity can ever be made. But there has been for years, in churches of the Protestant faith, a strong and growing sentiment in favor of **a union based upon common points of doctrine**. To secure such a union, the discussion of subjects upon which all were not agreed--however important they might be from a Bible standpoint--must necessarily be waived.” GC 444*

*“When the leading churches of the United States, **uniting upon such points of doctrine as are held by them in common**, shall influence the state to enforce their decrees and to sustain their institutions, then Protestant America will have formed an image of the Roman hierarchy, and the infliction of civil penalties upon dissenters will inevitably result.” GC 445*

Heathenism invading our cities:

*“As we near the close of time, there will be greater and still greater external parade of heathen power; **heathen deities** will manifest their signal power, and will exhibit themselves before the **cities of the world**; and this delineation has already begun to be fulfilled.” TM 117, 118*

The cause and purpose of ‘natural’ disasters:

*“Satan **works through the elements** also to garner his harvest of unprepared souls. He has studied the **secrets of the laboratories of nature**, and he uses all his power to control the elements as far as God allows. When he was suffered to afflict Job, how quickly flocks and herds, servants, houses, children, were swept away, one trouble succeeding another as in a moment. It is God that shields His creatures and hedges them in from the power of the destroyer. But the Christian world have shown contempt for the law of Jehovah; and the Lord will do just what He has declared that He would--He will **withdraw His blessings** from the earth and **remove His protecting care** from those who are rebelling against His law and teaching and forcing others to do the same. Satan has control of all whom God does not especially guard. He will favor and prosper some in order to further his own designs, and he will bring trouble upon others and lead men to believe that it is God who is afflicting them.*

*While appearing to the children of men as a great physician who can heal all their maladies, he will bring disease and disaster, until populous cities are reduced to ruin and desolation. Even now he is at work. In accidents and calamities by sea and by land, in great conflagrations, in **fierce tornadoes** and **terrific hailstorms**, in **tempests, floods, cyclones, tidal waves, and earthquakes**, in every place and in a thousand forms, Satan is exercising his power. He sweeps away the ripening harvest, and famine and distress follow. He imparts **to the air a deadly taint**, and thousands perish by the pestilence. These visitations are to become **more and more frequent and disastrous**. Destruction will be upon both man and beast. “The earth mourneth and fadeth away,” “the haughty people . . . do languish. The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant.” Isaiah 24:4, 5*

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And **then** the great deceiver will persuade men that **those who serve God** are causing these evils." GC 588-590

The New York City vision:

Some have seen the **events of 9/11** as a fulfillment of a vision that Ellen White had while visiting New York City. It bears noting that although there are many similarities there are also differences:

*"On one occasion, when **in New York City**, I was in the night season called upon to behold buildings rising **story after story** toward heaven. These buildings were warranted to be **fireproof**, and they were erected to glorify their owners and builders. **Higher and still higher** these buildings rose, and in them the most costly material was used. Those to whom these buildings belonged were not asking themselves: "How can we best glorify God?" The Lord was not in their thoughts.*

I thought: "Oh, that those who are thus investing their means could see their course as God sees it! They are piling up magnificent buildings, but how foolish in the sight of the Ruler of the universe is their planning and devising. They are not studying with all the powers of heart and mind how they may glorify God. They have lost sight of this, the first duty of man."

*"As these lofty buildings went up, the owners rejoiced with ambitious pride that they had money to use in gratifying self and provoking the envy of their neighbors. Much of the money that they thus invested had been obtained through exaction, **through grinding down the poor**. They forgot that in heaven an account of every business transaction is kept; every unjust deal, every fraudulent act, is there recorded. The time is coming when in their fraud and insolence men will reach a point that the Lord will not permit them to pass, and they will learn that there is a limit to the forbearance of Jehovah. The scene that next passed before me was an **alarm of fire**. Men looked at the lofty and **supposedly fireproof** buildings and said: "They are perfectly safe." But these buildings were consumed as if made of pitch. The **fire engines** could do nothing to stay the destruction. The **firemen were unable** to operate the engines." 9T 111-13*

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San Francisco and Oakland (the San Francisco earthquake occurred on **April 18, 1906**. Ellen White had already predicted in 1902:

*“Well-equipped tent meetings should be held in the large cities, such as San Francisco; for not long hence these cities **will suffer under the judgments** of God. San Francisco and Oakland are becoming as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the Lord will visit them in wrath.” Manuscript 114, 1902*

*“San Francisco and Oakland are becoming as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the Lord will visit them. **Not far hence** they will suffer under His judgments.” Manuscript 30, 1903*

False Revivals:

Ellen White predicted an increase in **false revivals** in the protestant churches. She emphasized that these revivals would precede the true revival that will come as a result of the latter rain:

*“Notwithstanding the widespread declension of faith and piety, there are true followers of Christ in these churches [**apostate protestant churches**]. Before the final visitation of God's judgments upon the earth there will be among the people of the Lord such a revival of primitive godliness as has not been witnessed since apostolic times. The Spirit and power of God will be poured out upon His children. At that time many will separate themselves from those churches in which the **love of this world** has supplanted love for **God and His word**. Many, both of ministers and people, will gladly accept those great truths which God has caused to be proclaimed at this time to prepare a people for the Lord's second coming.*

***The enemy of souls desires to hinder this work;** and before the time for such a movement shall come, he will endeavor to prevent it by **introducing a counterfeit**. In those churches which he can bring under his deceptive power he will **make it appear** that God's special blessing is poured out; there will be manifest what is thought to be **great religious interest**. **Multitudes** will exult that God is working marvelously for them, when the work is that of another spirit. Under a religious guise, Satan will seek to extend his influence over the Christian world.” GC 464*

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What is Ellen White's definition of a false revival? Notice the following description:

*“Popular revivals are too often carried by appeals to the **imagination**, by **exciting the emotions**, by gratifying the love for what is **new and startling**. Converts thus gained have **little desire to listen to Bible truth**, little interest in the testimony of prophets and apostles. Unless a religious service has something of a **sensational character**, it has no attractions for them. A message that appeals to **unimpassioned reason** awakens no response. The **plain warnings of God's word**, relating directly to their eternal interests, are unheeded.” GC 463*

World Wars:

Ellen White has some remarkable things to say about world wars that were right around the corner. In **1890**, 24 years before the First World War Ellen White wrote the following striking words:

*“The tempest is coming, and we must get ready for its fury, by having repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord will arise to shake terribly the earth. We shall see troubles on all sides. **Thousands of ships** will be hurled into the depths of the sea. **Navies will go down** and human lives will be **sacrificed by millions**. Fires will break out unexpectedly, and no human effort will be able to quench them. The palaces of earth will be swept away in the fury of the flames. **Disasters by rail** will become more and more frequent; confusion, collision, and death without a moment's warning will occur on the **great lines of travel**. The end is near, probation is closing. Oh, let us seek God while he may be found, call upon him while he is near!” Signs of the Times, April 21, 1890*

There is one prediction of Ellen White, however, that never came to fruition. This one vision is used over and over again by the enemies of Ellen White as evidence that she was a false prophet. I include here two complementary explanations of the **1856 vision**—one of them by Glenn Coon and the other by the White Estate.

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Roger Coon Explains the 1856 Vision

Glenn Coon, who was for many years the director of the Ellen G. White Estate, wrote a valuable document that you have received for study in this class. The title of the document is: "Inspiration/Revelation: What it is and How it Works". In it he has provided a clear explanation of the famous 1856 vision that seemingly was never fulfilled:

"Some time ago I was holding a series of class lectures and public meetings at one of our educational institutions on the Atlantic seaboard. At the close of the Thursday evening presentation a denominational worker at this school asked if he might speak with me privately. I invited him to my guest room where we conversed for more than an hour.

As soon as he was seated, he began, 'I really want to believe in Ellen White as a legitimate, authentic prophet of the Lord.' I could tell by the tone of his voice that he was not only deeply sincere, but also deeply concerned as well.

'Fine,' I responded. 'Is there any impediment to the fulfillment of your wish?'

Without answering my question directly, he went on, 'Isn't the fulfillment of predictions one of the Bible's tests of a true prophet?'

'Oh, yes,' I smiled. 'When I used to teach college prophetic-guidance classes in California and Nigeria, we examined four such tests (1) the words of the 'prophet' under scrutiny must agree with earlier inspired revelations known to have come from the Lord (Isaiah 8:20); (2) the fruitage test must be applied, both the prophet's own life and the lives of those who follow the prophet (Matthew 7:16, 20); (3) the prophet must testify that Jesus was the divine-human incarnate Son of God (1 John 4:1-3); and (4) the predictions of the prophet must come to pass.'

'This last test,' I told my inquirer, 'is twice mentioned in the Old Testament. Jeremiah (chap. 28:9) presents it from the positive perspective: 'When the word of the prophet shall come to pass, then shall the prophet be known, that the Lord hath truly sent him.' And Moses presents it from the negative perspective; 'When a prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of

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him' (Deuteronomy 18:22).'

'I thought so,' my friend said quietly. Then he went on, 'Well, what do we do, then, with Ellen White's predictions that never came to pass? For example, I understand that in 1856 she said she was shown a group of our church members at a meeting somewhere. She said that some of them would be 'food for worms,' some would be subjects of the seven last plagues, and some would be alive and translated at the second coming of Christ. Are any of the persons who attended that meeting still alive?'

'Not to my knowledge,' I replied. 'In fact, the last known survivor died in 1937 at the age of 83. His name was William C. White, and he was a babe in arms at the time his mother, Ellen White, made the prediction.'

'That is what I have heard. Well, how do you handle it--in the light of this Biblical test of a prophet--that his prediction must come to pass, and if it doesn't this is evidence that the Lord has not spoken through him?'

'I handle it the same way I handle other unfulfilled prophecies of genuine prophets that appear in the Bible,' I replied. 'Incidentally, I will deal with this in substantial detail in just a moment. But my policy, when people raise questions about Ellen White's prophetic role, is to go first to the Bible, to see how the situation is resolved there, before I examine Ellen White. You see, I want to see her in the light of the Bible, not the other way around.'

And so we began a most interesting study of unfulfilled prophecies by authentic, acknowledged prophets in the Bible. Probably the best-known example is Jonah.

After finishing his celebrated "submarine" ride in the belly of the great fish, Jonah went to Nineveh to do the Lord's bidding. Nineveh was a large city; it would take Jonah three days to cover it entirely. His message was as simple as it was stark: 'Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown' (Jonah 3:4). No hope was offered, no compromise, no conditional element.

After delivering the message, Jonah went out of town and found a vantage place where he could witness (and relish) the massacre of his nation's most hated enemies. Jonah despised these people with a passion, for the Assyrians were the most warlike and fearsome of Israel's pagan foes. When they

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captured Jewish prisoners of war, they flayed them--skinned them alive--to extract every ounce of trauma in torture that they could before they killed the victim. In such instances death, when it came, was a welcome, merciful release. The Jews quite understandably had no love for the Ninevites.

Although there was no hope explicit in the message of Jonah, the Ninevites (who may have had some prior knowledge about Jehovah from hearing other Jewish prophets, or from reading Jewish prophetic writings) decided to mend their ways. They expressed their repentance in the cultural manifestation appropriate to the times--they put on sackcloth and covered themselves with ashes. God beheld it all, and in love and mercy granted them a stay of execution.

Meanwhile, the prophet was becoming angrier by the moment. One suspects that the real cause of this growing irritation was not merely his narrow chauvinistic Jewish loyalty, but rather a fear that word of this new development might get back to Jerusalem before he did.

Jonah may have been more concerned about his professional reputation as a prophet than about the fate of his 120,000 'converts.' Instead of wishing them baptized by water, he wanted them incinerated by fire! Perhaps he was afraid that when he got back to Jerusalem the little children playing in the street would chant after him, 'Jonah's a false prophet; Jonah's a false prophet.' Why? Because his prediction didn't come to pass.

Interestingly, in a footnote to history, we learn that several centuries after this event the Ninevites 'repented' of their former repentance (see 2 Corinthians 7:10) and went back to their former ways. God then 'repented' of His reprieve, and sent the threatened destruction that Jonah had originally foretold.

But was Jonah proved a 'true' prophet 200 years *ex post facto*? No, not at all. If the Ninevites had *never* subsequently been destroyed, Jonah would still have been deemed a true prophet, even though his prediction did not come to pass.

How? By the conditional element that exists in some prophecies, either explicitly or implicitly. A clue to this is found as early as 950 B.C. when the prophet Azariah instructed King Asa, 'The Lord is with you, while ye be with him; and if ye seek him, he will be found of you; but if ye forsake him, he will forsake you' (2 Chronicles 15:2).

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More to the point, however, is the interesting (and significant) fact, that in *both* of the biblical books where the test of fulfillment is mandated, this conditional element is also explicitly stated.

Ten chapters *before* giving the test of fulfillment, Jeremiah mentions this conditional element:

At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it; If that nation against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them. And at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it; If it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good, wherewith I said I would benefit them (Jeremiah 18:7-10).

Moses also mentions the conditional element repeatedly in Deuteronomy. (Deuteronomy 4:9; 8:19; 28:1, 2, 13-15; cf. also Zechariah 6:15)

Some have felt that this was a face-saving means of maintaining a prophet's professional reputation in the face of adverse evidence such as nonfulfillment of predictions, (Walter Rea is one such and he lists the 'failed' prediction of 1856 as 'White Lie' No. 8 of a total of 18 such alleged 'White Lies,' in an address to the Association of Adventist Forums, San Diego, California on February 14, 1981) but it is not. It is a biblical principle. One does not need an advanced degree in theology to be able to figure out what kind of prophecies are amendable to the conditional element and which are not.

One could cite other biblical examples of unfulfilled prophecies given by authentic, legitimate prophets. The category that comes most quickly to mind is that of a host of predictions made by a half-dozen Old Testament prophets about Israel's national honor and glory--predictions about the worldwide mission of Israel and the ingathering of the Gentiles, eternal rest in Canaan, and deliverance from political enemies.

A few of these predictions were fulfilled, secondarily, through "spiritual Israel" (the Christian church); and some may be fulfilled to Christians ultimately, after sin and sinners are destroyed following the last judgment. Despite these exceptions, the majority of these prophecies were not fulfilled in Bible times, are not being fulfilled today, and never will be fulfilled (for an

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excellent and extremely helpful treatment of the subject, see ‘The Role of Israel in Old Testament Prophecy,’ *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, volume 4, pp. 25-38).

Then do we say that the prophets who made these predictions--notably Moses, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Joel, Zephaniah, and Zechariah--were false prophets? No. Nor do we say, as do the Secret Rapture theorists, that these prophecies will be fulfilled in our own time. Indeed, these latter expositors have built a whole theology on the misunderstanding of the conditional element in prophecy, and they posit a last-day fulfillment in order that these Old Testament writers may be proved to be reliable, authentic prophets of the Lord! (For additional examples of the conditional element in biblical prophecies, see LeRoy Edwin Froom, *Movement of Destiny* [Washington, D. C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1971], pp. 573, 574)

A Look at the ‘Food for Worms’ Vision

Let us now come back to Ellen White and the ‘Food for Worms’ vision, to discover the facts in that case. During the latter part of May 1856, a conference in Battle Creek was attended by members and denominational workers of a church that was still four years away from assuming a corporate name. Attendees came to the conference from various parts of the eastern and midwestern parts of the United States and from Canada. The conference opened on Friday afternoon, May 23, and closed on Monday, May 26. On Sabbath the attendance was so large that it was necessary to leave the modest chapel that then served the Adventists and go across the street to a large tent pitched to accommodate the crowd.

On Tuesday morning, May 27, another meeting was held, this time back in the chapel, attended largely by workers who were still in Battle Creek. It was at this service that Mrs. White was taken off in vision, and was shown some of those attending the May 23-26 conference.

The report of this vision is found in *Testimonies for the Church*, volume 1, pages 127-137, and is still published by the church, although some critics claim that the church tries to hide Mrs. White's unfulfilled predictions.

Incidentally, carefully drawn lists of the names of those in attendance at that conference were compiled by a number of interested parties. Some of these

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lists still survive in the archives of the Ellen G. White Estate in the General Conference office. The lists were actively circulated among Adventists in earlier days, and J. N. Loughborough tells, in a letter written in 1918, about two ministers, a 'Brother Nelson' and George Amadon, who took such a roster to Ellen White in 1905 to see if she could add any names that they had overlooked.

Mrs. White is reported to have said, 'What are you doing?' When told the purpose of the list--to show the nearness of Jesus' coming because very few of those attending still survived--Mrs. White asked what use would be made of the list. Brother Nelson responded, "I am going to have copies of it printed and sent out to all of our people."

Mrs. White's instant rejoinder was, 'Then you stop right where you are. If they get that list, instead of working to push the Message, they will be watching the *Review* each week to see who is dead.' Loughborough, in telling the story, concluded with the observation that Ellen White objected to using this incident as a 'sign of the times.' (J. N. Loughborough letter from Sanitarium, California, August 28, 1918). Obviously, she recognized the conditional element in the vision, and the fact that the Seventh-day Adventist Church had not then met the condition.

Was the conditional element explicit in the angel's testimony to Ellen White in the 1856 vision? No. But then, neither was the conditional element explicit in the testimony of Jonah as he trudged for three days throughout the 'exceeding great' city of Nineveh. In both cases, however, the conditional element was implicit.

From as early as 1850 to as late as 1911, (for a comprehensive view of several such statements by Ellen White, see Froom, pp. 583-588; and Robert Olson, *The Crisis Ahead* (Angwin, California: Pacific Union College Bookstore, 1976), pp. 75-78) Ellen White's writings repeatedly suggest that if the Seventh-day Adventist church had done its job, "the work would have been completed, and Christ would have come ere this." (Manuscript 4, 1883); published in *Evangelism*, pp. 695, 696, and *Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 68.

The conditional element in *some* prophecy is exhibited both in the Bible and in the writings of Ellen G. White. To accept it in one, but discard it in the other, is inconsistent and irrational.

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The White Estate Explains the 1856 Vision

Concerning a conference in 1856 Ellen White declared:

"I was shown the company present at the conference. Said the angel, '*Some food for worms, some subjects of the seven last plagues, some will be alive and remain upon the earth to be translated at the coming of Jesus.*' " All who were alive then are now dead. Does this unfulfilled prediction mean that Mrs. White is a false prophet? We offer a more extended answer to this question because it illustrates a fundamental misconception regarding the gift of prophecy.

Deuteronomy 18:22 reads: "*If a prophet speaks in the name of the Lord but the thing does not take place or prove true, it is a word that the Lord has not spoken*" (NRSV).

This text, taken alone, would indict a number of Bible prophets. Deuteronomy 18:22 is to be understood, even as any other lone text, in the context of **all Scripture**. Other scriptures reveal that there are **qualifying factors** that operate in relation to a prophet's predictions, particularly where the **free will of humanity** may be involved. It may come as a surprise to some to think that God's promises of blessings and His threats of judgments **are conditional**. But the Scriptures are explicit on this. Notice the words recorded by Jeremiah:

"At one moment I may declare concerning a nation or a kingdom, that I will pluck up and break down and destroy it, but if that nation, concerning which I have spoken, turns from its evil, I will change my mind about the disaster that I intended to bring on it. And at another moment I may declare concerning a nation or a kingdom that I will build and plant it, but if it does evil in my sight, not listening to my voice, then I will change my mind about the good that I had intended to do to it." Jer. 18:7-10 (NRSV)

The Bible presents a number of illustrations of the application of this principle set forth by Jeremiah. Indeed, we may be thankful for Jeremiah's words; they help us rightly to understand some texts of Scripture that might otherwise seem to indict the divine claims of certain prophets. Consider these two instances that illustrate both parts of Jeremiah's statement. The first is a divine threat to bring judgment upon a nation. We see in parallel columns the threat of judgment and its reversal:

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The Threat of Judgment Reversed

Jonah 3:3-4: Threat uttered

*"So Jonah arose and went to Nineveh, according to the word of the LORD. Now Nineveh was an exceedingly great city, a three-day journey in extent. **4** And Jonah began to enter the city on the first day's walk. Then he cried out and said: "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!"*

Jonah 3:5, 10: Threat reversed

*"So the people of Nineveh **believed God**, proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest to the least of them. **10** Then God saw their works, that **they turned from their evil way**; and God relented from the disaster that He had said He would bring upon them, and **He did not do it.**"*

A Promised Blessing

Exodus 6:2, 6-8: God promised to give the land of Canaan to those He delivered from Egypt:

*"And God spoke to Moses and said to him: "I am the LORD" . . . **6** Therefore say to the children of Israel: 'I am the LORD; I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, I will rescue you from their bondage, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments. **7** I will take you as My people, and I will be your God. Then you shall know that I am the LORD your God who brings you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. **8** And **I will bring you into the land** which I swore to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and **I will give it to you as a heritage**: I am the LORD.'" **9** So Moses spoke thus to the children of Israel; but they did not heed Moses, because of anguish of spirit and cruel bondage."*

The Promised Blessing Reversed:

Numbers 14:26-34

And the Lord spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying, How long shall I bear with this evil congregation, which murmur against me? . . . Say unto them . . . your carcasses shall fall in this wilderness and all that were numbered among you according to your whole number . . . doubtless ye shall not come into the

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*land concerning which I sware to make ye dwell therein . . . and ye shall know **my breach of promise.***"

How clearly these parallel passages on the promise to Israel illuminate the words of Jeremiah! Said the Lord to Israel, "Ye shall know my breach of promise." Or, as stated in the alternate reading in the margin: "Ye shall know my altering of my purpose."

The Case of Eli

Again, take the words of "a man of God" who came to Eli to declare judgment against him because of the vile conduct of his sons. This "man of God" asked Eli if he remembered the promise that the Lord made to his family "when they were in Egypt in Pharaoh's house," that they should serve as God's priests. Then he follows with this reversal of the promise:

"Wherefore the Lord God of Israel saith, I said indeed that thy house, and the house of thy father, should walk before me for ever: but now the Lord saith, Be it far from me; for them that honour me I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed. Behold, the days come, that I will cut off thine arm, and the arm of thy father's house, that there shall not be an old man in thine house." 1 Sam. 2:30, 31

Have sincere Bible students been disturbed by these reversals of God's decrees, have they in any way lost confidence in the claims of the Bible prophets because their predictions failed of fulfillment? Why not? Because in view of Jeremiah's words they read into each prediction an implied qualifying clause:

The Implied Qualifying Clause

1. "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown"—if the Ninevites do not repent.
2. "I will bring you in unto the land, concerning the which I did swear to give it"—if ye will keep My covenant. (See Ex. 19:5, 6, where the Lord, speaking to Moses en route to Canaan, inserts the qualifying "if.")
3. "I said indeed that thy house, and the house of thy father, should walk before me for ever"—if ye will walk in the ways of righteousness.

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If it is proper--and it is--to add to these predictions a qualifying clause, why is it not proper to do so with Mrs. White's 1856 prediction?

Theologians Comment on Predictions

The conditional character of Bible predictions may be explained on the altogether reasonable ground that God, though sovereign, is not arbitrary. He does not deal with people as if they were lifeless objects on a chessboard to be moved about exclusively at His will. He mysteriously holds in check, as it were, His own plans oftentimes, because He will not override the free will of anyone. That is what gives to divine predictions their conditional quality, and that is what caused God to speak of "my breach of promise," or "my altering of my purpose."

Well-known Bible commentators have written of this:

"God's promises are as conditional as his threats. It would be neither just nor merciful to us for God to continue his favors unabated after we had departed from him. The removal of them is a wholesome warning to us. It springs naturally from the personal relation of God to his people, one which depends on reciprocal sympathy."--*The Pulpit Commentary*, Notes (Homiletics) on Jeremiah 18:7-10.

"The majority of the [Old Testament] prophecies, however, were of the conditional type. They contain a suppressed 'unless' or 'if you keep my commandments' type of conditionality . . . It is this provisional nature to the threat or promise delivered by the prophet that explains such a famous case as that of the prophet Jonah."—*Hard Sayings of the Bible*, Walter C. Kaiser, Jr., Peter H. Davids, F. F. Bruce, Manfred T. Brauch (1996).

Factors That Affect the Promise of the Advent

The Scriptures reveal that one of the reasons why God seems to us to be slow in carrying out His plan and promise to create a new earth for the righteous is because He desires to give everyone a little longer time in which to exercise

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their free will to flee from the wrath to come. Peter thus answers those who would doubt the certainty of God's promise to bring an end to this world of evil simply because time has tarried:

"The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." 2 Peter 3:9.

Peter also declares that the children of God may hasten the Advent by exercising their free will. There is something that we can do about bringing the Advent nearer. We read: "Waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God" 2 Peter 3:12 (NRSV). Commentators have observed on this text:

"God appoints us as instruments of accomplishing those events which must be first before the day of God can come. By praying for His coming, furthering the preaching of the Gospel for a witness to all nations, and bringing in those whom 'the long-suffering of God' waits to save, we *hasten the coming of the day of God*."--Jamieson, Fausset, Brown, *Commentary*, Notes on 2 Peter 3:12.

That the coming of Christ is related to an action of human free will--the preaching of the gospel by Christ's followers--is clearly revealed in our Lord's prophecy as to the time of His coming: "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." Matthew 24:14

No Failure in the Word of the Lord

Thus it is evident that if the free will of men and women is so vitally related to the second coming of Christ, both as regards the unbeliever and the professed children of God, any prediction concerning it would have to be tempered and qualified by that fact.

Numerous statements made by Ellen White in the decades following the 1856 vision demonstrate that she clearly understood that there is an implied conditional quality to God's promises and threatenings--as Jeremiah declared--

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-and that the conditional feature in forecasts regarding Christ's Advent involves the state of heart of Christ's followers. The following statement, written in 1883, is especially relevant on this point:

"The angels of God in their messages to men represent time as very short. Thus it has always been presented to me. It is true that time has continued longer than we expected in the early days of this message. Our Saviour did not appear as soon as we hoped. But has the Word of the Lord failed? Never! It should be remembered that the promises and the threatenings of God are alike conditional . . .

"It was not the will of God that the coming of Christ should be thus delayed. God did not design that His people, Israel, should wander forty years in the wilderness. He promised to lead them directly to the land of Canaan, and establish them there a holy, healthy, people. But those to whom it was first preached, went not in 'because of unbelief.' Their hearts were filled with murmuring, rebellion, and hatred, and He could not fulfill His covenant with them.

"For forty years did unbelief, murmuring, and rebellion shut out ancient Israel from the land of Canaan. The same sins have delayed the entrance of modern Israel into the heavenly Canaan. In neither case were the promises of God at fault. It is the unbelief, the worldliness, unconsecration, and strife among the Lord's professed people that have kept us in this world of sin and sorrow so many years."--MS. 4, 1883. (Quoted in *Evangelism*, pp. 695, 696.)

These words from Mrs. White harmonize with what we have already discovered of the ways of God toward humanity, that free will plays an awesome part in the operation of the plans of God for this earth. We can better understand Mrs. White's unfulfilled prediction of 1856 when it is examined in the light of the conditional character of prophetic promises found in the Scriptures.

[Adapted from F. D. Nichol, "The Predictions of the 1856 Vision," in *Ellen G.*

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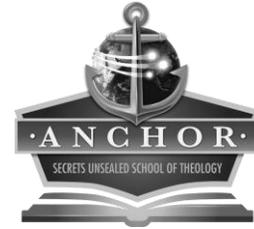
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White and Her Critics (Hagerstown, Md.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1951), pp. 102-111. Available from Adventist Book Centers (1-800-765-6955).]

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by Pastor Stephen Bohr

LESSON #9 - TESTING ELLEN WHITE’S PROPHETIC GIFT: SECONDARY TESTS

Test #5: Certainty of her call and a willingness to openly rebuke sin:

There are many characteristics of false prophets but one of the salient ones is the desire to be people pleasers. They love popularity and recognition but for this they must ruffle feathers. In order to maintain their popularity with the people they must overlook sin and preach a smooth message of peace and safety. Popularity is never a litmus test for a true prophet. It is rather a litmus test for a false one!

If a self-proclaimed prophet is popular with the world we can be sure that he is a false prophet. Jesus warned:

Luke 6:26:

“Woe to you when all men speak well of you, for so did their fathers to the false prophets.”

The **prophet Jeremiah** added his testimony:

Jeremiah 6:13, 14

*“Because from the least of them even to the greatest of them, everyone is given to covetousness; and from **the prophet** even to the priest, everyone **deals falsely**. **14** They have also healed the hurt of My people **slightly**, saying, **‘Peace, peace!’** When there is no peace.”*

We are told in **Revelation 13:3** that the leader of the Roman Catholic Papacy will be extremely popular with the world at the end of time. In fact, we are told that the whole world will wonder after him. In contrast, Jesus clearly

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stated concerning His true messengers:

"I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world." **John 17:14**

Biblical prophets were anything but popular. The very church members that they were sent to disliked them. Elijah was persecuted, Moses was constantly criticized, Isaiah was sawn asunder, Jeremiah was thrown into a dungeon, John the Baptist was beheaded, Stephen was stoned, etc. The reason why prophets were disliked is because they told it like it is without mincing words!

This reminds me of an experience that occurred last year when I presented a series on the great controversy in a Hispanic church in New Jersey. I noticed a certain young man in the front row who never missed a meeting. He seemed to be hungry for the word!

Toward the end of the series, my wife and I were invited to eat at the home of the lady who had invited me to present the series. As we sat at the table we noticed that she had also invited this young man because, as we soon found out, she wanted him to share his testimony with us.

The young man was standing on a street corner on a Sabbath morning and saw a nicely dressed woman with a Bible in her hand moving in his direction. This struck him as rather strange because he knew that Christians went to church on Sunday rather than on Sabbath. So he approached her and asked: "Excuse me but where are you going?"

She answered: "I am going to church."

He replied: "But Christians go to church on Sunday, not Saturday!"

She replied: "Not my church. We hold our services on the seventh-day Sabbath just as the Bible teaches."

He then said to her: "I have been studying the Bible and I have reached the same conclusion but I did not even know that there was a church that keeps the Sabbath. Could I come to church with you? Of course she said: "yes".

So they went side by side to the church. When they arrived the young man asked a greeting elder: "Is this the church that keeps the seventh-day Sabbath?"

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The elder replied: “Yes it is.” And the young man told the elder: “Then this church is my church.”

The young man stayed for Sabbath School and for the church service. During the sermon hour the pastor mentioned the name of Ellen G. White as prophet of the remnant and then read a quotation from her writings. The young man wondered: “Who is this Ellen White anyway? I need to check her out when I get home.”

So he went to the Internet and goggled her name and suddenly all of these negative websites came online. As you know, there is a plethora of websites that reveal a **vitriolic hate** toward Ellen White and to their utmost to discredit her prophetic gift. After reading material on several of these sites he wondered whether he really wanted to go back to a church that had such a hated prophet.

But then he said, and these are his very words:

“I thought to myself. There is not a single prophet in the Bible that I know of that the people loved—most were hated as much or more than Ellen White. So if she is hated so much she might well be on the right track.”

So he decided to go back to the church the next Sabbath and ask for a book that was written by Ellen White. To make a long story short, the elder gave him a copy of The Great Controversy. The young man read the book in one week! The next Sabbath he said to the elder: “After reading this book and seeing what is happening in the world, I have no doubts whatsoever that the writer was a prophet of the Lord!”

Let’s take an example of a prophet who was willing to rebuke the greatest king in the history of Israel--Nathan. As we all know, David had committed the grave sins of adultery and murder and had attempted to hide his guilt. But the Lord knew what David had done and he revealed it to His prophet and instructed him to rebuke David. Nathan. Nathan first told David a well-know parable to prepare the way for David to admit his guilt (2 Samuel 12:1-6). Nathan then pointed the finger at David and said: “You are the man” (verse 7). Then Nathan clearly explained to David the consequences of his sin (verses 8-12).

The point is that when God commanded Nathan to deliver the message, Nathan did not measure the consequences. He openly and fearlessly rebuked David’s

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sin no matter the consequences to himself. The life of Nathan was spared because David repented but another prophet—John the Baptist—lost his head for rebuking the same sin before another king!

A true prophet does not deliver a message that satisfies the carnal heart. As can be seen in the case of Nathan, God often commands the prophet to deliver a rebuke for information that is hidden in the human heart. In order to do this the prophet must be **absolutely certain** of his/her call and of the **information** that God has imparted.

Ellen White once had a vision where she **only heard a voice** and God told her that when she heard that voice she should **deliver a message** to that person. God did not tell her where to deliver the message or to whom. There was no place here for conjectures and guesswork.

Ellen White was never concerned about what people would think of the message that she delivered. She never softened the message, fearful that it might offend the receiver. She was always bold in rebuking sin and bringing it out into the open.

It was quite a while until Ellen White heard that voice again. One day she and her husband attended a revival camp meeting. When the train arrived, the person who transported them to the camp suggested that after such a long trip they should freshen up before going to the tent where the meetings were being held. But Ellen White had an uncontrollable urge to go immediately to the meeting. When she arrived at the tent, a pastor had already begun his sermon. What happened next was a striking surprise to the audience. Without any hesitation, Ellen took her husband by the arm and marched to the front of the tent. Her husband sat in the front row and Ellen stood directly in front of the preacher, looked the preacher in the eye, pointed her finger at him and said:

“My brother, you don’t have any right to be behind that pulpit speaking to the people.”

Naturally the preacher instantly interrupted his sermon. All eyes were focused on him and on the Lord’s prophet who was standing directly in front of him. She had never seen the man and knew nothing about him. She had simply heard his voice in vision and she was told to deliver a message to him when she heard the voice. The message was the following:

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“Tell him that he has no right to speak to the people. There is a woman in another state that calls him ‘husband’ and children who call him ‘father’. And there is a woman here at the camp that calls him ‘husband’ and children who call him ‘father’.”

The man abandoned the platform and disappeared. He never finished his sermon. His own brother later revealed that he had been living a double life and that he deserved the rebuke. The effect of the message was immediate. The Spirit of the Lord was poured out upon the camp meeting and there was a great revival!

But let’s suppose for a moment that Ellen White had made a mistake. What if she had delivered the message to the wrong person? After all, she had only heard voice! But Ellen made no mistake. She had heard a voice and the Lord brought the voice to her memory at the precise moment when it was needed. She did not hesitate. She marched to the front of the tent and boldly delivered the unpopular message. This shows how much confidence Ellen White had in her calling.

Ellen White never dared to hold back a message of reproof. When a worker received a white envelope with Ellen White’s return address he knew that an important message was enclosed. Ellen White was no respecter of persons. She rebuked ministers and administrators equally. She constantly had to reprove **D. M. Canright** who refused her counsel. As a result he left the church and wrote a scathing book against her. She repeatedly wrote counsels and rebukes to **Dr. John Harvey Kellogg** treated like a son. She even had strong words of rebuke for **Arthur G. Daniells** who was the president of the General Conference from 1901 till 1922.

Ellen White did not relish the task of presenting these messages of rebuke. She explained:

*“It has been **hard for me** to give the message that God has given to me for those I love, and yet I have **not dared to withhold it**. I have to make my **face as flint** against the faces of those who set themselves so stubbornly to carry out their own way and to pursue their own course of action. I would not do a work that is so **uncongenial to me** if I thought that God would excuse me from it. When I have written one testimony to the brethren, I have thought that I should not have any more to write; but again I am in travail of soul, and cannot sleep or rest. In the night season I am speaking and writing clear words of admonition. I waken so*

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*burdened in soul that I am again driven to take up my pen. In various ways matters are opened up before my mind, and **I dare not rest or keep quiet**. I fear and tremble for the souls of men who are in responsible places in Battle Creek.” Manuscript Releases, volume 19, p. 276*

*“So in many cases God has given me light in regard to peculiar defects of character in members of the church and the dangers to the individual and the cause if these defects are not removed. Under certain circumstances wrong tendencies are liable to become strongly developed and confirmed, and to work injury to the cause of God and ruin to the individual. Sometimes, when special dangers threaten the cause of God or particular individuals, a communication comes to me from the Lord, either in a dream or a vision of the night, and these cases are **brought vividly to my mind**. I hear a voice saying to me: **“Arise and write; these souls are in peril.”** I obey the movings of the Spirit of God, and my pen traces their true condition. **As I travel, and stand before the people in different places, the Spirit of the Lord brings before me clearly the cases I have been shown, reviving the matter previously given me.**” 5T 685*

When Kellogg was entertaining and teaching his pantheistic theories Ellen White wrote:

*“I have been afraid that I should not have the strength to write to you thus plainly, for to do it takes hold of **every fiber of my being**. It is indeed as if I were writing to my own son.” Letter 180, 1903, p. 2 (To Dr. J. H. Kellogg, March 5, 1903.)*

On a certain occasion in Melbourne, Australia in 1890 Ellen White was led to the platform and was introduced to the congregation by Elder A. G. Daniells. After Elder Daniells took his seat, Ellen White opened her Bible and prepared to begin her sermon. She opened her mouth as if to speak but words would not come out. Then, placing her hands on the pulpit she scanned the entire audience apparently looking for someone.

Her search, however, seemed to be fruitless so she attempted to begin her sermon for a second time but words refused to come out of her mouth. Once again her eyes carefully scrutinized the audience, but she could not find the person she was looking for. She simply could not begin her message until she found the person she was looking for. Suddenly, she turned and examined the five men that were with her on the platform. Her eyes were fixed on the man who was seated in the last chair on the stage and pointing her finger at him she said to Elder Daniels in a loud voice:

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“Why is that man on the platform with me?”

The six-foot man slowly got up from his chair and with a shameful look left the platform and disappeared. It was a dramatic scene.

While the congregation reflected upon the scene and wondered what it all meant, Ellen White calmly returned to the pulpit and began her sermon without any reference to what had just happened. It was later revealed that the man on the platform was actually a spiritist medium, a wolf in sheep’s clothing! Ellen White did not know the man but when she was about to begin her sermon she immediately felt his presence. She had seen him in vision and the Lord impressed her that he was present at the meeting. Clearly, Ellen White was certain of her call and openly rebuked sin.

Once, Ellen White was tempted to doubt the certainty of her own calling as a prophet and she was severely rebuked:

*“All these things weighed heavily upon my spirits, and in the confusion I was sometimes **tempted to doubt my own experience**. While at family prayers one morning, the power of God began to rest upon me, and the thought rushed into my mind that **it was mesmerism**, and **I resisted it**. Immediately **I was struck dumb** and for a few moments was lost to everything around me. I then saw my sin in doubting the power of God, and that for so doing I was struck dumb, and that my tongue would be loosed in less than twenty-four hours.” EW 22*

Test #6: The Physical Phenomena

Ellen White had some 2000 visions in her lifetime. She had many of these visions in the presence of multiple eyewitnesses whose integrity was beyond reproach. One of those witnesses were Captain Joseph Bates who carefully examined Ellen White while she was in vision to determine if her visions were the result of mesmerism. Others who saw her while she was in vision were J. N. Andrews, Uriah Smith and John Loughborough.

Ellen White described her experience while in vision:

*“As inquiries are frequently made as to my state in vision, and after I come out, I would say that when the Lord sees fit to give a vision, I am **taken into the presence of Jesus and angels**, and am entirely **lost to earthly things**. I can see no farther than **the angel directs me**. My attention is often directed to scenes transpiring upon earth.*

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*“At times I am carried far **ahead into the future** and shown what is to take place. Then again I am shown things as they **have occurred in the past**. After I come out of vision I do not at once remember all that I have seen, and the matter is **not so clear** before me **until I write**, then the scene rises before me as was presented in vision, and I can **write with freedom**. Sometimes the things which I have seen are **hid from me after I come out** of vision, and I cannot call them to mind **until I am brought before a company** where that vision applies, then the things which I have seen come to my mind with force. I am just as dependent upon the Spirit of the Lord in **relating or writing [inspiration]** a vision, as in **having [revelation]** the vision. It is impossible for me to call up things which have been shown me unless the Lord brings them before me at the time that He is pleased to have me relate or write them.” *Spiritual Gifts* (1860), vol. 2, pp. 292, 293*

Ellen White’s experience while in vision was very similar to that of the Biblical prophets. The books of Daniel and Revelation provide clues concerning the state of a prophet while in vision. Let’s summarize the visionary experience of Ellen White:

Immediately before Ellen White entered a visionary state there was in the room a profound sense of the **presence of God** (look up: 3MS 38)

When the vision began, Ellen White frequently uttered the words: “**Glory, glory, glory**” or “glory to God”

When Ellen White entered a visionary state she **lost her normal physical strength** (see Daniel 10:8, 17)

It was then apparent that Ellen White was filled with a **supernatural strength**. It is well known that Ellen White held a **19-pound Bible** with arm extended for the better part of a half hour without exhibiting any physical tiredness. It bears noting that men who have held that Bible in the same manner have not been able to hold it for more than **a couple of minutes** without exhibiting physical distress (see Daniel 10:18, 19).

Ellen White **did not breathe** while she was in vision (see 3MS 42) but **her heart continued beating** normally and the **color of her cheeks** remained the same as when she was not in vision. When she was in vision, James White would invite members of the audience to examine her. Explains Carlos Viera:

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*“There was **no indication of breath**, no inhalation or exhalation, no movement of her chest. No vapor clouded a mirror held in front of her mouth, and a burning candle placed next to her lips did not flicker.” Juan Carlos Viera, The Voice of the Spirit, p. 47.*

As far as we know, her longest vision lasted for four hours and she did not breathe! (See Daniel 10:17)

In **1857 Elder D. T. Bordeau** was an eyewitness to one of Ellen White’s visions:

“June 28, 1857, I saw Sister Ellen G. White in vision for the first time. I was an unbeliever in the visions; but one circumstance among others that I might mention convinced me that her visions were of God. To satisfy my mind as to whether she breathed or not, I first put my hand on her chest sufficiently long to know that there was no more heaving of the lungs that there would have been had she been a corpse. I then took my hand and placed it over her mouth, pinching her nostrils between my thumb and forefinger, so that it was impossible for her to exhale or inhale air, even if she had desired to do so. I held her thus with my hand about ten minutes, long enough for her to suffocate under ordinary circumstances; she was not in the least affected by this ordeal. Since witnessing this wonderful phenomenon, I have not once been inclined to doubt the divine origin of her visions.” D. T. Bordeau quoted in J. N. Loughborough, The Great Second Advent Movement, pp. 204-211

Occasionally while in vision Ellen would make exclamations relative to the scene she was witnessing. For example, the family distinctly remembers her exclaiming on three separate occasions *“They come, they come, they come!”* After coming out of the vision she explained that she had seen the coming of Jesus with His angels as described in revelation 19:11, 14.

While in vision, her **eyes were open**, not with a listless, empty stare but rather with her eyes moving as if contemplating a developing scene (see Numbers 24:3, 4, 16).

The **position of her body** while in vision varied. Sometimes she sat, sometimes she lied down and sometimes she walked to and fro in the room gesturing with her hands. In spite of the fact that the room had many pieces of furniture other objects she never collided or tripped over them.

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Ellen White was totally unconscious of her surroundings while she was in vision. She did not see, hear or feel anything that went on around her. Sometimes eyewitnesses were allowed to **pinch her and cover her nose and mouth** and she remained oblivious to what they were doing to her (see Daniel 10:9; 2 Corinthians 12:1, 2).

At the end of the vision Ellen White took a **deep breath** followed by other breaths until she was breathing normally once again.

Immediately after coming out of vision **everything seemed to be extremely dark**. She frequently could not see well for hours after coming out of vision because of the glory of the scene she had witnessed while in vision. Occasionally she would beg the angel to **let her stay** in heaven but the angel would tell her that she must return to earth to share what she had seen.

After several hours her normal strength returned and she carried out her normal everyday activities.

A very interesting experience took place on Sabbath, January 12, 1861 in **Parkville, Michigan**. On that day the church in Parkville was to be dedicated. Notice had been sent to the members of the church that James and Ellen White and other pioneers would be in attendance. The people were well informed about the supernatural character of Ellen White's visions and wondered if she might have a vision at the dedication service.

There was a non-Adventist spiritist physician in Parkville who boastfully affirmed that Ellen White's visions were spiritist manifestations; that she was simply serving as the medium for a spirit of the departed. He claimed that he could bring her out of her visionary state in an instant.

The meeting was held in the afternoon and as might be expected, Ellen White received a vision. James White, as was his custom, invited those who were present to examine Ellen White. The people, remembering the spiritist physician's boasts, goaded him to do what he claimed he could do.

Dr. Brown proceeded to examine Ellen White but soon his face became pale, he began to tremble and sweat and it seemed like he was about to faint. Elder White said to Dr. Brown: *"Please doctor, please tell us the results of your examination."*

“Oh, she doesn’t breathe!” he said and ran toward the door. When he got to the door the members blocked the entrance and said: *“Go back to the platform and bring her out of the vision. You said you could do it in less than a minute.”* *“Oh, no!”* Dr. Brown said. *“What’s wrong”*, asked the members: *“Only God knows,”* replied Dr. Brown. *“Let me out of this place!”* and he pushed his way out of the church.

Test #7: The High Spiritual Plane of Ellen White’s Writings: They draw us ever closer to Jesus

The high spiritual level of Ellen White’s writings can be seen in her concept of Christ. There is one theme that engrossed Ellen White more than any other, the ‘matchless charms of Christ,’ a description she used more than **160 times**.

Any person who has read books such as The Desire of Ages, Christ’s Object Lessons, The Ministry of Healing, Steps to Christ and Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing cannot help but see that Ellen White loved Christ and wanted to influence others to love Him as well.

In a letter she wrote to **O. A. Olsen in 1892** Ellen White expressed her frustration in finding words to adequately describe the ‘matchless charms of Christ’:

*“I walk with **trembling before God**. I **know not** how to speak or trace with pen the large subject of the atoning sacrifice. I **know not** how to present subjects in the living power in which they stand before me. I **tremble** for fear lest I shall belittle the great plan of salvation by **cheap words**. I bow my soul in awe and reverence before God and say, “Who is sufficient for these things?” 3SM 115*

On June 6, 1896 Ellen White wrote:

“That which is holy and elevated in heavenly things, I scarcely dare represent. Often I lay down my pen and say, Impossible, impossible for finite minds to grasp eternal truths, and deep holy principles, and to express their living import. I stand ignorant and helpless. The rich current of thought takes possession of my whole being, and I lay down my pen, and say, O Lord, I am finite, I am weak, and simple and ignorant; Thy grand and holy revelations I can never find language to

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express." 3SM 118

Most of the book The Desire of Ages (for more on the writing of the book read 3SM 115-120) was written while Ellen White was suffering **excruciating pain** due to rheumatoid arthritis and the nostalgia of being in Australia far from her home and her family. She explained that during this time she had to write while she sat in bed and she had to change her position every hour in order to have some semblance of comfort. It would have been easy for her to hide her head in her pillow and brood and complain with self-pity. But she did not! In her own words:

*"I have been passing through **great trial in pain** and suffering and helplessness, but through it all I have obtained a precious experience more valuable to me than gold." 2SM*

When she was writing The Desire of Ages she wrote the following words to the leaders of the Seventh-day Adventist Church:

*"You know that my whole theme both in the pulpit and in private, by voice and pen, is **the life of Christ**. Hitherto nearly all that I have written on this theme has been written during the hours when others are sleeping." Letter 41, 1895 (3SM 118)*

And in her counsel to the pastors of the Church, Ellen White shortly before her death encouraged them to uplift Christ:

*"**Lift up Jesus**, you that teach the people, **lift Him up** in sermon, in song, in prayer. Let all your powers be directed to pointing souls, confused, bewildered, lost, **to "the Lamb of God."** **Lift Him up**, the risen Savior, and say to all who hear, 'Come to Him who "hath loved us, and hath given Himself for us.'" Let the **science of salvation** be the burden of every sermon, the theme of every song. Let it be poured forth in every supplication. Bring nothing into your preaching **to supplement Christ**, the wisdom and power of God. Hold forth the word of life, presenting **Jesus as the hope** of the penitent and the stronghold of every believer. Reveal the way of peace to the troubled and the despondent, and show forth the grace and completeness of the Savior." Gospel Workers, pp. 159, 160 (1915) (Evangelism, p. 185)*

Even more, in chapter one of The Desire of Ages, Ellen White underlined that the science of the cross will be the subject of study and the song of the redeemed and the angels throughout the ceaseless ages of eternity:

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*“God's wonderful purpose of grace, the mystery of redeeming love, is the theme into which “angels desire to look,” and it **will be their study throughout endless ages**. Both the redeemed and the unfallen beings will find in the cross of Christ their science and their song. It will be seen that the glory shining in the face of Jesus is the glory of self-sacrificing love.171171 “DA 19, 20*

Ellen White often expressed frustration because she was unable to find human words to describe the glory of Christ and the plan of salvation:

*“Now I must leave this subject so **imperfectly presented** that I fear you will misinterpret that which I feel so anxious to make plain. Oh, that God would quicken the understanding, for **I am but a poor writer**, and cannot with **pen or voice** express the great and deep mysteries of God. Oh, pray for yourselves, pray for me.” Letter 67, 1894. (3SM 90)*

Test #8: Her Negative Perspective of Satan:

According to **Mark 3:24-26** Satan never fights against himself. This being the case we must examine the writings of Ellen White to discover her perspective of Satan. One thing is clear, if Ellen White persistently writes against the devil and his stratagems, Satan cannot be the one who inspired her writings. Ellen White affirmed that there could not be any middle ground in this matter—they are either of God or of Satan:

“The visions are either of God or the Devil. There is no halfway position to be taken in the matter. God does not work in partnership with Satan. Those who occupy this position cannot stand there long. They go a step further and account the instrument God has used a deceiver, and the woman Jezebel.” PH016 (Letter to J. N. Andrews and Sister H. N. Smith, 1860)

All the life and experience of Ellen White was one constant battle with the devil. All of her writings are to be understood within the context of the Great Conflict between good and evil.

On March 14, 1858 Ellen White traveled to Lovett’s Grove, Ohio for a funeral service. During the service she was caught up in a two-hour vision where God showed her in broad strokes, the great controversy between Christ and Satan from its inception until its consummation.

The next day, Ellen and her husband began the return trip home to Battle Creek. During the journey they laid plans to publish what Ellen White had seen in the

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vision. Little did they realize that Satan was eavesdropping on their plans to disseminate the vision, and therefore he was filled with anger because his stratagems were about to be unveiled before the world. Satan was determined to frustrate the writing, publication and dissemination of the forthcoming book so he decided then and there to kill the messenger.

When James and Ellen arrived in Jackson, Michigan on their way to Battle Creek they decided to visit the home of Daniel R. Palmer. At this time, Ellen White was in good health. As Ellen sat with Mrs. Palmer at the kitchen table, something unexpected happened. Let's allow Ellen White herself to describe it:

*"We had been in the house but a short time, when, as I was conversing with Sister Palmer, **my tongue refused to utter** what I wished to say, and seemed large and numb. A strange, **cold sensation struck my heart**, passed over my head, and down my right side. For a time I was insensible but was aroused by the voice of earnest prayer. I tried to use my left limbs, but they were **perfectly useless**. For a short time I did not expect to live. It was my **third shock of paralysis**, and although within fifty miles of home, I did not expect to see my children again. I called to mind the triumphant season I had enjoyed at Lovett's Grove, and thought it was my last testimony, and felt reconciled to die." *Life Sketches*, p. 338*

The symptoms that Ellen White describes are indicative of a stroke. This attack of paralysis greatly hindered and delayed the plans to publish what she had seen in the Lovett's Grove vision. She explained that she could only write one page a day and then had to rest three and the task of writing was with great pain and effort. But as time passed, her strength returned and she was able to write several pages a day. Ellen White explained:

*"For several weeks I could not feel the pressure of the hand, nor the coldest water poured upon my head. In rising to walk, I often staggered, and sometimes fell to the floor. In this condition I commenced to write the Great Controversy. I could write at first but one page a day, then rest three; but as I progressed, my strength increased. The numbness in my head did not seem to becloud my mind, and before I closed that work *Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 1, the effect of the shock had entirely left me." *3SM100**

In **June of 1858** God showed Ellen White that this was no ordinary stroke but a direct attack by Satan:

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*“I was taken off in vision. In that vision it was shown that in the sudden attack at Jackson, **Satan intended to take my life**, in order to **hinder the work** I was about to write; but angels of God were sent to my rescue. I also saw, among other things, that I should be blest with better health than before the attack at Jackson.”*
Life Sketches, p. 339

Anyone who reads The Great Controversy cannot help but conclude that if Satan were the source, he would not say such nasty things about himself. In this book Ellen White unmask's Satan's schemes while she exalts Jesus Christ and presents him as the Victor in the great controversy between good and evil. If Satan had been the source of the book, he would be fighting against himself.

When one turns to the Index to the writings of Ellen White, one finds a slew of names with which Ellen White refers to the devil. Here are some of them:

Accuser of the brethren, accuser of the church, great adversary, adversary of souls, antagonist of Christ, antichrist, apostate, arch apostate, arch fiend, arch deceiver, master deceiver, arch foe, arch rebel, arch enemy, arch demon, arch rebel, arch traitor, demon, destroyer, rebel, liar, father of lies, chief of all liars, chief of conspiracy, murderer, oppressor, father of unbelief, prince of darkness, prince of demons, tyrant, serpent, thief, tormentor, transgressor, usurper, warrior, author of disease and misery, artful and deadly foe, great general of apostasy, god of all dissension, instigator of all rebellion, originator of dark and brooding doubts, prince of devils, mighty revolter, root of all evil, slanderer, teacher of lies and tormentor.

The big question is this: If the work of Ellen White were inspired by the devil, would he describe himself in such derogatory terms?

Ellen White provides an impressive description of Satan's malignity in Early Writings, p. 152 and 153:

*“I was shown Satan as he once was, a happy, exalted angel. Then I was shown him as he now is. He still bears a kingly form. His features are still noble, for he is an angel fallen. But the expression of his countenance is **full of anxiety, care, unhappiness, malice, hate, mischief, deceit, and every evil**. That brow which*

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was once so noble, I particularly noticed. His forehead commenced from his eyes to recede. I saw that he had so long bent himself to evil that **every good quality was debased**, and **every evil trait** was developed. His eyes were cunning, sly, and showed great penetration. His frame was large, but the **flesh** hung loosely about his hands and face. As I beheld him, his chin was resting upon his left hand. He appeared to be in deep thought. A smile was upon his countenance, which made me tremble, it was so **full of evil and satanic slyness**. This smile is the one he wears just before he makes sure of his victim, and as he fastens the victim in his snare, **this smile grows horrible.**"

The Lord also gave Ellen White a glimpse of Satan's plans to enmesh the world in the closing scenes of earth's history:

"I saw the rapidity with which this delusion was spreading. A train of cars was shown me, going with the speed of lightning. The angel bade me look carefully. I fixed my eyes upon the train. It seemed that the whole world was on board. Then he showed me the conductor, a fair, stately person, whom all the passengers looked up to and revered. I was perplexed and asked my attending angel who it was. He said, "It is Satan. He is the conductor, in the form of an angel of light. He has taken the world captive. They are given over to strong delusions, to believe a lie that they may be damned. His agent, the highest in order next to him, is the engineer, and others of his agents are employed in different offices as he may need them, and they are all going with lightning speed to perdition." Early Writings, p. 263

And Satan's plans not only involve the world at large but also the Remnant Church. As is well known, a **refined type of Spiritualism** is attempting to penetrate the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the form of Spiritual Formation and Contemplative Prayer. Everyone must be aware, for example, of the ONE PROJECT that many of our campus chaplains are attempting to implement on our university campuses. Their expressed intention is to change not only the face, but also **the very heart** of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. It is suggested that **seven books** be read on this subject:

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- Stephen P. Bohr, “Worship at Satan’s Throne”
- Dave Fiedler, “Tremble”
- Dave Fiedler, “Meet It”
- Thomas Mostert, “Hidden Heresy”
- Howard Peth, “The Dangers of Contemplative Prayer”
- Rick Howard, “The Omega Rebellion”
- Carsten Johnsen, “The Mystic Omega of End Time Crisis”

It is no coincidence that Satan planted several counterfeit movements around the year 1844. Within a twenty-year period before and after 1844, the Mormons, the Jehovah’s Witnesses, Christian Science, Spiritualism, Pentecostalism, Evolutionism and Marxism all appeared on the scene.

Test #9: The Practical Nature of the Messages

The messages of true prophets are **not mere philosophical treatises** intended to educate the mind. Their messages are meant to **impact the practical daily life** in all its spheres—physical, mental and spiritual. Ellen White not only wrote on theological matters. She gave many practical nuts and bolts counsels on subjects such as the home, marriage, childrearing, health, diet, education, stewardship and church administration. Let’s notice some of those practical everyday counsels.

Ellen White once wrote:

*“Do not neglect to teach your children **how to cook**. In so doing, you impart to them principles that they must have in their religious education. In giving your children **lessons in physiology**, and teaching them **how to cook** with simplicity and yet with skill, you are laying the foundation for the most useful branches of education. Skill is required to make **good light bread**. There is **religion in good cooking**, and I question the religion of that class who are too ignorant and too careless to learn to cook.” CG 374*

*“Let us remember that there is practical religion in a loaf of good bread.”
Counsels on Diet and Foods, p. 251*

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Ellen White had a lot to say about the need for a practical education:

*“**Manual training** is deserving of far more attention than it has received. Schools should be established that, in addition to the highest mental and moral culture, shall provide the best possible facilities for **physical development and industrial training**. Instruction should be given in **agriculture, manufactures**—covering as many as possible of the most useful trades—also in **household economy, healthful cookery, sewing, hygienic dressmaking, the treatment of the sick**, and kindred lines. Gardens, workshops, and treatment rooms should be provided, and the work in every line should be under the direction of skilled instructors.” Education, p. 218*

*“Many of the branches of study that consume the student's time are not essential to usefulness or happiness; but it is essential for every youth to have a thorough acquaintance with **everyday duties**. If need be, a young woman can dispense with a knowledge of **French and algebra**, or even of the **piano**; but it is indispensable that she learn to make **good bread**, to fashion neatly-fitting garments, and to perform efficiently the many duties that pertain to homemaking.” Education, p. 216*

“Since both men and women have a part in homemaking, boys as well as girls should gain a knowledge of household duties. To make a bed and put a room in order, to wash dishes, to prepare a meal, to wash and repair his own clothing, is a training that need not make any boy less manly; it will make him happier and more useful. And if girls, in turn, could learn to harness and drive a horse, and to use the saw and the hammer, as well as the rake and the hoe, they would be better fitted to meet the emergencies of life.” Education p. 216, 217

Ellen White also had many practical counsels on healthful living:

*“God has caused to grow out of the ground herbs for the use of man, and if we understand the nature of these **roots and herbs**, and make a right use of them, there would not be a necessity of running for the doctor so frequently, and people would be in much better health than they are today.” Letter 35, 1890 (Medical Ministry, pp. 230, 231)*

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“Pure air, sunlight, abstemiousness, rest, exercise, proper diet, the use of water, trust in divine power--these are the true remedies. Every person should have knowledge of **nature's remedial agencies** and **how to apply them**. It is essential both to understand the principles involved in the treatment of the sick and to have a practical training that will enable one rightly to use this knowledge.

Too little attention is generally given to the preservation of health. It is **far better to prevent disease** than to know how to treat it when contracted. It is the duty of every person, for his own sake, and for the sake of humanity, **to inform himself** in regard to the laws of life and conscientiously to obey them. All need to become acquainted with that most wonderful of all organisms, the human body. They should understand the **functions of the various organs [physiology]** and the dependence of one upon another for the healthy action of all. They should study the influence of **the mind upon the body**, and of **the body upon the mind [psychology]** and the laws by which they are governed.” *MH* 127, 128

“**Drug medication**, as it is generally practiced, **is a curse**. Educate **away from drugs**. Use them **less and less**, and depend more upon **hygienic agencies**; then nature will respond to God's physicians—pure air, pure water, proper exercise, a clear conscience. Those who persist in the use of **tea, coffee, and flesh meats** will feel the need of drugs, but many might recover without one grain of medicine if they would obey the laws of health. Drugs need seldom be used.” *Counsels to the Church*, p. 105

“In treating the sick, the physician will seek God for wisdom; then, instead of placing his dependence upon **drugs** and expecting that **medicine** will bring health to his patients, he will use **nature's restoratives**, and employ **natural means** whereby the sick may be aided to recover. The Lord will hear and answer the prayers of the Christian physician.” U. T., 1888. *Healthful Living*, p. 247

Ellen White followed the counsels that she gave on natural remedies. For example, she suggested the use of **grape juice with raw eggs** as a means to cure anemia. She also suggested the use of **charcoal for stomach ailments** and **eucalyptus oil** for a cold. She also suggested that pain in the eyes and in the head could be alleviated by **hot or cold water mixed with salt** and applied

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with a soft cloth upon the eyes and the head.

A letter to a worker on the use of eucalyptus:

*"I am very sorry to learn that Sister C is not well. I cannot advise any remedy for her cough better than **eucalyptus and honey**. Into a tumbler of honey put a few drops of the eucalyptus, stir it up well, and take whenever the cough comes on. I have had considerable trouble with my throat, but whenever I use this I overcome the difficulty very quickly. I have to use it only a few times, and the cough is removed. If you will use this prescription, you may be **your own physician**. If the first trial does not effect a cure, try it again. The best time to take it is before retiring." Letter 348, 1908*

"The oil of the eucalyptus is especially beneficial in cases of cough and pains in the chest and lungs. I want you to make a trial of this remedy which is so simple, and which costs you nothing." Letter 20, 1909 2SM 301

On the use of charcoal:

"The most severe inflammation of the eyes will be relieved by a poultice of charcoal, put in a bag, and dipped in hot or cold water, as will best suit the case. This works like a charm." 2SM 294

"My mother had told me that snakebites and the sting of reptiles and poisonous insects could often be rendered harmless by the use of charcoal poultices." 2SM 295

On the use of grape juice and eggs:

"I have received light that you are injuring your body by a poverty-stricken diet . . . It is the lack of suitable food that has caused you to suffer so keenly. You have not taken the food essential to nourish your frail physical strength. You must not deny yourself of good, wholesome food . . . Get eggs of healthy fowls. Use these eggs cooked or raw. Drop them uncooked into the best-unfermented wine you can find. This will supply that which is necessary to your system." Counsels on Diet and Foods, pp. 203, 204 (To Dr. D. H. Kress, 1901)

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On the use of water as a remedy:

“God's miracles do not always bear the outward semblance of miracles. Often they are brought about in a way that looks like the natural course of events. When we pray for the sick, we also work for them. We answer our own prayers by using the remedies within our reach. Water, wisely applied, is a most powerful remedy.”
2SM 346

Test #10: Protection and guidance through the Prophetic Gift

Here I will deal with four stories on how EGW guided the church through challenging times (there are many more examples in Selected Messages, volumes 1 and 2):

- The adoption of a **denominational name**
- The **Pantheism** Crisis
- The **Indiana** Camp Meeting
- The **Salamanca** vision (pp. 161-163 in one of my books)

Guidance in Adopting a Denominational Name

Seventh-day Adventists believe in a **divine, supernatural, miraculous** and **rapid** work of creation at the beginning of human history. We believe that God created this world in six **literal, consecutive, contiguous**, 24-hour days (just like the days we experience today) and rested on a **literal 24 hour seventh day** about **six thousand years ago**. We also believe that the sin originated in this world just as it is described in the book of Genesis and that the only hope for the earth is found in the literal, miraculous second coming of Jesus Christ to establish His eternal kingdom that shall never be destroyed. It will not be a kingdom created by man from within history but rather by God from without!

We derive our view of creation from a literal reading of **Genesis 1 and 2, Exodus 20:8-11** and **Psalms 33:6, 9**:

*“By the word of the Lord the heavens were made and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth . . . For He **spoke** and it was **done**; He **commanded**, and it*

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stood fast."

Even Biblical scholars who believe in **progressive creation** and **theistic evolution** have been willing to admit that the **writer of the book** of Genesis believed that the days were literal. But they have concluded that modern science has proved that the writer was simply wrong and therefore the record is not reliable.

At the heart of the creation story is the Sabbath. God established the Sabbath as the **memorial sign** of His authority as Creator. Thus the observance of the Sabbath points to a literal creation story. God worked six days and rested the seventh and established this as a pattern for man to work six and rest the seventh as well. This was the settled belief of the church until what is known as the **Age of Reason** or the **Enlightenment**.

The Age of Reason or Enlightenment in the 17th century

The **Age of Reason** began in the **early 17th century** with the work of **Rene Descartes**: Descartes' contemporary **Blaise Pascal** candidly complained:

*"I cannot forgive Descartes; in all his philosophy he did his best to **dispense with God**. But he could not avoid making Him set the world in motion with a flip of His thumb; after that he had **no more use for God**."*

Descartes' most famous book was **A Discourse on Method** that was published in **1637** some 150 years before the beginning of the French Revolution.

The Age of Reason eventually would jettison the need for **faith and the miraculous** in religion. The **sciences** would reach the conclusion that everything in the visible world could be explained and resolved through human ingenuity without the need of an ever-interfering God.

The mood of the day is epitomized by a comment that was made by Scottish geologist **James Hutton** in **1785**:

*"We see no vestige of a **beginning**, no prospect of an **end**."*

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A **cruel philosophy** was growing that would eventually displace the long held view of a literal creation week: the theory of evolution. This theory would seek to obliterate the idea of a supernatural miraculous, rapid, divine beginning and a rapid, supernatural miraculous divine end to human history.

More and more, theologians, scientists and philosophers embraced the idea that life came into existence by a **prolonged process of natural selection** where the strong survived and the weak disappeared. The story of Genesis would finally come to be understood as myth, legend or saga.

Charles Darwin

The place was **England** and the date was December of **1831**. Charles Darwin left England on the **H. M. S. Beagle** on his way to South America (especially the Galapagos Islands) to observe, experiment, and collect evidence that he would ultimately use to **attempt to prove** that there is no vestige of a divine beginning and no prospect of a divine end.

He travelled for **five years** and then sat down to write his now famous book, The Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection, or the Preservation of Favored Species in the Struggle for Life. Remarkably, he **finished** his book in the year **1844**!

William Miller

Now we move across the foamy billows of the Atlantic to **Low Hampton, New York**, right on the Vermont border. The date is **August of 1831**, the **same year** that Darwin began his voyage. A 49 year-old farmer, **William Miller** by name, had been studying the Scriptures non-stop for 13 years, many times literally burning the midnight oil. He had reached the conclusion that Jesus was going to come at some point in **1843**. He heard a constant voice in the ear of his conscience compelling him to: *“go tell it to the world.”*

The central verse of his preaching came from **Revelation 14:6, 7** where every nation, kindred, tongue and people are commanded to worship the one who

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'made the heavens, the earth, the seas and everything that is in them.' The message spread like a **California grassfire** all across New England. At the same time in Europe, South America, Asia and Africa individuals and groups preached a similar message.

This movement came to be known as the **Great Second Advent Awakening**. From 1831 till 1844 a powerful proclamation of the first angel's message went forth. Thousands were converted and embraced a loving God Who created the world in six literal days.

Thus while Darwin was travelling, researching and writing to spread the doctrine of **macroevolution**, Miller and his colleagues were proclaiming with power that the **Creator** was about to **come back** to the world in judgment.

The year 1844

As mentioned before, in **1844 Darwin finished his book**, which would go to every nation, kindred, tongue and people. The book would ultimately discourage people from believing that there was a **supernatural, divine, miraculous beginning**, and a supernatural, divine, miraculous end to human history.

The **very same year** that Darwin published his evolutionary views, God called another writer whose **works would also go** to every nation, kindred, tongue and people to proclaim that God created the world in six literal, consecutive, contiguous 24 hour days and rested on the seventh day to remind us of the fact that He was the Creator. Very early in her writing career **Ellen White** wrote:

*"I was then carried back to the creation and **was shown** that the first week, in which God performed the work of creation in six days and rested on the seventh day, was **just like every other week**. The great God in his days of creation and day of rest, measured off the first cycle **as a sample for successive weeks** till the close of time . . . The weekly cycle of **seven literal days**, six for labor, and the seventh for rest, which **has been preserved** and brought down through Bible*

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history, originated in the great facts of the first seven days.” *Spiritual Gifts, volume 3, p. 90*

Ellen White was aware of the evolutionary theories that were in the air and the danger that they represented:

*“But the infidel supposition, that the events of the first week required seven vast, indefinite periods for their accomplishment, **strikes directly at the foundation of the Sabbath of the fourth commandment.** It makes indefinite and obscure that which God has made very plain. It is the **worst kind of infidelity**; for with many who profess to believe the record of creation, it is **infidelity in disguise.** It charges God with commanding men to observe the week of seven literal days in commemoration of seven indefinite periods, which is unlike his dealings with mortals, and is an impeachment of his wisdom. *Spiritual Gifts, volume 3, p. 91**

She unabashedly affirmed:

*“Infidel geologists claim that the world is very much older than the Bible record makes it. They **reject the Bible record**, because of those things that are to them evidences from the earth itself, that the world has existed tens of thousands of years. And many who **profess to believe the Bible record** are at a loss to account for wonderful things, which are found in the earth and with the view that creation week was **only seven literal days**, and that the world is **now only about six thousand years old.** These [who profess to believe in the Bible record], to free themselves of difficulties thrown in their way by infidel geologists, adopt the view that the six days of creation were **six vast, indefinite periods**, and the day of God's rest was another indefinite period; making **senseless the fourth commandment** of God's holy law. Some eagerly receive this position, for it destroys the force of the fourth commandment, and they feel a freedom from its claims upon them.” *Spiritual Gifts, volume 3, pp. 91, 92**

The Origin of our Name

1859 Charles Darwin's **book was published** and it caused uproar in conservative religious circles. The work was relentlessly attacked by the

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conservative theologians of the day.

Unfortunately at that time theologians were **wrong in their science** (by stating that species do not vary even within their own kind) and **in their theology** (that the Bible teaches that there is no variation within the species). Darwin had proved that **there are changes** within the species and he had proof for it in his research.

In **1860** (MARK THE YEAR!) at **Oxford University** in England, **Thomas Huxley**, famous zoologist and staunch defender of the Darwinian evolutionary hypothesis and **Samuel Wilberforce**, conservative theologian, met for a debate. Wilberforce bragged before the debate:

“I have come here to smash Darwin.”

Huxley soundly **trounced Wilberforce**, who used arguments based on faulty science and theology. It would not be an exaggeration to say that Huxley knocked Samuel’s socks off.

Harold Coffin, Seventh-day Adventist creationist scientist, describe the consequences of this debate:

*“Theology then became the **bondmaid of science**, and the **goddess of reason**, which the French Revolution had first set up in the latter part of the eighteenth century, now became tacitly accepted in other countries as an object of worship. **Science became the great god** of learned and unlearned alike, its authority superseding even that of Sacred Writ. From this time on, the facts of science have been increasingly interpreted in terms of the **evolutionary hypothesis**. Geology and biology in particular have become permeated with this idea, which is accepted **virtually as a fact** requiring only more research of establish its final truth.”* Harold Coffin, *Creation—Accident or Design?* pp. 403, 404.

After this debate even conservative theologians began to abdicate their faith in a literal creation week and embraced theistic evolution. The Roman Catholic Church is one of those organizations that jettisoned the idea of a supernatural creation in seven literal, consecutive, contiguous days.

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Roman Catholicism and Evolution

On October 22, 1996, Pope **John Paul II** was invited to give a speech to the **Pontifical Academy of Sciences**. Here is a portion of what the pope said and how his speech was reported:

*“It is indeed remarkable that this theory [evolution] has been progressively accepted by researchers, following a series of discoveries in various fields of knowledge. The **convergence [among the various sciences]**, neither sought nor fabricated, of the results of work that was conducted **independently** is in itself a **significant argument in favor of this theory.**”*

*“In a major statement of the Roman Catholic Church’s position on the theory of evolution, Pope John Paul II has proclaimed that the theory is **‘more than just a hypothesis’** and that **evolution is compatible with Christian faith**. In a written message to the Pontifical Academy of Sciences, the pope said the **theory of evolution has been buttressed by scientific studies and discoveries since Charles Darwin**. **If taken literally**, the Biblical view of the beginning of life and Darwin’s scientific view would seem **irreconcilable**. In Genesis, the creation of the world, and Adam, the first human, took **six days**. Evolution’s process of genetic mutation and natural selection—the survival and proliferation of the fittest new species—has taken **billions of years**, according to scientists . . . ”*
Chicago Tribune, 10/25/96 “Pope Bolsters Church Support for Evolution.” By Stephen Swanson, Tribune staff writer.

Evidently Pope **Francis I** agrees that **evolution and creation** are compatible ideas:

*“When we read about Creation in Genesis, we run the risk of imagining **God was a magician**, with a magic wand able to do everything. But that is not so . . . ”*

*“He created human beings and **let them develop** according to the **internal laws** that he gave to each one so they would **reach their fulfillment** . . . ”*

*“The **Big Bang**, which today we hold to be the origin of the world, **does not contradict** the intervention of the divine creator but, rather, **requires it** . . . ”*

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“God is not a divine being or a magician, but the Creator who brought everything to life”

*“Evolution in nature is **not inconsistent** with the notion of creation, because **evolution requires the creation** of beings that **evolve**.”*

Many protestant (Benjamin Warfield, Bernard Ramm) scholars are now **reinterpreting the days** of creation as long periods of time. Many Biblical scholars who use the **historical critical method** don't even believe that **Moses wrote Genesis**. Many of them are willing to admit that the **writer of Genesis believed** that the days of creation were literal, consecutive, contiguous 24-hour days but they say that the **writer was wrong because he lived in a pre-scientific age**.

Our Denominational Name

In **1860**—the same year of the debate—a committee met at Battle Creek, Michigan on **September 26** to **choose a name** for the denomination that was born from the Great Disappointment in 1844. Among the members of this committee were brother **Loughborough**, brother **Hewitt** and brother **Poole**. Many ministers at the time believed that the sprouting movement should be called the Church of God. Elder Loughborough, however, objected to this name stating that many other religious groups claimed the same name. Finally, brother Poole made the following motion:

*“Resolved, that we call ourselves **Seventh-day Adventists**.”*

With only **one dissenting vote** (the minister who had proposed the name ‘Church of God’) the resolution was adopted.

In the **October 23, 1860** issue of The Review and Herald, p. 179 the following explanation was given:

*“The name Seventh-day Adventists, was proposed as a simple name and one expressive of our **faith and position**.”*

Ellen White confirmed that this was a wise choice and explained the reason

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why in Testimonies for the Church, volume 1, pp. 223 and 224:

*“I was shown in regard to the **remnant people of God taking a name**. Two classes were presented before me. One class embraced the great bodies of professed Christians. They were **trampling upon God's law** and bowing to a papal institution. They were keeping the **first day of the week** as the Sabbath of the Lord. The other class, who were but few in number, were **bowing to the great Lawgiver**. They were keeping the fourth commandment. The peculiar and **prominent features** of their faith were [1] the observance of the seventh day, and [2] waiting for the appearing of our Lord from heaven.*

*The conflict is between the requirements of **God** and the requirements of the **beast**. The first day, a papal institution that directly contradicts the fourth commandment, is yet to be made a test by the two-horned beast. And then the fearful warning from God declares the penalty of bowing to the beast and his image. They shall drink the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of His indignation.*

*No name that we can take will be appropriate but that which **accords with our profession** and **expresses our faith** and **marks us a peculiar people**. The name Seventh-day Adventist is a **standing rebuke** to the Protestant world. Here is the line of distinction between the worshipers of God and those who worship the beast and receive his mark. The great conflict is between the commandments of God and the requirements of the beast. It is because the saints are keeping all ten of the commandments that the dragon makes war upon them. If they will **lower the standard and yield the peculiarities of their faith**, the dragon will be at peace; but they excite his ire because they have dared to **raise the standard** and **unfurl their banner** in opposition to the Protestant world who are worshiping the institution of papacy.*

*The name Seventh-day Adventist carries the **true features of our faith in front, and will convict the inquiring mind**. Like an arrow from the Lord's quiver, it will wound the transgressors of God's law, and will lead to repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.*

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*I was shown that almost every fanatic who has arisen, who wishes to hide his sentiments that he may lead away others, **claims to belong to the church of God**. Such a name would at once excite suspicion; for it is employed to conceal the most absurd errors. This name is **too indefinite for the remnant people of God**. It would lead to the supposition that we had a faith which we wished to cover up.”*

As we shall see, the papacy not only exalts Sunday in place of the Sabbath, but it also has a counterfeit view on how the world will come to an end. Thus the Sabbath is a double rebuke to the papacy’s view of the beginning and the end.

Hauling Down our Colors in the SDA Church

There is a tendency among some Seventh-day Adventists churches today to hide our denominational name. They refer to themselves as **Adventist fellowship**, **Adventist Community Church**, and some even delete the name Seventh-day Adventist altogether. Some Adventists are not satisfied with saying “I am a Seventh-day Adventist.” They feel that it is necessary to add the word ‘Christian’ to our name because others might think that we are a cult and not Christians. Ellen White long ago warned:

*“Men will employ every means to make **less prominent** the difference between Seventh-day Adventists and observers of the first day of the week. A company was presented before me under the name of Seventh-day Adventists, who were advising that the banner, or sign, which makes us a distinct people should **not be held out so strikingly**; for they claimed that this was **not the best policy** in order to secure success to our institutions. But this is **not a time to haul down our colors**, to be ashamed of our faith. This distinctive banner, described in the words, “Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus,” is to be borne through the world to the close of probation. While efforts should be increased to advance in different localities, there must be **no cloaking of our faith to secure patronage**. Truth must come to souls ready to perish; and if it is in any way hidden, God is dishonored, and the blood of souls will be upon our garments.”*

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The Roman Catholic Social Theory that Eliminates the Need for a supernatural end

It all began with St. Augustine's City of God. His idea was that the church should control the civil governments of the world and in this way establish God's universal kingdom of peace on earth.

St. Augustine interpreted the stone of Daniel 2 as the church conquering the kingdoms of the world and bringing about the kingdom of God on earth. Anyone who objected to this scenario was to be exterminated. Augustine provided the theological basis for the Inquisition.

Words of Thomas Aquinas:

*"In order that spiritual matters might be kept separate from temporal ones, the ministry of this [spiritual] kingdom was entrusted not to earthly kings but to priests and especially to the highest of them, the successor of St. Peter, Vicar of Christ, the Roman Pontiff, to whom **all kings must be subject** just as they are subject to our Lord Jesus. For those whom the care of an **intermediate end** pertains should be subject to him to whom the care of the **ultimate end** belongs and be directed by his rule." The Political Ideas of St. Thomas Aquinas, p. 100*

Words of the Council of Trent regarding the power of the pope:

*"All **temporal power is his**; the dominion, jurisdiction, and government of the whole Earth is **his by divine right**. All rulers of the Earth **are his subjects** and must submit to him." John W. Robbins, Ecclesiastical Megalomania, p. 131*

*"That principle which Leo XIII so clearly established must be laid down at the outset here, namely, that there resides in Us [**the Papacy**] the right and duty to pronounce with **supreme authority** upon **social and economic matters**." Pope Pius XI, Encyclical Quadragesimo Anno, May 15, 1931, paragraph 41*

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*“Because all men are joined together by reason of their common origin, their redemption by Christ and their supernatural destiny, and are called to form one Christian family, We appealed in the Encyclical Mater et Magistra to **economically developed nations to come to the aid** of those which were in the process of development.” John XXIII, *Pacem in Terris*, (1963), 121*

*“It is our clear duty, therefore, to strain every muscle in working for the time when all **war can be completely outlawed** by international consent. This goal undoubtedly requires the establishment of a **universal public authority** acknowledged as such **by all** and **endowed with the power** to safeguard on the behalf of all, security, regard for justice, and respect for rights.” Second Vatican II, *Gaudium et Spes*, (1965) 82*

*“Moreover, since in virtue of her mission and nature she is bound to no particular form of human culture, nor to any political, economic or social system, the **[Roman Catholic]** Church by **her very universality** can be a very close bond between diverse human communities and nations, provided these **trust her and truly acknowledge her right** to true freedom in fulfilling her mission.” Vatican Council II, *Gaudium et Spes* (1965), 42*

*“This international **collaboration on a worldwide scale** requires institutions that will prepare, coordinate, and direct it until finally there is established an order of justice which is **universally recognized** . . . Who does not see the necessity of thus establishing progressively **a world authority**, capable of acting effectively in the **juridical and political** sectors?” Paul VI, *Populorum Progressio* (1967), 78*

*“He [John Paul] was himself the head of the most extensive and **deeply experienced** of the three global powers that would, within a short time, set about ending the nation system of world politics that has defined human society for over a thousand years. It is not too much to say, in fact, that the chosen purpose of John Paul’s pontificate—the engine that drives his papal grand policy and that determines his day-to-day, year-by-year strategies—is **to be victor in that competition**, now well under way.” Malachi Martin, *The Keys of this Blood*, p. 17*

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*“In this timely and provocative new book, best-selling author Malachi Martin reveals the untold story behind the Vatican’s role in the collapse of the Iron Curtain, as well as Pope John Paul II’s far-reaching assessment of the **three-way contest** now unfolding among the global powers—the Soviet Union under Mikhail Gorbachev, the capitalist nations of the west, and the pope’s own universal Roman Church—a **winner-take-all** race against time and each other to **establish, maintain, and control** the first one-**world government** that has ever existed on the face of the earth.”* Dust cover on *The Keys of this Blood* by Malachi Martin

*“Clearly, the new agenda—Heaven’s agenda; the Grand Design of God for the **new world order**—had begun. And Pope John Paul would stride now in the arena of the millennium endgame as something more than a geopolitical giant of his age. He was, and remains, the serene and confident **Servant of the Grand Design**.”* Malachi Martin, *The Keys of this Blood*, p. 50

*“There is one great similarity shared by all three of these globalist competitors. Each one has in mind a particular grand design for **one world governance** . . . Their **geopolitical** competition is about which of the three will **form, dominate and run** the **world system** that will **replace** the decaying nation system.”* (Malachi Martin, *The Keys of this Blood*, p. 18)

*“No holds barred because, once the competition has been decided, the world and all that’s in it--our way of life as **individuals** and as **citizens** of the nations; our **families** and our jobs; our trade and commerce and money; our **educational systems** and our **religions** and our **cultures**; even the **badges of our national identity**, which most of us have always taken for granted--all will have been **powerfully and radically altered forever**. No one can be exempted from its effects. No sector of our lives will remain untouched . . . Nobody who is acquainted with the plans of these three rivals has any doubt but that **only one of them can win**.”* (Malachi Martin, *The Keys of This Blood*, p. 16)

*“As to the time factor involved, those of us who are **under seventy** will see at least the basic structures of the **new world government** installed. Those of us **under forty** will surely live under its **legislative, executive and judiciary**”*

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authority and control." Malachi Martin, *The Keys of this Blood*, pp. 15-16.

" . . . There is urgent need of a true world political authority, as my predecessor Blessed John XXIII indicated some years ago. Such an authority would need to be regulated by law, to observe consistently the principles of **subsidiarity and solidarity**, to seek to establish the **common good**, and to make a commitment to securing authentic integral human development inspired by the values of charity in truth. Furthermore, such an authority would need to be **universally recognized** and to be vested with the **effective power** to ensure security for all, regard for justice, and respect for rights." Benedict XVI in his encyclical, *Caritas in Veritate*

"The **common good** therefore involves all members of society, **no one is exempt from cooperating**, according to each one's possibilities, in attaining and developing it." *Compendium of Catholic Social Doctrine*, section 167.

On the universal destination of goods, the *Compendium of Catholic Social Doctrine* states:

"If it is true that everyone is born with the right to use the goods of the earth, it is likewise true that, in order to ensure that this right is exercised in an equitable and orderly fashion, **regulated interventions are necessary**, interventions that are the result of **national and international agreements**, and a **juridical order** that adjudicates and specifies the exercise of this right." *Compendium of Catholic Social Doctrine*, section 173

"Christian tradition has never recognized the **right to private property as absolute and untouchable**: 'On the contrary, it has always understood this right within the broader context of the **right common to all** to use the goods of the whole of creation. The right to private property is **subordinated** to the right to **common use**, to the fact that goods are meant **for everyone**.'" *Compendium of Catholic Social Doctrine*, section 177

"The Church's social teaching moreover calls for recognition of the social function of any form of private ownership that clearly refers to its necessary relation to the **common good** . . . The **universal destination of goods** entails

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*obligations on how goods are to be used by their legitimate owners . . . From this arises the duty on the part of owners not to let goods in their possession go idle and to channel them to productive activity, even **entrusting them to others** who are desirous and capable of putting them to use in production.” Compendium of Catholic Social Doctrine, section 178*

*“New technological and scientific knowledge must be placed at the service of mankind’s primary needs, gradually increasing humanity’s **common patrimony**. Putting the principle of the **universal destination of goods** into full effect therefore requires action at the **international level** and planned programs on the part of all countries.” Compendium of Catholic Social Doctrine, section 179*

*“Man’s earthly activity, when inspired and sustained by charity, contributes to the building of the **universal city of God**, which is the **goal of the history of the human family**. In an increasingly globalized society, the **common good** and the effort to obtain it cannot fail to assume the dimensions of the **whole human family**, that is to say, the community of peoples and nations, in such a way as to shape the **earthly city in unity and peace**, rendering it to some degree an anticipation and a prefiguration of the undivided city of God.” *Caritas in Veritate*, section 7*

*“Insofar as it is part of the Church’s moral teaching, the Church’s social doctrine has the same dignity and authority as her moral teaching. It is **authentic Magisterium** which **obligates** the faithful to adhere to it.” Compendium of Catholic Social Doctrine, section 80*

*‘The Catholic Church has never given up the hope to **re-establish** [she must have once had it and lost it] the medieval **union of church and state**, with a **global state** and a **global theocracy** as its ultimate goal.’ The **Roman Church-State** is a **hybrid—a monster** of ecclesiastical and political power. Its political thought is totalitarian, and whenever it has had the opportunity to apply its principles, the result has been **bloody repression**. If, during the last 30 years, it has softened its assertions of full, supreme, and irresponsible power, and has murdered fewer people than before, such changes in behavior are not due to a*

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change in its ideas, but to **a change in its circumstances [the secular governments keep her at arms' length]** . . . The **Roman Church-State** in the twentieth century, however, is an institution **recovering from a mortal wound**. If and when it **regains [so it must have lost it]** its full power and authority, it will impose a regime more sinister than any the planet has yet seen **[the deadly wound will be healed]**." John W. Robbins, *Ecclesiastical Megalomania*, p. 195.

"I am convinced that Roman Babylon **will again regain** all of its **previous power** before the last judgment overtakes it. I fear that most of the nations, intimidated by its power and terrified by its brutality, will **allow the yoke shaken off some two hundred years ago to be lain upon them again.**" Words of Ph. J. Spener in *Symposium on Revelation*, volume 2, p. 388

"What the Roman Catholic Church-State accomplished on a **small scale** during the Middle Ages is what it desires to achieve on a **global scale** in the coming millennium." John W. Robbins, *Ecclesiastical Megalomania*, p. 187 (1999)

Also the New Age mystical/pantheistic concept of Pierre Teilhard de Chardin must be brought in. The whole universe is evolving toward a Christ consciousness that will bring an era of peace and harmony.

Seventh-day Adventist also believe that the only hope for planet earth is the supernatural, miraculous, rapid, second coming of Jesus to destroy all earthly kingdoms and set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed (Daniel 2): Not made with hands is the key expression used of the body of Jesus and also the heavenly sanctuary. But in this belief we are going against the grain of the world.

Matthew 4: Offers Him the kingdoms of this world

Globalism: A Matter of Survival

Crises that are bringing the world together in a common effort:

- The war against terror
- The global economic problems

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- The threat of global pandemics
- The threat of global warming
- The global problem of poverty
- The problem of ethnic and religious divisions and strife

World leaders are searching for solutions to these problems without the intervention of God. Because they believe in an evolutionary beginning they also believe in an evolutionary end where the whole world will converge to bring about a millennium of peach.

Pierre Teilhard de Chardin provided the New Age philosophy that would bring the evolutionary hypothesis and the Roman Catholic social theory together.

Ellen White long ago predicted:

*"The **so-called Christian world** is to be the theater of great and decisive actions. Men in authority will enact laws controlling the conscience, after the example of the Papacy. Babylon will make all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication. **Every nation will be involved** . . . "These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast. These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for He is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with Him are called, and chosen, and faithful" (Revelation 17:13, 14).*

*"These have one mind." There will be a **universal bond of union, one great harmony, a confederacy of Satan's forces**. "And shall give their power and strength unto the beast." Thus is manifested the same arbitrary, oppressive power against religious liberty, freedom to worship God according to the dictates of conscience, as was manifested by the Papacy, when in the past it persecuted those who dared to refuse to conform with the religious rites and ceremonies of Romanism. {1MR 297.2}*

"The whole world is to be stirred with enmity against Seventh-day Adventists, because they will not yield homage to the papacy, by honoring Sunday, the

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institution of this antichristian power. It is the purpose of Satan to cause them to be blotted from the earth, in order that his supremacy of the world may not be disputed.” {Mar 217.3}

No creation, no Sabbath, no sin, no redemption, no judgment, no second coming, no new heavens and new earth. No vestige of a beginning and no prospect of an end.

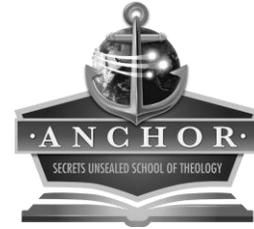
The Sabbath is the sign of the Creator, the Redeemer and the future Restorer.

Jesus is coming to do at the end what He did at the beginning. He will recreate miraculously in six literal 24 hour days the world and then He will rest the seventh literal day. The Sabbath will be the eternal sign of this (Isaiah 66:22, 23). Thus the Sabbath is retrospective and prospective. It points to a divine, miraculous, rapid beginning and a divine, miraculous, rapid end.

Revelation 14:6, 7 is more relevant than ever!

II Peter 3: We have the message for the world today. Our message is that the Sabbath will be the great issue and test of loyalty and Jesus is coming soon. This totally goes against the grain of contemporary thought which believes in evolution and the setting up of a new world order without the divine intervention of God. Seventh-day Adventists will be laughed to scorn as was Noah!

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LESSON # 10 - SATAN'S ATTEMPT TO UNDERMINE CREATION

Introduction

Let's begin our study today by reading **Revelation 14:6, 7**. Verse 7 strongly suggests that God's people toward the end of human history **will bring the attention** of the world to the **Creator and His Sabbath**. In contrast to this we are told that the **beast will impose** His mark upon every nation, kindred, tongue and people.

*"Then I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to those who dwell on the earth — to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people 7 saying with a loud voice: "Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and **worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water.**"*

The Days of Creation

Do we **have any reason** to believe that the days of creation were each of **24 literal hours in length**?

- Jesus and the **New Testament writers** believed that the creation was **literal event** in **space and time** (for example, Matthew 19:1-6). To question a literal creation account is to impugn the **honesty of the New Testament writers**, including Jesus Himself!

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- **Psalm 33** describes the **immediacy** and **rapidity** of the creation event:
*“By the word of the Lord the heavens were made and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth. For He **spoke and it was done**; He **commanded, and it stood fast**.”*
- **Genesis 1:4, 5**: The daily cycle contained a day and a night, an **evening and morning**. It would be **absurd** to say that each day had an ‘evening and morning’ if the days of creation were **millions of years** in length.
- The expression “**and it was so**” used several times in Genesis 1 indicates **immediacy** and **rapidity** (1:7, 9, 11, 15, 24; see Psalm 33:6-9).
- It is a fact that in the Old Testament, **every single time** that the word “day” appears in the **singular** with an **ordinal number** (day one, day two, etc.) it means a 24 hour day. There are **no exceptions** to this rule.
- How could **the plants** that were created the third day survive millions of years of darkness before the sun was put in place on the fourth day?
- **Exodus 20:11**: The Sabbath commandment offers **definitive proof** that the days of creation week were **literal, consecutive and contiguous**. Think about it. God instructed man to **work six** days and **rest the seventh** just **like He had** worked six and rested on the seventh. How could God tell man to work six days as He had worked six days if the **days were millions of years long**?

Satan Hates the Sabbath

Exodus 20:11 provides the **rationale** for the observance of the Sabbath. Ask yourself the question: **Why would Satan** want us to believe that the world came into existence through a **cruel and extended process** which took millions of years?

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Satan has hated the Sabbath throughout history because it points to **Jesus as the loving Creator and Satan hates Jesus.**

- In the Old Testament, Satan led **Israel to trample** on the Sabbath
- Then after the **Babylonian captivity** he led them to idolize it
- In the early Christian church he led theologians to despise the Sabbath as a relic of Judaism
- **Middle Ages** he led the **bishop of Rome** to change the day of worship from Sabbath to Sunday
- At **the end** he will impose the death penalty upon everyone who keeps the Sabbath and rejects Sunday

The Sabbath ever reminds us that **Jesus is the Creator** of the heavens and the earth. Satan wants us to **forget the Creator** and therefore he does his utmost to **efface the reminder** from the minds of men. This is why the **first angel's message** is of such vital importance in these last days. It calls human beings to worship the Creator and to keep His commemorative sign—the Sabbath.

Ellen White explains how Satan, through infidel scientists, attempts to eradicate the Sabbath:

*“But the [**infidel**]: **ST, March 20, 1879**] assumption that the events of the first week required thousands upon thousands of years [**seven vast, indefinite periods**]: **ST, March 20, 1879**], strikes directly at the foundation of the fourth commandment. It represents the Creator as commanding men to observe the week of literal days in commemoration of **vast, indefinite periods**. This is unlike his method of dealing with his creatures. It makes **indefinite and obscure** that which he has made very plain. It is **infidelity** [**worst kind of infidelity**]: **ST March 20, 1879**] in its most insidious and hence most dangerous form; its real character is so disguised that it is held and taught by many who profess to believe the Bible [**many who profess to believe the record of creation**]: **ST, March 20, 1879**].” Counsels on Education, pp. 190,*

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*“And many who **profess to believe** the Bible are at a loss to account for wonderful things which are found in the earth with the view that creation week was only **seven literal days** and that the world is now only **about six thousand** years old. These, **to free themselves from difficulties thrown in their way by infidel geologists**, adopt the view that the six days of creation were six vast, indefinite periods, and the day of God's rest was another indefinite period; **making senseless the fourth commandment** of God's holy law. Some eagerly receive this position; for it destroys the force of the fourth commandment, and they **feel a freedom from its claims upon them.**” Signs of the Times, March 20, 1879*

Concordists or Accomodationists

Ellen White has warned against the attempt to **accommodate** the Bible record to the assumptions of science:

*“Inferences erroneously drawn from facts observed in nature have, however, led to **supposed conflict** between science and revelation; and in the effort to **restore harmony**, interpretations of Scripture have been adopted that **undermine and destroy the force of the word of God**. Geology has been thought to contradict the literal interpretation of the Mosaic record of the creation. Millions of years, it is claimed, were required for the evolution of the earth from chaos; and in order to **accommodate** the Bible to this supposed revelation of science, the days of creation are **assumed to have been vast, indefinite periods, covering thousands or even millions of years**. Such a conclusion is wholly **uncalled for**. The Bible record is in harmony with itself and with the teaching of nature.” Education, pp. 128, 129*

Did you notice the word “**accommodate**”? The vast majority of scholars, both Adventist and non-Adventist agree that the **writer of Genesis** wanted us to understand that the days of creation were **literal, consecutive and contiguous** 24 hour days. But some of them say that **science has proven** that the writer was wrong and therefore we must **reinterpret and accommodate** the Biblical account of creation **to fit** the discoveries of contemporary science.

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They come up with all sorts of **alternative explanations** of creation such as **pantheism**, **progressive creation**, **punctuated equilibrium**, **theistic evolution** and **intelligent design**.

I once had a conversation with a Seventh-day Adventist pastor who believed that **evolution was God's method of creation** and that death existed long before sin. He stated:

"There can be no doubt that the geologic column is accurate."

I asked him:

"How do you deal with the story of Genesis where death comes as a result of human sin and the days of creation are spoken of as literal 24-hour days?"

Amazingly he answered:

*"**Moses believed** that creation took place in seven literal 24 hour days and that death came in as a result of sin but **Moses was wrong** and he must be corrected by modern scientific discovery."*

Throwing out the Spirit of Prophecy

When the Seventh-day Adventist critics question the literal days of creation they must also question the reliability of the **writings of Ellen White**. She was **categorical** that the days of creation were literal 24-hour days. In fact, she claims that she was **carried back to creation** and was shown that the days of creation were **just like every other day**.

*"I was then **carried back** to the creation, and **was shown** that the first week, in which God performed the work of creation in six days and rested on the seventh day, was **just like every other week**. The great God, in his days of creation and day of rest, measured off the first cycle **as a sample** for successive weeks till the close of time." Spirit of Prophecy, volume 1, p. 85*

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In another place she boldly affirms:

*“When the Lord declares that He made the world in six days and rested on the seventh day, He means the day of **twenty-four hours**, which He has marked off by the **rising and setting of the sun.**”* Testimonies to Ministers, p. 135

The Geologic Column and Death before Sin

It has been said that if you **tell a lie** enough times people will eventually come to **believe that it is the gospel truth**. This is what has happened with belief in the **theory of evolution**. What began as a theory in the days of Darwin is today **accepted as a scientific fact**—and anyone who disagrees is looked upon as an **ignoramus**. Concerning the theory of evolution, Ellen G. White once stated:

*“The genealogy of our race, as given by inspiration, traces back its origin, not to a line of developing germs, mollusks, and quadrupeds, but to the **great Creator.**”*
PP 45

Richard Hammill

Some of our own theologians have jumped on the evolutionary band wagon and teach that the days of creation lasted **millions of years**, that there was **death long before sin** entered the world and that the **geologic column proves** this **beyond any doubt**. The late **Richard Hammill**, who for many years was president of **Andrews University** and also served as one of the **vice-presidents** of the General Conference once explained how, after examining the geologic column, he **had to accommodate** the Bible to the discoveries of modern geology:

“I had to recognize that the forms of life that we are acquainted with mostly, like the ungulate hoof animals, the primates, man himself, exist only in the very top little layer of the Holocene, and that many forms of life were extinct before these ever came in, which, of course, is a big step for a Seventh-day Adventist when you are taught that every form of life came into existence in six days. . . I had felt it

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for many years, but finally there in about 1983 I had to say to myself 'That's right.' The steadily accumulating evidence in the natural world has forced a reevaluation in the way that I look at and understand and interpret parts of the Bible."

Ronald Numbers

One-time Seventh-day Adventist, Ronald Numbers, the grandson of a former General Conference president explains in the introduction to his book The Creationists how and why he gave up his Adventist views on a literal seven day creation week and became an agnostic:

"Having thus decided to follow science rather than Scripture on the subject of origins, I quickly, though not painlessly, slid down the proverbial slippery slope toward unbelief."

In a 1982 Numbers served as an expert witness in favor of evolution against a creationist lawyer. Numbers affirms:

"Bird publicly labeled me an 'Agnostic'. The tag still feels foreign and uncomfortable, but rather accurately reflects my theological uncertainty."

Ellen White's Response to Numbers

Ellen White, as if writing personally to Numbers long ago, predicted what would happen if science, falsely so-called, should supplant the Biblical account of creation:

"I have been shown that without Bible history, geology can prove nothing. Relics found in the earth do give evidence of a state of things differing in many respects from the present. But the time of their existence, and how long a period these things have been in the earth, are only to be understood by Bible history. It may be innocent to conjecture beyond Bible history, if our suppositions do not contradict the facts found in the sacred Scriptures. But when men leave the word of God in regard to the history of creation, and seek to account for God's creative works upon natural principles, they are upon a boundless ocean of

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uncertainty." 3SG 93

Notably, an **agnostic** is not the same as an **atheist**. An atheist **denies** the existence of God but an agnostic is **uncertain** whether God exists. Thus it is notable that Ellen White should use the expression 'boundless ocean of **uncertainty**' to describe those who are **not sure** that the Biblical account of creation can be trusted.

Human Knowledge Incomplete

In another place Ellen White explains why **human knowledge cannot be fully trusted** in the matter of origins and what happens when men of **science and theologians** lose confidence in the trustworthiness of the Bible on this subject:

*"Human knowledge of both material and spiritual things is **partial and imperfect**; therefore many are unable to **harmonize** their views of science with Scripture statements. Many accept mere **theories and speculations as scientific facts**, and they think that **God's word is to be tested [when it is the other way around]** by the teachings of "science falsely so called." First Timothy 6:20 The Creator and His works are beyond their comprehension; and because they cannot explain these by **natural laws**, **Bible history is regarded as unreliable**. Those who doubt the reliability of the records of the Old and New Testaments too often go a **step further** and doubt the **existence of God** and attribute infinite power to nature. Having **let go their anchor**, they are left to **beat about upon the rocks of infidelity.**" GC 522*

Did God use Evolution as His Method of Creation?

The god of evolution and the God of the Bible are **totally incompatible**. The Scriptures describe God as a **loving, kind and good** Father who made **everything perfect** and **cares** for His creation. In stark contrast, the process of evolution is **cruel and merciless**. Says one writer:

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“Evolution presents a **bloody, ruthless struggle** for existence from the very beginning, where there is **much waste** of living substance and many false starts and blind alleys.” Here I Stand p. 277

The Bible portrays **Jesus as the Creator** (John 1:1-3). The question is: Would Jesus, who instructed his disciples to pick up all that remained that **nothing be lost** after he had fed the **4,000 and the 5,000** use such a **wasteful method** to create?

Evolution functions on the basis of the **survival of the fittest**. The **strong win and survive while the weak** [contrary to the Biblical counsel that we are **to help the weak**] are wiped out. Evolution is a method of **trial and error**. It is a method that requires significant time to iron **out the glitches in the process**. Does such a method reflect **your view of God**? Is God such that He could not get things right **the first time**?

The idea of **cruelty and death** before sin is an attack on God’s **wisdom, omnipotence** and **goodness**. Would a God whose **eye is on the** sparrow (Luke 12:6), who even has the hairs of our head numbered (Matthew 10:30) use such a **cruel** and wasteful method to create?

Creation and Redemption

The Bible describes an **unbroken chain of events**: [1] Adam and Eve were **created perfect**, [2] they had a **literal fall**, [3] as a result **sin entered** the world and passed to all men [4] and **death came in** as a consequence of sin. [5] Therefore **we need a Redeemer** from sin in order to have any hope for a [6] **new world** where there is no sin and no death. If there was death before sin then the **link** between **creation and redemption** is broken because redemption is deliverance from death.

Roman Catholic theologian, Karl Schmits-Moorman, is quoted in Creation, Catastrophe and Redemption, p. 112:

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*“The notion of the traditional view of redemption as reconciliation and ransom from the consequences of Adam’s fall **is nonsense** for anyone who knows about the evolutionary background to human existence in the modern world.” Further, he states that salvation “cannot mean returning to an original state, but must be conceived as **perfecting through the process of evolution.**”*

Frank L. Marsh, a Seventh-day Adventist creationist scientist stated as much:

*“If death and the law of tooth and claw existed long before man, and if man evolved through these ‘natural’ processes, then there could **not have been a perfect Garden of Eden** nor a perfect Adam and Eve. Nor could there have been a **real Fall**, in which man became subject to sin. If that is so, what is the theological meaning of Jesus’ incarnation and atonement? **Paul connects the two**: ‘For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man’s obedience many will be made righteous’ (Romans 5:19). If there was no Garden of Eden with its tree of life, what is the future that Revelation 22 depicts for the redeemed?” Frank L. Marsh, Here I Stand, pp. 278, 279*

The question that begs to be asked is this: **How much longer** must creation wait until the **process** of evolution reaches its goal? **Millions** of years? Billions? This certainly doesn’t offer us **much hope for an imminent** coming of Jesus to make **all things new!**

Further, **how long** will it take God to create a new heavens and a new earth? Will He use evolution as His method once again? If he does it quickly why didn’t he do it that way in the first place? Evolution **impacts our concept of end time** events and the second coming. How many millions of years must we wait for **lambs and wild beasts** to live together in harmony? (Isaiah 11:6; 65:25). For how long must creation cry out for its deliverance? (Romans 8)

Creation and the Flood

It is common for theologians to refer to the stories of **Genesis 11 as myth, legend** or **saga**. Not only do these theologians (inside and outside the Seventh-day Adventist Church) **deny the historicity and literalness** of the

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creation story but they also deny that there was a **worldwide flood** that destroyed all living things except those who were saved in the ark.

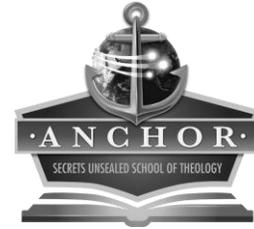
Notice in the following statement how Ellen White **links creation with the flood**. In her mind, if we read the record of creation wrong we will also deny the historicity of the worldwide flood in Noah's day:

*“But apart from Bible history, geology can prove nothing. Those who reason so confidently upon its discoveries, have no adequate conception of the size of men, animals, and trees before the flood, or of the **great changes which then took place**. Relics found in the earth **do give evidence** of conditions differing in many respects from the present; but **the time** when these conditions existed can be learned **only from the Inspired Record**. In the **history of the flood**, inspiration has explained that which **geology alone** could never fathom. In the days of Noah, men, animals, and trees, many times larger than now exist, were buried, and thus preserved as an evidence to later generations that the antediluvians perished by a flood. God designed that the discovery of these things should **establish faith in inspired history**; but men, with their **vain reasoning**, fall into the same error as did the people before the flood,—the things which God gave them as a benefit, they turn into a curse by making a wrong use of them.”*
Christian Education, pp. 191, 192

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by Pastor Stephen Bohr

LESSON #11 - ELLEN WHITE AND THE ALPHA AND OMEGA

Reading: 1SM 201-209

Four Quotations

Ellen White: *‘We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us and His teaching in our past history.’* Christian Experience and Teaching, p. 204)

Santayana: *‘Those who fail to learn from the mistakes of history are bound to repeat them.’* George Santayana *The Life of Reason*, 1905

Proverbs 29:18: *‘Where there is no vision the people perish.’* The word ‘perish’ means: “to lose restraint.”

I Timothy 4:1: *“Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons.”*

The Biblical View of the Nature of God

God is an infinite **personal** being who inhabits a **specific place** which the Bible calls **‘heaven’**.

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God is **transcendent**. This means that He is **outside** and **above** His creation. He is **before** His creation and **distinguishable** from it. In fact, He is the **cause** and creation is the **effect**. He **pre-existed** all things and **brought all things** into existence.

Christ taught us **to pray**, ‘Our **Father** who art in heaven.’ This shows that God is a **person** (he is a **Father**), that he inhabits a **specific place** (heaven) and that He **created us** (because He is Father).

Isaiah 57:15 describes the perfect balance between the **transcendence and immanence** of God:

*“For thus says the High and Lofty One Who **inhabits eternity**, whose name is Holy: “I dwell in the **high and holy place**, **with him** who has a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.”*

The World View of Pantheism

God is an **impersonal essence or force** that permeates the **entire universe**. For pantheism, **everything that is, is God**—stars, planets, trees, plants, animals, human beings, minerals—you name it, **all is God**. A kindred heresy is known as **panentheism** which means that **God is in** everything.

In pantheism there is **no distinction** between nature and God because they are **one and the same**.

We usually think of pantheism as the foundation of Oriental religions such as **Hinduism** and **Buddhism**, and this is true. But there was a time in the early twentieth century when pantheism attempted sneak in and overwhelm the Seventh-day Adventist church. The story I am about to tell you is not only a lesson in **history** but also a lesson in **prophecy** for Ellen White has warned us that the **Alpha** heresy will once again raise its **ugly head** in the church as the **Omega**. It will be the same deadly virus but it will morph into a **different form**.

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John Harvey Kellogg (the father of corn flakes)

John Harvey Kellogg was a very **influential physician** in the Seventh-day Adventist church in the late **19th and early 20th centuries**. He was the founder of the world famous **Battle Creek Sanitarium** as well as a brilliant **surgeon, inventor** and **health reformer**.

As early as **1897**, Kellogg began teaching some **strange ideas** about the nature of God. In the **1897** General Conference, he stated:

*'Gravitation acts instantaneously throughout space. By this mysterious force of gravitation the whole universe is held together in a bond of unity . . . We have here the evidence of a **universal presence**, an **intelligent presence**, an **all-wise presence**, an **all-powerful presence**, a presence by the aid of which every atom of the universe is kept in touch with every other atom. This force that holds all things together, that is **everywhere present**, that thrills throughout the whole universe that acts instantaneously through boundless space, can be **nothing else than God Himself**. What a wonderful thought that this same God is **in us** and **in everything**.'* (*General Conference Bulletin, February 12, 1897, p. 83*)

Later on, in **1903**, Kellogg published **The Living Temple**, in which he **expanded his views** on the nature of God. On page 29, Kellogg explained:

*'Suppose now we have a boot before us—not an ordinary boot, but a living boot, and as we look at it, we see little boots crowding out at the seams, pushing out at the toes, dropping off at the heels, and leaping out at the top—scores, hundreds, thousands of boots, a swarm of boots continually issuing from our living boot,—would we not be compelled to say, 'There is a **shoemaker in the boot**'? So there is present **in the tree** a power which creates and maintains it, a **tree-maker in the tree**.'*

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Division and Taking Sides

Soon people began to take sides and more and more people sided with Kellogg. A number of prominent physicians, teachers, ministers, theologians and administrators who were revered and honored in the church, defended the 'the new philosophy' as it was called. They claimed that this philosophy brought God so much closer to us. No one in the church seemed to detect the mortal dangers lurking beneath this so-called 'new light'.

A Conversation with W. A. Spicer

About this time, W. A. Spicer (who was 13 years younger than Kellogg) had just returned to Battle Creek from mission service in India. Kellogg, wanting to win over Spicer over to his side, set up an interview. Spicer himself later explained that before the interview he thought this whole conflict was merely a battle over semantics.

They met and began to discuss Kellogg's ideas. It did not take long for Spicer to realize that the problems with Kellogg's views went far beyond semantics. He came to realize that Kellogg actually believed God was in all created things.

Kellogg asked Spicer:

'Where is God?'

Spicer answered:

'God is heaven where the throne of God is.'

Kellogg then replied:

'Heaven is where God is and God is everywhere, in the grass, in the trees in all of creation.'

It became clear to Spicer that there was no place in Kellogg's scheme for angels ascending and descending between heaven and earth. And of course

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there could be no **heavenly sanctuary** that needed to be cleansed. In fact, Kellogg, pointing to his heart, told Spicer:

“The sanctuary to be cleansed is here.”

Spicer immediately detected the serious implications of Kellogg’s new theology: There was no need **to pray** to a God in heaven because He is everywhere. There is no distinction between the **sacred and the common**, all is **equally holy** because **God is in everything**.

Spicer explained that as he listened to Kellogg, *‘heaven and earth seemed to disappear in a mist.’*

Spicer, having just returned from India, immediately **recognized the pantheism** in Kellogg’s ideas. He did his best to persuade Kellogg, that heaven is a **real place**, that God is a **real person**, and that the things of creation were **made by God** but **were not God**, all to no avail.

The Sanitarium Burns to the Ground and Kellogg Writes a Book

On **February 18, 1902**, the world famous, **Battle Creek Sanitarium** burnt to the ground. It was decided that Dr. Kellogg would **write a book** on health that the proceeds would be used to **rebuild the Sanitarium**. It was agreed, however, that Kellogg **would not include in the book** any of his controversial ideas on the nature of God. **Kellogg agreed** and undertook the project with gusto. He finished his book in **1903** and called it **The Living Temple**. When the proofs of the book were read, it was found that it was riddled with Kellogg’s pantheistic ideas. Notice the following examples:

*‘God is the explanation of nature--but **not a God outside of nature**, but **in nature**, manifesting himself through and in all the objects, movements and varied phenomena of the universe.’* (*The Living Temple*, p. 28)

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He also explained that certain phenomena were ‘*a physiological proof of the existence within the body of some power superior to the material composition or substance of the body, which exercises a **constant supervision and control** whereby individual identity is maintained. **God Himself**, the divine presence in the temple.’ (The Living Temple, p. 52)*

To sustain his view, Kellogg quoted the Apostle Paul’s declaration that our **body is the temple** of the Holy Spirit. In fact, the book was **filled with Scripture quotations** that gave it an **aura of Biblical authority**. Regarding this, Ellen White explained:

*‘All through the book are passages of Scripture. These scriptures are brought in such a way that **error is made to appear as truth**. Erroneous theories are presented in so pleasing a way that unless care is taken, many will be misled.’ (I SM 202)*

Kellogg furthermore stated in his book:

*‘Let us not forget that the sunlight is **God’s smile of benediction**; that the sunshine is Heaven’s light and life and glory, and the true Shekinah, the real presence with which the temple needs most to be filled; that the cooling breeze is the **breath of heaven**, a veritable messenger of life, carrying healing on its wings.’ (The Living Temple, p. 412)*

Kellogg’s Appeal

In view of the opposition to the publication of his book, Kellogg decided to **appeal** to the General Conference Committee. But to Kellogg’s surprise, **A. G. Daniells** along with others on the committee **refused to approve the publication** of the book. But Kellogg insisted that his views were ‘**new light**’ which needed to come before the people.

At length a committee of five was appointed to bring a report on the teachings in the manuscript and its suitability for publication. The subcommittee was divided; three were in favor of publication and two were against (one of those

in favor was A. T. Jones). But the General Conference Committee voted against the majority and in favor of the minority.

This angered Kellogg and he **demanded a hearing** before the General Conference Committee that was granted. Meanwhile the controversy was spreading on a broader scale. **Influential teachers, ministers, physicians and administrators** were all taking sides. As a result was a crisis was brewing that threatened to **tear the church apart**.

The Review and Herald Decides to Publish

In spite of the fact that the General Conference Committee voted not to publish the book, Dr. Kellogg **sent a private order** to the **Review and Herald Publishing House** to print **5000 copies** of the book at once. In other words, **our own publishing house** was printing material saturated with spiritualism contrary to the counsel of the General Conference.

Ellen White had warned of judgment to come upon the publishing house:

'In visions of the night I have seen an angel standing with a sword of fire stretched over Battle Creek.' (8T 97)

Just as the book had received its **final corrections** and was **about to be printed**, the factory **burned to the ground** and the plates were ruined. **Fire Chief Weeks** described the fire that destroyed the printing press:

*'There is something strange about your SDA fires, with the water poured on acting **more like gasoline**.'*

Kellogg, however, was determined to publish his book so he sent a copy to **another publisher** and a **few months** later a **large edition** of The Living Temple was printed. **Energetic efforts** were then made by Dr. Kellogg to recruit **young people** to sell it.

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Autumn Council in 1903

Autumn council in 1903 was held at Takoma Park, Maryland where the General Conference headquarters had just recently moved. The central point on the agenda was *'how to expand the preaching of the gospel to the world.'*

As the meeting was beginning, a group of about ten men came into the meeting hall and loudly protested the attitude of the denomination toward Dr. Kellogg's book. They demanded that the agenda be changed to hear their grievances. This was done.

Arthur G. Daniells

That evening, after a long day of conflict and debate, A. G. Daniells who was the president of the General Conference, walked home accompanied by a fellow worker who had embraced Kellogg's teachings.

The worker said to Daniells:

'You are making the mistake of your life. After all this turmoil, some of these days you will wake up to find yourself rolled in the dust, and another will be leading the forces.' Elder Daniells answered: *'I do not believe your prophecy. At any rate, I would rather be rolled in the dust doing what I believe in my soul to be right than to walk with princes, doing what my conscience tells me is wrong.'*

Messages from the Prophet

A. G. Daniells entered his house, tired and heavy hearted. He looked at the future of the church with dire forebodings. He was surprised to find a group of people in his home, all smiling and happy. He wondered how these people could be smiling when a crisis threatened to tear the church apart?

That very day, two letters had arrived from Ellen G. White who at the time was in California. In these two letters, sent weeks before, Ellen White warned the leadership about the dangerous errors found in the book The Living Temple. She instructed elder Daniells:

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*'I have some things to say to our teachers in reference to the new book, "The Living Temple." Be careful how you sustain the sentiments of this book regarding the personality of God. As the Lord represents matters to me, these sentiments do not bear the endorsement of God. **They are a snare that the enemy has prepared for these last days.**' (Review and Herald, October 22, 1903)*

Ellen White further explained:

*'In the **visions of the night** this matter was clearly presented me before a large number. One of authority was speaking . . . The speaker held up Living Temple, saying, "In this book there are statements that the writer himself does not comprehend. Many things are stated in a vague, undefined way. Statements are made in such a way that nothing is sure. And **this is not the only production of the kind that will be urged upon the people.** Fanciful views will be presented by many minds. What we need to know at this time is: **What is the truth** that will enable us to win the salvation of our souls?' (Letter 211, 1903)*

And then Ellen White told Daniells how to face the crisis:

*'After taking your position firmly, wisely, cautiously, **make not one concession** on any point concerning which God has plainly spoken. Be as **calm** as a summer evening, but as **fixed** as the everlasting hills. By conceding you would be **selling our whole cause** into the hands of the enemy. The cause of God is not to be traded away. We must now take hold of these matters **decidedly.**' (Letter 216, 1903, p. 6)*

Daniells read Ellen White's two letters about the errors in The Living Temple. Many **amens** were heard. **Tears** flowed freely from eyes. **Most** of those present **gave glory to God** for His miraculous deliverance. All were **forced to admit** that God had intervened at the **precise moment** He was needed. Many confused minds were led **back to the light.** **Confessions** were freely uttered. Sadly, not all accepted the counsel of Ellen White. Many **great teachers, physicians, administrators and ministers** were **lost to the cause.** Dr.

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Kellogg himself left the church, never to return and he **took with him** many of our medical institutions.

Why Ellen White's Dream and Counsel

On **November 1, 1903**, Ellen White wrote to Daniells explaining **why she had sent** those two testimonies that had arrived **the very day** they were desperately needed. God had given Ellen White a striking dream:

*'Shortly before I sent out the testimonies regarding the efforts of the enemy to undermine the foundation of our faith through the dissemination of seductive theories, **I had read an incident** about a ship in a fog meeting an iceberg. For several nights I slept but little. I seemed to be bowed down as a cart beneath sheaves. **One night** a scene was clearly presented before me. A vessel was upon the waters, in a heavy fog. Suddenly the lookout cried, "Iceberg just ahead!" There, towering high above the ship, was a gigantic iceberg. An authoritative voice cried out, "Meet it!" There was not a moment's hesitation. It was a time for **instant action**. The engineer put on full steam, and the man at the wheel steered the ship straight into the iceberg. With a crash she struck the ice. There was a fearful shock, and the iceberg broke into many pieces, falling with a noise like thunder to the deck. The **passengers were violently shaken** by the force of the collisions, but no lives were lost. The **vessel was injured**, but not beyond repair. She rebounded from the contact, trembling from stem to stern, like a living creature. Then she **moved forward** on her way.*

*Well I knew the meaning of this representation. I had my orders. I had heard the words, like a voice from our Captain, "**Meet it!**" I knew what my duty was, and that there was not a moment to lose. The time for decided action had come. I must **without delay obey** the command, "Meet it!"*

*That night I was up at one o'clock, writing as fast as my hand could pass over the paper. For the next few days I worked early and late, preparing for our people the instruction given me regarding the errors that were **coming in among us**.*

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I have been hoping that there would be a thorough reformation, and that the principles for which we fought in the early days, and which were brought out in the power of the Holy Spirit, would be maintained.’ (ISM 205-206)

What is most **dangerous about an iceberg**? Not what can be seen but what is **hidden beneath** the surface. Also the iceberg is very **cold a hard**.

So dangerous was this new philosophy that Ellen White warned what would happen if it were adopted by the church:

*‘The enemy of souls has sought to bring in the supposition that a great reformation was to take place among Seventh-day Adventists, and that this reformation would consist in **giving up the doctrines** which stand as the pillars of our faith, and engaging in a process of **reorganization**. Were this reformation to take place, what would result? The **principles of truth** that God in His wisdom has given to the remnant church would be discarded. Our **religion would be changed**. The fundamental principles that have sustained the work for the last fifty years would be accounted as error. A **new organization** would be established. **Books of a new order** would be written. A system of **intellectual philosophy** would be introduced. The founders of this system would go into the cities, and do a wonderful work. The Sabbath of course, would be **lightly regarded**, as also the God who created it. **Nothing would be allowed to stand in the way of the new movement**. The leaders would teach that virtue is better than vice, but **God being removed**, they would place their dependence on human power, which, without God, is worthless. Their foundation would be built on the sand, and storm and tempest would sweep away the structure.’ (1 SM 204-205)*

The Alpha and the Omega

*‘In the book Living Temple there is presented the **alpha of deadly heresies**. The **omega will follow**, and will be received by those who are not willing to heed the warning God has given.’ (Selected Messages, volume 1, p. 200)*

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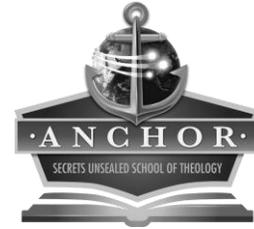
For quite a while Ellen White did not want to read any of Kellogg's book but finally she consented:

*'Finally my son said to me, "Mother, you ought to read at least some parts of the book that you may see whether they are in harmony with the light that God has given you." He sat down beside me, and together we read the preface, and most of the first chapter, and also paragraphs in other chapters. As we read, I recognized the very sentiments against which I had been bidden to speak in warning during the early days of my public labors. When I first left the State of Maine, it was to go through Vermont and Massachusetts, to bear a testimony against these sentiments. Living Temple contains the **alpha of these theories**. I knew that the **omega would follow** in a little while; and I trembled for our people.'* (*Selected Messages*, volume 1, p. 203)

*'I have seen the results of these fanciful views of God, in apostasy, spiritualism, and **free-lovism**. The **free-love tendency** of these teachings was so concealed that at first it was difficult to make plain its real character. Until the Lord presented it to me, I knew not what to call it, but I was instructed to call it **unholy spiritual love**."* *Testimonies*, vol. 8, pp. 291, 292 (1904)

Why would Ellen White refer to pantheism with these strange terms? In our next study we will understand the reason why.

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LESSON #12 - THE HIDDEN DANGERS OF PANTHEISM

God: The Arbiter of Good and Evil

A personal God, whose habitation is in heaven, is the Absolute Arbiter of good and evil. In other words, God defines what is good and what is evil. That is, the definition of good and evil is not inside man but rather outside.

God is the Creator of the universe. We are creatures made by God and therefore we are separate and distinct from Him (Isaiah 64:8). God is above us and is independent of us. To put it clearly, there is a clear distinction between God and us. We are not God nor part of God and God is not everything nor is He in everything. If God dwelt in everything He would dwell in the heart of both saints and sinners and that would clearly heresy of the highest degree!!!

God gave a command to Adam and Eve that He expected them to obey. The tree is called the ‘tree of the knowledge of good and evil’ because God is the absolute arbiter and definer of what is good and what is evil. To obey God’s command is good. To disobey God’s command is evil.

The command was simple, not complicated.

The command was clear, that is, easy to understand, and it was understood!!

The command was easy to obey; it was a small test.

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The principles of **all Ten Commandments** were contained in this one.

The **fundamental test** was:

Would man obey the command of God without **question or reservation**? The central issue was: would man obey God's Word or not? The **love of Adam and Eve** would be revealed by their **express obedience** to the word of God!! They would reveal their love by obedience!!

Satan's Attack on God's Word

The entire debate between Eve and the serpent **revolves around the trustworthiness of God's Word**. Satan used **five methods** to lead Eve to disobey God's clear, simple word:

- He Performed a counterfeit **miracle** by seemingly giving the serpent the power of speech
- **He distorted** God's word and got **Eve to add to it**
- He led Eve to follow the **logic of her mind**
- He led Eve to obey the witness of her **senses**
- He then **used Eve** to lead Adam to disobey God's word

The Gist of the Conversation

Satan **misstated** God's word in order to **get Eve to converse** with him (Gen. 3:1).

Eve corrected Satan's misstatement and added to God's word (3:2-3).

Satan blatantly told Eve that **God is a liar**. He was basically saying to her: "You can't really **trust God's word**. He has a hidden **agenda**. He is **keeping secrets**. He is trying to **intimidate you** and keep you enslaved.

Eve's natural question would be: **What** is God's hidden agenda? **What** secret is God trying to keep from us and why? **Why** would He want us to blindly obey Him? Why would He want us to think that we are going to die if we really aren't? (Genesis 3:4).

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Satan had an answer for Eve: '**For**' (a very important word because it connects with the previous verse) **God knows** something He **doesn't want you to know**. He is **hiding the truth** from you for some **ulterior motive**. Do you want to **know why**? "It is not because you are going to die, it is because God knows that when you eat, **you will be like Him in a very special sense**:

YOU WILL POSSESS THE UNCANNY ABILITY TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN GOOD AND EVIL **ON YOUR OWN!!** YOU WILL HAVE AN **INTERNAL, INNATE, NATURAL ABILITY** TO DISCRIMINATE BETWEEN GOOD AND EVIL WITHOUT GOD HAVING TO TELL YOU SO.

This is exactly what Satan had told the **angels in heaven**:

*"He reiterated his claim that angels needed no control, but should be left to follow **their own will**, which would **ever guide them** right. He denounced the divine statutes as a restriction of their liberty and declared that it was his purpose to secure the abolition of law; that, freed from this restraint, the hosts of heaven might enter upon a **more exalted, more glorious** state of existence."* (GC 499)

Satan was insinuating that **God developed this keen sense of discrimination** between good and evil by eating from the tree and then **He intimidated everyone else** by telling them that they would die if they ate from it.

Ellen White's Unusual Terminology for Pantheism

*"I have seen the results of these fanciful [**spiritualistic and pantheistic**] views of God, in **apostasy, spiritualism, and free-lovism**. The **free-love tendency** of these teachings was so concealed that at first it was difficult to make plain its real character. Until the Lord presented it to me, I knew not what to call it, but I was instructed to call it **unholy spiritual love**." (8T 292)*

*"It is not a conclusive evidence that a man is a Christian because he manifests **spiritual ecstasy** under extraordinary circumstances. **Holiness is not rapture**: it is an **entire surrender of the will to God**; it is **living by every word** that*

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proceeds from the mouth of God; it is **doing the will** of our heavenly Father; it is **trusting God** in trial, in darkness as well as in the light; it is **walking** by faith and not by sight; it is relying on God with **unquestioning confidence**, and resting in His love.” AA 51

Why would God tell Ellen White to call this heresy such a strange name? Why unholy spiritual love? Well, first we need to know what true love is.

What is True Love?

John 14:15 “If ye love me, keep my **commandments**.”

1 John 2:3-5: “And hereby we do know that we know him, if we **keep his commandments**. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth His word, in him verily is **the love of God perfected**: hereby know we that we are in him.”

1 John 5:3: “For **this is the love of God**, that we keep **his commandments**: and his commandments are not grievous.”

Romans 13:10: “Owe no man anything, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbor: therefore **love is the fulfilling of the law**.”

Pantheism’s Counterfeit ‘Love’

Pantheism teaches that **all that is, is God**. That being the case, each of us is God and no one is a lesser God than anyone else. The implications of this view are serious. If this is true, then **who determines** what our ethical standards will be? **Who defines what is right and what is wrong**? If we are God, we do!

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This is exactly what Satan told Eve:

*“You don’t need God to tell you what is right and wrong. Because you are God, you can define good and evil **on your own.**”*

Let’s see how this works out in a modern day example. **Public schools are using New Age philosophy** as their foundation. They are told to teach children using the principles of **values clarification**. What they say is that values are **already present in children** (because they are God) and simply must be **discovered** by them. In other words, values emerge from within they are not taught from without.

The psychology of the age therefore teaches that values should not be **imposed from an external source** (Bible, parents, teachers, church, etc.) Students should discover and **clarify their own values**. According to this view, no value system should be imposed on children. There are **no external absolute universal truths** to be believed and followed by all. Values are to be subjectively determined. If parents tell a child that **pre-marital sex** is wrong, the child can answer: ‘but that’s just your value judgment. Don’t force it on me.’ If a minister says that a gay lifestyle is wrong they can accuse the minister of attempting to impose his value system on them.

In the book, A Crash Course on the New Age, p. 119, we find the following explanation:

*“New age support for a host of ‘rights’ issues (such as human rights, civil rights, women’s rights, gay rights) can also be traced back to their belief in and **value of autonomy**; or the sovereignty of the self. In other words, if we are **all equally divine**, then we each have the right to pursue **self-realization** without **outside interference**, as long as we don’t interfere with others in their pursuit. Consequently, most would hold that **no laws** should be passed touching abortion or homosexuality, for example, since people have the right **to do what they please** with their own bodies.”*

This is the way it works out: If I am God and you are God then we must each choose our own **internal ethical system** because there is no **external person**

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'out there' where absolute moral guidance comes from. Thus, because moral decisions are anthropocentric, homosexuality can be all right for one but not for another. I am not at liberty to judge any person because every person is just as much God as I am.

There is no room in this system for a **personal God**, who lives in a **specific place** (heaven) and who at a **specific time** (1844) began judging **human beings** in a literal sanctuary by comparing their lives with an objective **law**, thus **separating** the righteous from the wicked. If God is in all, then **all is holy!** There is no reason to separate the righteous from the unrighteous or the holy from the unholy; all is **equally holy because all is equally God!!**

This is the true **source of seminars** that teach self-reliance, self-esteem, self-development, positive thinking, etc. It is the same lie that Satan has uttered since the beginning.

Ellen White made the following profound remark about the true nature of pantheism:

*"Today there are coming into **educational institutions** and into the churches everywhere **spiritualistic teachings** that undermine faith in God and in His word. The theory that God is an essence pervading all nature is received by many who profess to believe the Scriptures but however **beautifully clothed**, this theory is a **most dangerous deception**. It misrepresents God and is a dishonor to His greatness and majesty. And it surely tends not only to mislead but also to **debase men**. **Darkness** is its element, **sensuality** its sphere. The result of accepting it is **separation from God**. And to fallen human nature this means ruin.*

*Our condition through sin is unnatural, and the power that restores us must be supernatural, else it has no value. There is but one power that can break the hold of evil from the hearts of men, and that is the power of God in Jesus Christ. Only through the blood of the Crucified One is there cleansing from sin. His grace alone can enable us to resist and subdue the tendencies of our fallen nature. The spiritualistic theories concerning God make His grace of no effect. If God is an essence pervading all nature, then **He dwells in all men**; and in order to attain holiness, man has only to develop the **power within him**.*

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*These theories, followed to their logical conclusion, sweep away the **whole Christian economy**. They do away with the necessity for the atonement and make man his own savior.” (MH 428)*

*“Pantheistic ideas regarding God in nature **are framed by Lucifer**, the fallen angel. The strange part of the matter is that these ideas have been accepted by so many **as beautiful truth**. But that which they think is light will **lead them into dense darkness**. It is a distinguishing feature of the experience of Seventh-day Adventists to give glory to God. When we give **glory to human agencies [because they are supposedly ‘God’]**, when we have unlimited confidence in man, speaking of the excellence that we suppose him to possess, we worship we know not what. Let God be exalted. Let frail, erring human beings humble themselves before Him.*

*I have had much to say of the glory of God as seen in His created works, but never have I left the impression that **our God Omnipotent**, who ruleth in the heavens and fills all the heavens, is to be found in flower and leaf and tree. What I have said of God's works in nature was meant to lead the mind from nature **to nature's God**, to show that all the glory should be given to Him who ruleth in the heavens . . . “ The Upward Look, p. 336*

When we make our **heart**, our **reason**, our **feelings**, our **emotions**, our **intuitions**, our **senses**, the norm for right and wrong, we are harboring **counterfeit love**, or what Ellen White calls, ‘**unholy spiritual love**.’ Pantheism is a **frontal attack** on the **doctrine of sanctification**, a doctrine that invites us to reflect the principles of God’s holy law in our lives!! This is why Ellen White connected **pantheism with the holy flesh** fanaticism where people claimed to have holy flesh and therefore **not being able to sin**. The grossest sins were then **committed and attributed to God** who supposedly dwelt in them.

Ellen White further connects **pantheism with spiritualism** (remember Satan said: ‘you will not surely die?’):

*‘Spiritualism asserts that men are unfallen demigods; that “each mind will **judge itself**;” that “true knowledge places men above all law;” that “all sins*

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committed are innocent;" for "whatever is, is right," and "God doth not condemn." The basest of human beings it represents as in heaven, and highly exalted there. Thus it declares to all men, "It matters not what you do; live as you please, heaven is your home." Multitudes are thus led to believe that **desire** is the highest law, that **license** is liberty, and that man is **accountable only to himself**.

With such teaching given at the very outset of life, when impulse is strongest, and the demand for self-restraint and purity is most urgent, where are the safeguards of virtue? What is to prevent the world from **becoming a second Sodom?**' (Education 227-228)

In the same vein Ellen White remark:

"If God is an essence pervading all nature, then He **dwells in all men**; and in order to attain holiness, man has only to develop the **power within him**. These theories, followed to their logical conclusion, sweep away the whole Christian economy. They do away with the necessity for the atonement and make **man his own savior**.

These theories regarding God make His word of no effect, and those who accept them are in great danger of being led finally to look upon the **whole Bible as a fiction**. They may regard virtue as better than vice; but, having shut out God from His **rightful position of sovereignty**, they place their dependence upon **human power**, which, without God, is worthless. The **unaided human will** has no real power to resist and overcome evil. The defenses of the soul are broken down. Man has **no barrier against sin**. When once the **restraints of God's word and His Spirit** are rejected, we know not to what depths one may sink." (MH 428-429)

Satan's **end time deception** will be the same as at the beginning:

To **create doubt in God's objective Word**. He intends to lead human beings to live by their **own ethical standards independently of the Word**. In this way he can get people to cast the Law of God aside and follow their own impressions. This is why Jesus said that because of the **lawlessness in the world**, the love of many would wax cold. Notice, once again, how the **law is**

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connected with love!!

- **Rebellion** is as witchcraft (I Samuel 15:22, 23). The context indicates that Saul disobeyed an explicit command of the Lord with an apparent good motivation.
- **Spiritual formation**, contemplative prayer, contemporary Christian music, the One Project, all go hand in hand.
- **Why** would Satan want us to question the Spirit of Prophecy? Because she unmasks Satan's last day deceptions.

"There will be a hatred kindled against the testimonies which is satanic. The workings of Satan will be to unsettle the faith of the churches in them, for this reason: Satan cannot have so clear a track to bring in his deceptions and bind up souls in his delusions if the warnings and reproofs and counsels of the Spirit of God are heeded." Selected Messages, volume 1, p. 48 (Letter 40, 1890)

- **Must read:** Futurism's Incredible Journey, The Dangers of Contemplative Prayer, The Omega Rebellion and Worship at Satan's Throne.
- Revelation 12:17; 19:10; 22:8, 9

"The last great delusion is soon to open before us. Antichrist is to perform his marvelous works in our sight. So closely will the counterfeit resemble the true that it will be impossible to distinguish between them except by the Holy Scriptures. By their testimony every statement and every miracle must be tested." The Great Controversy, p. 593

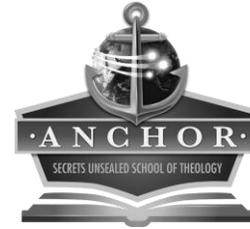
"Be not deceived; many will depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils. We have now before us the alpha of this danger. The omega will be of a most startling nature." (1SM 197)

"In the book Living Temple there is presented the alpha of deadly heresies. The omega will follow, and will be received by those who are not willing to heed the warning God has given." (1SM 200)

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You owe it to yourself to be informed! The unerring standard is the Word of God—**outside of man!** It could mean the difference between salvation and perdition.

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LESSON #13 - HOW TO STUDY ELLEN WHITE

ELLEN WHITE’S TESTIMONY REGARDING THE INDIANA CAMP MEETING AN EXEGETICAL STUDY

A Little Bit of History

From September 13-23, 1900 a memorable Seventh-day Adventist camp meeting was held at Muncie, Indiana. For two years before this, the conference president and the evangelist along with several pastors had been teaching a heresy which is known as ‘holy flesh’. Along with the heresy a new worship style, Pentecostal and charismatic in nature, was introduced at the camp meeting. In this study we will focus on the music and worship style that accompanied the ‘holy flesh’ heresy.

Ellen White had already been shown in vision eight months before the camp meeting (in January 1900) the events that were going to transpire at Muncie. She was also shown that what would occur at Indiana was similar to what had already taken place in early Adventist history. And, as I will show in this article, she also saw that the events that took place in early Adventist history and at the Indiana camp meeting would be repeated once again shortly before the close of probation.

The General Conference brethren were very concerned about what was happening in Indiana and for this reason they sent two pastors to the camp meeting as observers to bring back a report. Elder Stephen Haskell, who was one of the two pastors, sent a letter to Ellen White dated September 25, 1900

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just **two days after** the conclusion of the camp meeting where he explained what had occurred. Sister White in turn answered Haskell's letter fifteen days later on **October 10, 1900**. Here is one **key paragraph** from Ellen White's response to Elder Haskell's letter (all emphasis supplied):

*"It is impossible to estimate too largely the work that the Lord **will** accomplish through His proposed vessels in carrying out His mind and purpose. The things **you have described as taking place** in Indiana, the Lord has shown me **would take place just before the close of probation**. Every uncouth thing **will** be demonstrated. There **will** be shouting, with drums, music and dancing. The senses of rational beings **will** become so confused that they cannot be trusted to make right decisions. And this is called the moving of the Holy Spirit."*
Manuscript Releases, volume 21, p. 128,

Recently a Seventh-day Adventist supporter of Contemporary Christian Music (CCM) sent me an email where he claimed that Ellen White's remarks about the Indiana camp meeting apply primarily to the events that took place there and **not to the future**. In all Christian charity I would like to respond to his arguments by examining them one by one and offering an alternative understanding.

A Fundamental Law of Exegesis

The e-mailer is a **doctoral candidate** and as such I am sure that he knows that one of the **fundamental laws of exegesis** (the art of properly interpreting the Biblical text) is that the interpreter must understand **words, phrases and verb tenses** as the writer originally understood and intended them. In order to do this exegete (interpreter) must **exhaustively** research how the author in **other parts** of his/her writings used these phrases, words and verb tenses. The **same laws** that apply to Biblical exegesis apply as well to the writings of Ellen White because the **same Spirit** inspired both the Bible and the writings of Ellen White.

Ellen White's Three Phrases

In his email the e-mailer brought up **three phrases** that Ellen White used in the above quotation on what happened at the 1900 Indiana camp meeting. He

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claims that his analysis of these three phrases proves that Ellen White's testimony applies **almost exclusively to the original recipients** in 1900.

- The first phrase is “*as taking place*”
- The second phrase is “*would take place*”
- The third is “*the close of probation*”

As I read the email I wondered whether the author had **taken the time to examine** how Ellen White uses these three phrases **elsewhere in her writings** in order to be certain that his analysis was correct. I suspect that he did not because upon examination of **all her writings** it became clear to me that he attributed to Ellen White's phrases **meanings that she did not intend**. I have looked up **every single one** of her uses of these phrases on the Ellen G. White CD Rom and such uses do not square with the e-mailer's grammatical and syntactical interpretation. Let's examine them one by one.

The Expression “*as taking place*”

Here is his analysis of the expression ‘*as taking place*’:

“The ‘things you [Elder Haskell] have described as taking place in Indiana’ indicates a PRESENT tense, i.e., they were occurring AT THE TIME of Ellen White's writing, i.e., Oct 1900. The Spanish translator put them in the past (‘ocurrían’) which is a gross distortion.”

Upon closer scrutiny it will be found that the e-mailer's expression “gross distortion” is actually a gross misunderstanding. Contrary to what the e-mailer confidently states, the translator **did not** mistranslate a present tense into a **past tense**. As we shall shortly see the e-mailer errs on two counts. First, the expression ‘*as taking place*’ is not a present tense and, second, the translation ‘*ocurrían*’ is not a past tense.

The simple fact is that the **past** tense of the verb ‘*ocurrir*’ is not ‘*ocurrían*’ (such as the translator used) but rather ‘*ocurrieron*’. If Ellen White had used the verb construction ‘that **took** place’ (as in a **punctual** past) the translator would have been correct in translating ‘*que ocurrieron*’. But the wise translator realized that he could not translate the expression ‘*as taking place*’ with the punctual past tense ‘*ocurrieron*’ because Ellen White did not use the

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punctual past ‘that **took** place’. So the translator properly translated the English verb construction ‘as taking place’ with the Spanish verb ‘ocurrían’. The verb ‘ocurrían’ simply means ‘estaban ocurriendo’ (as a past process). In other words, the translator properly used what grammarians call the **past progressive** tense.

I did some research online and consulted with several English teachers and all the sources agree that the expression ‘as taking place’ is what grammarians call a **past progressive tense**. The definition of a past progressive is “an action that **was** in **progress** at **some point** in the **past**.” Although Ellen White does not use the specific helping verb ‘were’ with the expression ‘as taking place’, the context indicates that the verb is tacit in the grammatical construction. Thus Ellen White’s expression is to be understood as saying “as **were** taking place”.

A lifelong retired English teacher wrote me the following explanation about this expression:

*“The events you have described as **having** taken place . . .’ indicating that the events had **already taken place** by the time Haskell reported them to EGW. Alternatively, this could be worded, ‘The events you have described that **were** taking place . . .’ My ‘gut’ feeling is the events were most probably **over and done and not continuing** into the time of our pioneers’ correspondence (emphasis mine).”*

Additional evidence that the events were **not still occurring** when Ellen White wrote to Haskell on October 10 can be found in the fact that Ellen White wrote to Haskell: “the things **you have described** as taking place in Indiana.” And what were the things that Elder Haskell had described to Ellen White in his letter? Were they events that were **still transpiring** when Ellen White replied to Haskell? The answer is clearly ‘no’ because Haskell had simply reported in his letter what he had observed at the Indiana camp meeting. He was not describing what was still transpiring but rather the events that had **already occurred** and he had been an eyewitness to when he attended the camp meeting on September 13-23.

An examination of Ellen White's writings reveals that she was well acquainted with expressions such as 'are taking place' (present progressive), and 'will take place' (future) but she does not use these tenses in this statement. This is the only time in her writings where I was able to find that she uses the word combination 'as taking place . . . would take place'. However she does use both expressions ('as taking place' and 'would take place') individually in several places so we must go to those places to ascertain their meaning.

So let's look at the few other places where Ellen White uses the identical phrase 'as taking place' in order to ascertain if what the English teacher stated and what I researched is accurate.

Regarding the process of the investigative judgment Ellen White states:

*"In the parable of Matthew 22 the same figure of the marriage is introduced, and the investigative judgment is clearly represented **as taking place** before the marriage." GC 428*

Clearly Ellen White is using the expression 'as taking place' to describe a **past progressive** event (the investigative judgment) that transpired before the close of probation. When the marriage takes place at the close of probation the judgment will have already transpired **as a process in the past**. Ellen White could have said that the investigative judgment 'took place' before the marriage but this would have eliminated the idea that the judgment was a **process** that occurred in the past and was finished when the wedding took place.

Ellen White also described some meetings that **took place** after the General Conference Session in Minneapolis in 1888:

*"Scenes that **were** a shame to Christians have been presented to me, **as taking place** in the council meetings **held** after the Minneapolis meeting. The loud voice of dispute, the hot spirit, the harsh words, resembled a political meeting more than a place where Christians **were met** for prayer and counsel. These meetings **should have been dismissed** as an insult to heaven. The Lord **was** not revered as an honored guest by those assembled in council, and how could they expect divine light to shine upon them; how could they feel that the presence of Jesus*

***was** molding and fashioning their plans? The place of meeting **was** not **held** as sacred, but **was** **looked** upon as a common business place. Then how could those assembled receive an inspiration which would lead them to enthrone truth in their hearts, to speak words in the tender, loving spirit of the Master?" PH080 15*

In this statement Ellen White once more uses the past progressive 'as taking place' to describe several meetings that **had** transpired in the **past as a process** but had **already concluded** when she wrote this quotation. The meetings were not ongoing when she wrote—they had already concluded! You will notice that in this quotation Ellen White repeatedly uses the **past tense** in conjunction with the expression 'as taking place' to indicate that this was a process that took place in the past and had already concluded when she wrote.

A third quotation reveals the same past progressive use:

*"I wish to speak of some things that have been represented to me **as taking place** in assemblies of God's people. Some **have taken** offense at things entirely unworthy of notice, and **have dishonored** God by giving way to the feelings of the unsubdued heart. They **have misinterpreted** the truth, and **weakened** its influence. They have **strengthened** Satan's kingdom; for church-members who speak words that stir up strife are doing Satan's work much more effectively than his own subjects. Review and Herald, July 21, 1903*

Notice once again the number of times that Ellen White used past tense verbs with the past progressive 'as taking place'. Ellen White knew the difference between "as taking place" and "are taking place". Why did she not use "are taking place" in her Indiana statement if she meant to say that the events were still transpiring when she wrote to Elder Haskell on October 10, 1900?

But let's suppose, for the sake of argument, that her expression does mean "the things that are taking place" in Indiana (which is disproven categorically by an examination of her use of the expression in other places of her writings). Such a meaning would make no difference with regards to the e-mailer's argument because immediately after using the expression 'as taking place' she uses the future tense to describe events that were **still in the future** from the time that she wrote to Haskell. **Four times** she uses the helping verb 'will' to

describe what would happen **in the future** from the time that she wrote to Haskell. If she was referring to what was **still occurring** in Indiana we would expect her to have written to Elder Haskell:

*“The things you have described **as taking place** in Indiana, the Lord has shown me **would take place** just before the close of probation. Every uncouth thing **would** be demonstrated. There **would** be shouting, with drums, music and dancing. The senses of rational beings **would** become so confused that they cannot be trusted to make right decisions.”*

So, in the light of all the evidence from Ellen White’s writings the e-mailer’s contention that the expression ‘as taking place’ is a PRESENT tense has been proven wrong. The translator was correct after all! Let’s turn now to an examination of the expression ‘would take place.’

The Expression “would take place”

The email writer confidently states:

*“Likewise ‘would take place’ does not accept a connotation of ‘future’ such as ‘volverían a ocurrir’ [would occur again] because ‘would’ is a ‘conditional simple’ verb tense and **not future**. Moreover, the future tenses ‘se manifestará, habrá’ do not change the previous verb tenses because EGW was referring to events that were occurring in 1900 and which would likely continue to occur in the future, should the church not take the matter seriously.”*

I have already provided ample evidence from Ellen White’s writings themselves that the events at the Indiana camp meeting had **already** transpired (as a process) in the past from the point of time when she wrote to Elder Haskell on October 10, 1900.

But what about the expression ‘would take place’? Is the e-mailer correct in his assertion that “‘would’ is a ‘conditional simple’ verb tense and **not future**?” His assertion might be accepted as correct if Ellen White had **only** used the single word ‘would’. But she uses the word ‘would’ in a verbal construction so the entire verbal construction must be examined in order to ascertain the meaning she intended.

Further, is it accurate on the e-mailer's part to simply brush aside the three future tenses that follow the expression 'as taking place' (plus one before) under the unfounded assumption that "the future tenses 'se manifestará', 'habrá' do not change the previous verb tenses"?

And even further, is it accurate on his part to conjecture that Ellen White's use of the helping verb 'would' indicates that the events at Indiana would 'likely continue to occur in the future, should the church not take the matter seriously'?

Well, the best way to discover the answer to these questions is to examine how Ellen White used the expression 'would take place' in the rest of her writings. In other words, let Ellen White explain Ellen White. I assume that the e-mailer would agree that this is the proper exegetical procedure.

Contrary to the e-mailer's confident assertion, Ellen White uses the verbal construction 'would take place' 59 times in her published writings (on the EGW CD Rom) to describe events that would **unconditionally** transpire in the **future**. The following examples will show that when Ellen White uses the expression 'would take place' she is referring to events that **would occur** in the **future, not conditionally** but **in actuality**.

What did Jesus mean when He predicted that the apostles would do greater works than even He had done? Ellen White responds:

*"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto My Father." John 14:12 By this, Christ did not mean that the disciples would make more exalted exertions than He had made, but that their work would have greater magnitude. He did not refer merely to miracle working, but to all that **would take place** under the agency of the Holy Spirit." Acts of the Apostles, p. 22*

Are we to understand that in this promise of Jesus to the disciples 'would' is a 'conditional simple' verb tense and **not future**?

Concerning the events that are described in the book of Revelation Ellen White states:

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*“The events that **would take place** in the closing scenes of this earth's history were outlined before him [John]; and there he wrote out the visions he received from God.” Acts of the Apostles, p. 570*

And again:

*“There [on Patmos] he [John] wrote out the visions and revelations he received from God, telling of the things that **would take place** in the closing period of this earth's history.” Christ Triumphant, p. 312*

Was the fulfillment of John's prophecies in the book of Revelation **conditional** because Ellen White used the word 'would' in the verbal construction 'would take place'? Would the e-mailer still sustain that the word “‘would’ is a ‘conditional simple’ verb tense and **not future**”?

Ellen White also wrote about the future fulfillment of Daniel's prophecies:

*“No less a personage than the Son of God appeared to Daniel. Our Lord comes with another heavenly messenger to teach Daniel what **would take place** in the latter days” The Sanctified Life, p. 49*

Once again I ask: Is the word 'would' in the verbal construction 'would take place' “a ‘conditional simple’ verb tense and **not future**”?

When Jesus told the disciples about His upcoming sufferings he encouraged them with thoughts of the future:

*“He [Jesus] directed their minds [the disciples] from the scenes of sorrow before them to the mansions of heaven and the reunion that **would take place** in the kingdom of God.” Review and Herald, November 13, 1913*

Is the reunion of the apostles with Jesus in the kingdom of God conditional? Without intending to become redundant I ask the e-mailer: Is the word 'would' in the verbal construction 'would take place' “a ‘conditional simple’ verb tense and **not future**”?

When Samuel went to Jesse's house to anoint the shepherd boy David, we are told that the anointing was actually a prophetic ceremony that announced the future anointing of David as King of Israel:

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*“The sacred oil was put upon the brow of David by the high priest, for the anointing by Samuel was a prophetic ceremony of what **would take place** at the inauguration of the king.” ST June 15, 1888*

Does the word ‘would’ in the verbal construction ‘would take place’ indicate that the future anointing of David, as king was conditional?

Regarding the Pharisees Ellen White states:

*“They set spies on His track, to report His movements. They thought this unknown to Christ, but He was much more accurately acquainted with their movements than they were with His. He knew every step that **would be taken** and every event that **would take place**.” ST, February 8, 1899*

Are the expressions ‘would be taken’ and ‘would take place’ conditional simply because they use the helping verb ‘would’?

Regarding the events that Jesus predicted in Matthew 24 we are told:

*“With prophetic eye Christ looked down the stream of time to the **very end** of earth's history, and marked out with **prophetic pencil** the very things that **would take place** in these last days.” YI, November 18, 1897*

At the risk of sounding excessively redundant I ask once again: Were the events that Jesus predicted conditional simply because Ellen White used the word ‘would’?

Upon reading my response I am sure that the e-mailer will go to the writings of Ellen White to attempt to find exceptions that will justify his exegesis of Ellen White’s statement about Indiana and he is certainly welcome to do this as I have already done. But he will find nothing different than what I have found.

I did find 21 statements where Ellen White uses the expression ‘would take place’ in a **conditional** sense. But when she does, she always makes it **absolutely clear** that she is using the expression conditionally by using the word ‘would’ twice, by adding the conditional word ‘if’ or by adding the phrase ‘let there be’. Notice the following examples:

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*“**Let there be** light and love and cheerful song in the place of gloom, and what a change **would take place!**” 10MR 165*

*“Oh, that mothers and fathers **would** realize their responsibility and accountability before God! What a change **would take place** in society!” CG 141*

*“**If** in every church the young men and the young women would solemnly consecrate themselves to God, **if** they would practice self-denial in the home life, relieving their tired, careworn mothers, what a change **would take place** in our churches!” AH 486*

*“**If** each president would feel the necessity of diligent improvement of his talents in devising ways and means for arousing ministers to work as they should, what a change **would take place** in every Conference.” PH002 p. 21*

*“**If** the God-given responsibilities of saving souls ready to perish, **were** understood, old habits, traditionary sentiments that clog and hinder reformatory action, **would** be cut away from the heart and life, and a transformation **would take place** in character. PH080, p. 8*

*“**If** we dealt kindly and tenderly and compassionately with one another, loving others as Christ has loved us, what a change **would take place** in our world!” 2SAT, pl. 177*

Ellen White’s use of the verbal construction ‘would take place’ with regards to the Indiana camp meeting lacks any element of conditionality. It bears noting also that even though the verbal construction ‘would take place’ in the above examples is conditional, it is **not present** conditional but rather **future conditional!**

In conclusion, the e-mailer’s contention that the helping verb ‘would’ in the verbal construction ‘would take place’ “is a ‘conditional simple’ verb tense and **not future**” is proven incorrect by an examination of the entirety of Ellen White’s writings. There is simply no conditionality language in Ellen White’s Indiana camp meeting use of the expression ‘would take place.’

The Close of Probation

Perhaps the e-mailer's evidence will yield better results when we examine the expression 'the close of probation'.

Regarding Ellen White's understanding of the close of probation he states:

*"Further, in order to understand why Ellen White attached eschatological importance to the events in Indiana, we have to ask when she thought the 'close of probation' was near and whether or not this period was in a distant future or was occurring on her day. I believe this can be answered by reading what she wrote in 1889, eleven years before Indiana: "The days of our probation are **fast** closing. The end is **near**." (COL 319) Again, this was written 11 years before the events in Indiana! Thus the logical conclusion of the statement on the eschatology of the worship in Indiana is that those events were one more proof to her that the end was indeed near."*

If I understand the e-mailer's argument correctly what he is saying is that Ellen White believed that the events at the Indiana camp meeting served as evidence **to her** that the close of probation was 'even at the door' in her day and not in the distant future. But does his assertion tell the whole story? Once again we must take a look at **all** that Ellen White has written on the matter.

In the aftermath of the Indianapolis 1888 General Conference Session Ellen White did not seem to believe that what happened at Indiana was a sign that the close of probation was right around the corner. She stated in 1901 (one year after the Indiana camp meeting):

*"We may have to remain here in this world because of insubordination **many more years**, as did the children of Israel; but for Christ's sake, His people should not add sin to sin by charging God with the consequence of their own wrong course of action." Letter 184, 1901*

There is conclusive evidence that Ellen White knew that the close of probation would linger well beyond 1900. In the 1911 (ironically 11 years **after** the Indiana camp meeting) edition of The Great Controversy she stated:

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*“Solemn are the scenes connected with the closing work of the atonement. Momentous are the interests involved therein. The judgment is **now passing** in the sanctuary above. For many years this work has been in progress. **Soon**--none **know how soon**--it will pass to the cases of the living. In the awful presence of God our lives are to come up in review.” GC 490*

How could Ellen White have believed that the events at the Indiana camp meeting indicated that probation was about to close when the judgment of the living had not even begun in 1911? Even a cursory look at what Ellen White wrote in The Great Controversy reveals that she knew that several important prophetic events had not yet taken place in 1900. Among other things, the papacy had not yet healed from its deadly wound, the United States had not yet made an image of the beast and the national Sunday Law movement of 1888 had all but fizzled out. Concerning the Sunday law she stated in 1905:

*“Sooner **or later** Sunday laws will be passed. But there is much for God's servants to do to warn the people. This work has been greatly retarded by their having to wait and stand against the devisings of Satan, which have been striving to find a place in our work. **We are years behind.**” Review and Herald, February 16, 1905*

Does Ellen White have statements where she describes the imminence of the close of probation? Yes she does. But the use of the word ‘soon’ should not be taken to mean that Ellen White believed that probation would close shortly after the Indiana camp meeting. The apostle Paul warned the Thessalonians about being overtaken by the ‘soon’ close of probation and none of them are alive two thousand years later:

*“But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you. For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. For when they say, “Peace and safety!” then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape. But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should **overtake you** as a thief.” (1 Thessalonians 5:1-4)*

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Did Paul speak of the close of probation (the coming of the thief) as imminent in his day? Yes he did. Yet did Paul know full well that time would linger long beyond apostolic days? Yes he did and he explains this in 2 Thessalonians 2. Why, then did Paul make it sound like the close of probation was imminent in his day? The reason is that he was admonishing believers to always be ready in every generation. The idea of the imminence of probation's close in the New Testament has the function of keeping the church ever ready for the Lord's coming in each generation.

Another example is found in Revelation 22:10, 11. Here **Gabriel** speaks to John in the following terms:

*"And he said to me, "Do not seal the words of the prophecy of this book, for **the time is at hand**. He who is unjust, let him be unjust still; he who is filthy, let him be filthy still; he who is righteous, let him be righteous still; he who is holy, let him be holy still."*

Didn't Gabriel know that time would linger and probation would not close for centuries? Of course he did! But he gave this message because he wanted God's people always to live in expectancy in every generation. The warning was for the original recipients as well as for those who live in the end time.

At the close of the book of Revelation we find the following words spoken by none other than Jesus Himself:

"He who testifies to these things says, "Surely I am coming quickly".

Didn't Jesus know that his prediction to come quickly was going to take longer than 2000 years? Of course He knew!

Notice two more examples:

*"But the end of all things **is at hand**; therefore be serious and watchful in your prayers." (1 Peter 4:7)*

*"Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it; for **the time is near**." (Revelation 1:3)*

I believe that the imminence statements of Ellen White have the same purpose as these Biblical examples. She was admonishing God's people to be faithful and used imminence as a method to encourage God's people to be faithful.

One hundred and twelve years have passed since the Indiana camp meeting. If what happened in 1900 occurred just before the close of probation why are we here 112 years later? There are two possible answers to the question. Either Ellen White was wrong in believing that what happened at Indiana was a sign that the close of probation was right around the corner in 1900 or the email writer is wrong in assuming that she believed this.

Irrelevant to the Original Recipients

Toward the end of the e-mailer's communication he affirms:

"We must further ask ourselves: What would be the relevance to the Adventist church in 1900 if Ellen White was describing the events in Indiana as something that would happen in 1998, 2012 or 2054? Absolutely none. That's why the message had a very particular audience in mind, in 1900, the very same audience who needed to take a stand against the perfectionism and emotionalism of some of our members in Indiana at that time." "There's no need to distort her statements to make them relevant today."

I am puzzled by the e-mailer's argument. He seems to be suggesting that what Ellen White wrote about the Indiana camp meeting would be irrelevant to the original recipients if she was predicting similar events to take place in the future. As the writer sees it, what possible relevance would her statements have for those who were in Indiana if what she wrote applies to the church in 1998, 2012 or 2054? Perhaps my mind fails to grasp the logic of the e-mailer's argument or he did not carefully think this one through.

I am sure that the writer knows that it is common for Biblical writers to affirm that the record of past historical events was written, not only for the benefit of the church of the past but also for the benefit of the church of the future. Notice just two examples from the writings of the apostle Paul:

*"Now all these things [the events in the wilderness] happened to **them** [the Hebrews] as examples, and they were written for **our** [the recipients in Paul's*

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day] admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come.” (1 Corinthians 10:11)

“For whatever things **were written before** were written **for our learning**, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.” (Romans 15:4)

I am sure that the writer is well acquainted with Ellen White’s famous statement.

*“In reviewing our past history, having traveled over every step of advance to our present standing, I can say, Praise God! As I see what God has wrought, I am filled with astonishment, and with confidence in Christ as leader. We have nothing to fear for the **future**, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us and His teaching in our **past** history.” CET 204*

History is a master teacher because it has a tendency to repeat itself. A wise philosopher once stated: “Those who do not learn from the mistakes of history are bound to repeat them.” Thus Ellen White’s description of the historical events surrounding the 1900 Indiana camp meeting teach the end time church lessons that were intended to prevent a repetition of the mistakes of the past.

Ellen White is telling Elder Haskell that the events he witnessed at the Indiana camp meeting would be repeated again in our camp meetings **just before** the close of probation. Thus she is warning the church of the end time that it should be careful not to repeat the history of the past. In this way she is reproofing what happened at Indiana and using it as a warning for the church of the future. Thus, both the church of the past and the church of the future would be benefited. What Ellen White said to Haskell was relevant in her day because the church was facing the problem but it was also relevant to the end time because the problem would surface once again.

The e-mailer’s relevance argument is weak and would make irrelevant the remarks that Paul wrote to Timothy. In 1 Timothy 3:1-5 the apostle describes the condition of the church in his day. But Ellen White explains that these words were applicable to the condition of the church at the end of time as well (GC 444).

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The same could be said about 2 Timothy 4:1-4. Ellen White sees this as applying to the days of Paul as well as to the end time (LP 232, 324). I am sure that the e-mailer knows that prophets wrote not only for their time but to warn future generations by making reference to events of the past. Jesus did this with Matthew 24. Ellen White did it with Daniel 3. Says the Lord's servant:

*"The experience of the **past will be repeated**. **In the future**, Satan's superstitions will assume new forms. Errors will be presented in a pleasing and flattering manner. False theories, clothed with garments of light, will be presented to God's people. Thus Satan will try to deceive, if possible, the very elect. Most seducing influences will be exerted; minds will be hypnotized." Counsels to the Church, p. 323*

Ellen White Reads a Letter

Arthur White, Ellen White's grandson, offered this explanation in his monumental biography of his grandmother:

*"Ellen White was shown in Australia in January, 1900, what would take place. The strange work was just then developing in Indiana, and she was shown what would take place **at the camp meeting**. Thus she was prepared to speak of the matter when she came to the General Conference session in 1901." 5BIQ 104*

On April 17, 1901 Ellen White read a letter that she wrote to the brethren in Indiana. This led the conference president, R. S. Donnell to publicly repent and affirm his confidence in the Spirit of Prophecy.

*"Instruction has been given me in regard to the **late experience** of brethren in Indiana and the teaching they **have given** to the churches." Letter read to the General Conference ministers on April 17, 1901*

Notice that she does not say: "present experience" and "are giving". In English the expression 'the late' means something that came recently to an end but no longer exists. We use it, for example of someone who was alive and recently passed away as in 'the late president John F. Kennedy was slain in Dallas.'

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Again Ellen White said to the General Conference brethren:

*“But the **late experience** of brethren in Indiana **has** not been in accordance with the Lord’s instruction.”*

Notice once again that Ellen White does not say: “the **present** experience of the brethren in Indiana **is not** in accordance with the Lord’s instruction.”

And a third time:

*“The manner in which the meetings in Indiana **have been** carried on, with noise and confusion, does not commend them to thoughtful, intelligent minds.”*

In these three statements Ellen White makes it clear that in her letter to elder Haskell she was referring to what had occurred in the past. The events were not still occurring when she spoke. She returned from Australia in January of 1900 with the express purpose of dealing with the Indiana problem and thus she had at least 8 months to face the problem. The problem had already been resolved when she spoke at the General Conference session and there is no clear evidence to the contrary.

Wrongful Pneumatology or Doxology

The writer confidently states in his email that the problem at Indiana had little to do with music and everything to do with a wrongful pneumatology (doctrine of the Holy Spirit) and that the church has corrected the problem that took place at that camp meeting. In his own words:

*“This [correction] the church has done because emotionalism in worship has **little to do with music** and everything to do with a weak and distorted pneumatology.”*

I am more than puzzled by these remarks; in fact, I am perplexed. Has the problem of emotionalism and music in the church really been corrected? Is it accurate to state that ‘emotionalism in worship has little to do with music?’

Let’s answer each of these questions in turn.

I regularly travel to the five continents preaching and teaching and in my travels I have discovered that the problem of emotionalism and music is far from corrected. About four years ago I was an eyewitness to the following event:

I was invited to preach at a joint youth congress that was organized by a mission and a conference in a certain Latin American country. They had asked me to present a series on the prophetic message of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. I prepared a special series that I felt would engage the attention of the youth and made the nine-hour trip from Fresno.

The congress was held over a long weekend in a sporting arena in a delightful seaside town. On opening night I arrived at the arena early with high expectations. The youth began arriving in droves and soon the building was totally maxed out with what I estimated to be about one thousand youth. It appeared that this was going to be a wonderful spiritual weekend. But soon my expectations were blasted and I was deeply disappointed. Perhaps distressed would more properly describe my feelings.

To begin the program a group of young people came onto the highly elevated platform to lead out in CCM praise songs. They were dressed in blue jeans and t-shirts. On the platform there was a keyboard and electric guitars. With a deafening volume the band began to play its praise songs as the singers shouted out the words. The music was syncopated and rhythmic and was accompanied by different colored lights that undulated across the ceiling, the walls and the crowd. On the platform was a machine that spewed out a vapor that enveloped the platform in a mist and made it look like a bar room.

The youth in the stands clapped, danced, swayed, stomped, laughed, shouted whistled and shrieked. Most of the young people were not even singing but were rather talking, hugging each other and swaying to the music. If you think that I am stretching the truth about what went on, I still have a video that I took at this event to prove my assertions. I would state along with Elder Haskell's testimony about the Indiana camp meeting: *"I do not think I overdraw [exaggerate] it at all."*

The praise service lasted for a little more than an hour. The young people were whipped up into a frenzy that would not allow them to concentrate on an in-depth study of God's word. Finally just before nine o'clock the pastor who was in charge of the event told me that it was my turn but that I had to abbreviate my talk because it was late. At that point I asked myself, how can I preach in an environment where the youth are in such a state of frenzy? It was obvious that their hearts were not ready to receive the word so I decided to change my topic and preached a twenty minute sermon.

It was extremely difficult to preach in such an environment because the youth had little interest and there was no spirit of reverence. In fact, it took several minutes just to calm them down and even then while I was preaching they talked and were distracted. As this 'worship service' was transpiring I couldn't help but think: So Ellen White was right about what she predicted in 1900!

Here is another example of an event that took place in a large city in South America.

A few years ago I was invited to speak at Division-wide youth congress. Though the congress ended on Sabbath morning at the city's bullring, a concert was organized by a group of youth for Saturday night and was held in the same venue as the Sabbath morning worship service. Although the concert was not organized or sponsored by the Division, many of those who attended the congress also went to the concert, assuming that it was part of the programming because it was held in the venue.

A renowned soloist and a very well known singing group (both of them are on the list of supporters of HimnovaSión in their recently published e-book) presented the program. I did not attend the concert because I already knew the style of music that the artists were going to perform. However, two of my wife's nephews, who enjoy CCM, attended the concert and brought back a report.

As they told it, even they were amazed at the irreverent attitude of those who attended. They told me that girls came with gym suits that left very little to the imagination. They said that the volume was deafening, the youth danced in the

aisles, whistled, shouted, clapped, shrieked and climbed on the chairs. The music was a mixture of rock, jazz, and pop but with Christian lyrics.

Would anyone dare say that the music had nothing to do with the irreverent attitude and conduct of those who attended? The reaction of the mostly Adventist crowd was not due to a wrongful pneumatology but to the music that was presented. Does a holy God condone and accept this style of worship? I leave it to the reader to honestly answer this question.

The musical styles that were used at these and other events is living proof that Ellen White was right in predicting that what happened at Indiana would take place again in the future!

Ellen White's Letter to Haskell

A careful reading of Ellen White's letter to Elder Haskell reveals clearly that she was concerned about the **music style** as well as a wrongful pneumatology and theology. She leaves no doubt that the reason for the excitement, shouting and dancing was the music! Elder Haskell confirmed this when he stated:

*"There is a **great power** that goes with the movement that is on foot there. It would almost bring anybody within its scope, if they are at all conscientious, and sit and listen with the least degree of favor, **because of the music** that is brought to play in the ceremony." Stephen Haskell, Letter to Ellen G. White, September 25, 1900*

In her response to Haskell, Ellen White concurred with his assessment:

*"Better never have the **worship** of God blended with **music** than to use **musical instruments** to do the work which last January was represented to me would be brought into our camp **meetings**." 2SM 36*

*"Those things which have been in the **past** [at this point both the early Adventist experience and the Indiana camp meeting had already passed] **will be** in the **future**. Satan **will** make **music a snare** by **the way** in which it is conducted." 2SM 38*

*"Satan works amid the din and confusion of **such music**, which, **properly***

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conducted, *would be a praise and glory to God.” 2SM 37*

Thus Ellen White links a skewed pneumatology with a skewed doxology and worship. The modern Pentecostal movement clearly reveals that a wrong understanding of the Holy Spirit frequently leads to a wrongful use of music which translates into a rambunctious response in the worship service. And yet it is also true that a counterfeit pneumatology is not even needed in order for music to cause a questionable response in the hearers as can be seen by the Adventist worship services that I described earlier. The response of the youth in the bull ring concert and at the sports coliseum was not due to a wrong view of the Holy Spirit but rather to the music that was performed.

On the other side of the equation it is also correct to say that a proper understanding of the Holy Spirit will lead to a correct use of music which will in turn lead to a proper reverent response in the worship service. We use the expression: “where there is smoke there is fire.” Well, where there is dancing, shouting, whistling, etc there is a wrongful use of music. After all, *a capella* dancing is a rare phenomenon!

That the wrong kind of music creates an improper worship response can be seen by visiting Pentecostal churches or by watching TBN. What is it that causes the frenzied response of the crowd? The answer is, the music! If there was no CCM there would be no frenzy! And, as Ellen White states it, they attribute this frenzy to the work of the Holy Spirit!! Ellen White clearly affirms that the **wrongful use** of musical instruments was a problem at the Indiana camp meeting in 1900. And notice that she foresaw not only a problem at Indiana because she uses the plural ‘camp **meetings**’. As far as we know, there were no other camp meetings around 1900 that followed Indiana’s lead:

*“But last January the Lord showed me that erroneous theories and methods **would be brought** into our camp **meetings**, and that the history of the past would be repeated.” 2SM 37*

Some might assume that the future Ellen White was talking about in January of 1900 was what happened eight months later at Indiana. But in context this is only partially true. She was undoubtedly referring to what happened in early Adventist history as well as what happened at Indiana. But she was also

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clearly warning about similar events to take place in the future. Ellen White wrote to Haskell on October 10, 1900 a little over two weeks **after** the Indiana camp meeting had concluded:

*“Those things which **have been** in the **past will be** in the **future**. Satan **will** make music a snare by the way in which it is conducted.” 2SM 38*

When Ellen White wrote this statement **both** the events of early Adventist history and the events of the Indiana camp meeting were in the past. There is no way that this statement can be construed to mean that the two uses of the verb ‘will’ means ‘would’. I have already provided abundant evidence from Ellen White’s writings themselves that the events of Indiana had occurred as a past process and had already come to an end when Ellen White wrote her response to Elder Haskell.

Importance of Present Truth

Yet there is an even deeper issue involved here. Time and again Ellen White emphasizes that the purpose of our camp meetings is to present the third angel’s message to the world. She repeatedly underlines in her letter to Elder Haskell the importance of preaching Present Truth at our camp meetings and warns about the dangers of an improper worship style eclipsing the message. She clearly states that any worship style or music that detracts from this central purpose is unacceptable. Here are two examples:

*“... the enemy was trying to arrange matters so that the camp meetings, which have been the means of bringing the truth of the **third angel's message** before multitudes, should **lose their force and influence**.” 21MR 130*

*“This is an invention of Satan to cover up his ingenious methods for **making of none effect** the pure, sincere, elevating, ennobling, sanctifying truth **for this time**.” 21MR 128*

In short, the issue in 1900 was not only **theological** (‘holy flesh’, which was really an attack on the Biblical doctrine of sanctification) and **pneumatological** (a counterfeit concept of the Holy Spirit) but also

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doxological (an improper worship style and music). That is, the problem was related to the **kind of music** and **worship style** that accompanied a wrong view of the Holy Spirit.

Depreciation of Present Truth

The problem we face today is even more complex than the worship style and the music. I have found that those churches that use CCM styles also want the worship service to be composed mostly of praise music leaving little time for the sermon. Many of these churches don't want the Spirit of Prophecy to be quoted from the pulpit, they do not want anything said about our distinctive doctrines, particularly Bible prophecy and they do not want anything said about our distinctive Adventist lifestyle.

Thus the problem is more complex than just the music. Music has become an end in itself when it should be a means to an end. Music should be the support of the message rather than the message being the appendix to the music. The sermon should be the main course and the music should be the dessert but music has supplanted the message as the main course.

Wherever I travel I hear complaints about how the unique Adventist message has been eclipsed and devoured by music and musicians. In other words, music, instead of being a means to an end has become an end in itself. From being servant to the message, music has become its lord.

Hymns for the Occasion

A few years ago I was invited to speak at a camp meeting on the subject of worship. I underlined how the sermon should be central in the worship service and that music should support the sermon. After my presentation, a staunch advocate of CCM brought to my attention that in the heavenly worship scenes in the book of Revelation there is no sermon but rather just singing and praise. His point was that in heaven, praise music trumps the message. To be honest, I did not have as good answer to his argument until I sat down to study the matter.

When I studied the worship scenes in the book of Revelation I discovered that the heavenly beings don't sing just to sing. In other words, they don't just put a concert together with a collection of praise songs. Each hymn that they sing has a **central theme** and focus that is based on a **historical event** which has just transpired before they sing the song. So to speak, the live historical event is the sermon of the worship service and the music is the response to the historical event. Let's take the worship scenes one by one.

Hymn to the Creator

In Revelation 4 before Jesus arrived in heaven at His ascension the focus of heavenly worship was upon God the Father who was sitting on His throne. In harmony with the occasion, the music that the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures sang on this occasion centered on God the Father as the architect of creation:

*"You are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power; for **You created all things**, and by Your will they exist and were created." (Revelation 4:11)*

Death of Jesus on the Cross

When Jesus died on the cross, the worship music of the heavenly throng centered on the victory of Jesus over Satan:

*"Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven: "Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for **the accuser of our brethren**, who accused them before our God day and night, **has been cast down**." (Revelation 12:10; see also John 12:31-33)*

The Father's Acceptance of Christ's Sacrifice

When Jesus arrived in heaven at His ascension the theme of the choral music shifted from God the Father as the Creator to Jesus the Redeemer. At this point, Jesus returned from earth to heaven and He presented Himself before His Father with the wounds still fresh on His body. The four living creatures, the twenty-four elders and the angelic host sang a new song that had been composed for the occasion that centered on the event that was transpiring before their eyes:

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"You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation. You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth." Then I looked and heard the voice of many angels, numbering thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand. They encircled the throne and the living creatures and the elders. In a loud voice they sang: "Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!" (Revelation 5:9-12, NIV)

Taking over the Kingdom

When Jesus finally takes over the kingdoms of this world at the sounding of the seventh trumpet, the central theme song of the heavenly beings will focus on this great event:

"Then the seventh angel sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!" And the twenty-four elders who sat before God on their thrones fell on their faces and worshiped God, saying: "We give You thanks, O Lord God Almighty, the One who is and who was and who is to come, because You have taken Your great power and reigned."(Revelation 11:15, 16)

Victory over the Beast and his Image

When God's people finally gain the victory over the beast and his image they will sing the Song of Moses and the Lamb, the song of their deliverance. In this they will echo the song that was sung by Israel after their enemies had been swallowed up by the angry waves of the Red Sea:

"Great and marvelous are Your works, Lord God Almighty! Just and true are Your ways, O King of the saints! Who shall not fear You, O Lord, and glorify Your name? For You alone are holy. For all nations shall come and worship before You, for Your judgments have been manifested." (Revelation 15:3, 4)

Judging the Harlot

When God finally judges the harlot who has shed the blood of His people, the song of the heavenly choirs will bring to memory and reflect upon this event:

"After these things I heard a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, "Alleluia! Salvation and glory and honor and power belong to the Lord our God! 2 For true and righteous are His judgments, because He has judged the great harlot who corrupted the earth with her fornication; and He has avenged on her the blood of His servants shed by her." (Revelation 19:1, 2)

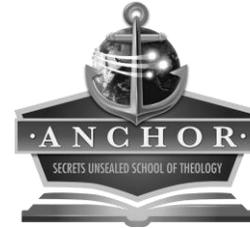
New Heavens and Earth

Finally, when the redeemed are in the Holy City and the wicked are outside, the song of the righteous will reflect that which they anticipate:

"And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away." (Revelation 21:3, 4)

The point is that our Seventh-day Adventist worship experience today must reflect our unique message and mission. The present truth message for today is that Jesus is in the most holy place and He is about to begin the judgment of the living. Should not our worship experience reflect this fact? Should not our theology determine our doxology? Should not present truth dictate what we sing in the worship service? If we worship like the Pentecostals and evangelicals, what reason do we have to exist? How can we say that our worship service is Adventist when we rarely sing or preach about what Jesus is doing presently in the heavenly sanctuary and what we should do in parallel fashion on earth.

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"Believe His Prophets: Prophetic Guidance in the Advent Movement"

by Pastor Stephen Bohr

LESSON # 14 - THE STORY OF THE SALAMANCA VISION as told by A. L. White

In the year 1890 general meetings were planned in the Atlantic district of our work, stretching up and down the Atlantic coast. It was before the days of union conferences. Elder A. T. Robinson had the work in charge and he invited Mrs. White to be present at these general meetings, which were to be conducted over a period of about three months' time. The first of these was held late in October at South Lancaster, Massachusetts. From day to day Ellen White bore her testimony, and when the series of meetings was over she was weary but took the cars for Salamanca, New York, where the next series of meetings was to be held.

While on the cars she caught a very severe cold. As she reached Salamanca and was taken to the Hicks home, where she was to stay, as a guest, Ellen White recorded in her journal (and we have it in her own handwriting in our vault) that never again must she attempt to attend meetings at this time of the year--it wasn't wise for one of her age to do so.

Miss Sarah McInterfer, her traveling companion and private secretary, was insisting that Mrs. White abandon her plans for the next two and a half months and go back to Battle Creek where She could have proper treatment. But already announcement had been made of the meetings that would be held. A large Protestant church had been rented for the occasion, and our believers were coming in from the churches in the southern part of western New York State and the northern part of Pennsylvania for this general meeting. And so Mrs. Mite determined to go forward with her appointments.

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The first of these appointments was on Sabbath afternoon, and she spoke to our people, although she was not well. The Sunday meeting was to be held in the opera house, for of course the church would be used by the congregation that owned it. It had been widely advertised that Mrs. White would speak. Although ill, she said she would go forward with the plans. But when Sunday morning came, she was not so well as she had been the day before. She could only speak in a whisper. From a human standpoint it seemed futile to attempt to hold such a meeting, especially with the general public. But Mrs. White assured the brethren that she would go forward with the appointment.

At an earlier time, on one occasion like this, she turned to her husband and said, "James, if I could only know that God would sustain me."

He asked, "Ellen, has the Lord ever failed you?"

She answered, "No."

And he assuringly answered, "The Lord will not fail you."

So now, stepping forward by faith, she went to the opera house that Sunday forenoon. The building was crowded. Ellen White was a good public speaker. She was well known in her day. And she stood before that audience and began to speak, but in just a whisper--then her voice broke clear, and she addressed them for an hour on her favorite subject, 'Christian Temperance' in its broad aspects, carrying it right back to the tables in the homes of the people.

Monday, Ellen White was not so well as she had been the day before. But the announcement had been made that she would speak on Monday afternoon at the church. The meetings were to close on Monday night so this would be the last time our people would hear her speak in connection with these meetings. At the appointed time she was helped to the place of meeting. She was assisted to the stand, and then supporting herself on the pulpit, she spoke to the people for about forty-five minutes. When she closed, the people crowded to the front to bid her farewell. They said: "Sister White, the Lord has given you a message for us this day." But in her journal (and we have it in her own

handwriting written the next day), she said, "I do not know upon what I spoke. I do not know one word I uttered. I was too ill."

And then in her discouragement and her illness she made her way to the Hicks home and to her room, thinking to pour out her soul before God and to plead for mercy, for strength, and for health. She reached her room and dropped on her knees by her chair, and then She tells us: "I had not uttered a word when the whole room seemed filled with a soft silvery light and my pain of disappointment and discouragement was removed. I was filled with comfort and hope--the peace of Christ."--Diary, Nov. 3, 1890.

And then she was rapt in a vision of God's glory. After the vision she cared not to sleep. She cared not to rest. She was healed--she was rested, and she lay on her cot that night, and as she did so, she thought of the words of Jacob of old, "surely the Lord was in this place, and I knew it not."

In the morning a decision must be given. Could she go on down to Virginia, where the next meetings were to be held at Stanley, or must she go back to Battle Creek, as her nurse insisted? Elder A. T. Robinson, who had the work in charge, and my father, called at her room to get her answer. They found her dressed and well--of course she would go on. She told of the healing. She told of the vision. She said, "I want to tell you about what was revealed to me last night. For in the vision I seemed to be in Battle Creek, and the angel messenger bade me, "Follow me." And then she hesitated. The scene was gone from her. She could not call it to mind.

They visited for a time, and then the men must leave to arrange for the transportation down through Pennsylvania and into Virginia, where the next meetings were to be held. But as they were leaving, she said, "Just a minute; want to tell you about the vision that was given to me last night. It had to do with important matters. In the vision I seemed to be in Battle Creek, and I was taken to the Review and Herald building, and the angel messenger bade me, 'Follow me'—it was gone again, as verily as Nebuchadnezzar's dream was gone from him as he tried to call it to mind. She could not remember.

The men hurried on to arrange for the transportation. And in good health, Mrs. White attended the meetings for the next two and a half months. In fact, later in that very week she spent the day visiting the Luray Caverns. When she went through the Caverns, she had in her hand a tin with three candles in it for light, and she did enjoy the day visiting those caves. I mention this that you may know she was in good health, healed completely from her illness.

In the days that followed she recorded in her journal that which she was not allowed to tell the men that day in Salamanca. (We have the handwritten record in our vault). Many things were revealed to her. But one scene particularly I think I shall bring to your attention. I shall read just a few sentences from this journal record to present to you the view that was given to her. It had to do with the American Sentinel. Now, the American Sentinel was to our work in the nineties what the Liberty magazine is today. It was a weekly journal then, published by the Pacific Press in New York City, devoted largely to religious liberty interests. I read from the journal:

"In the night season I was present in several counsels, and there I heard words repeated by influential men to the effect that if the American Sentinel would drop the words 'Seventh-day Adventist' from its columns, and would say nothing about the Sabbath, the great men of the world would patronize it; it would become popular, and do a larger work. This looked very pleasing. But what is the nature of the work that would be done to meet the world's ideas? These men could not see why we could not affiliate with unbelievers and non-professors to make the American Sentinel a great success."

"I saw their countenances brighten, and they began to work on a policy to make the Sentinel a popular success. The whole matter was introduced by men who needed the truth in the chambers of the mind and soul.

"This policy is the first step in a succession of wrong steps. The principles which have been advocated in the American Sentinel are the very sum and substance of the advocacy of the Sabbath, and when men begin to talk of changing their principles, they are doing a work which does not belong to them. 'Like Uzzah, they are attempting to steady the ark which belongs to God and is under His special supervision.'"

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I need not read more. You get the picture as she draws it here—a group of men discussing the editorial policy of one of our journals.

After finishing these general meetings, Mrs. White returned to her home in Battle Creek and prepared for the General Conference to be held on March 5-25, 1891. When the Conference opened, she was asked to speak to the workers each morning at half-past five. During the week she held these early-morning meetings. When they came to the Sabbath, she was asked to address the whole conference on Sabbath afternoon. She did so, and stood in the Battle Creek Tabernacle before four thousand of our workers and believers. She chose as her text, "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." The whole discourse was a powerful appeal for Seventh-day Adventists to hold forth the distinctive features of their faith.

Then she said in substance, "While at Salamanca, New York, matters of importance were revealed to me. In a vision of the night I seemed to be here in Battle Creek, and the angel messenger bade me, 'Follow me.'"—She hesitated. The scene was gone. She could not call it to mind. She continued to speak of how we must hold the distinctive features of our faith prominently in the front. Then she said, "I must tell you of the vision which was given to me at Salamanca; for in that vision important matters were revealed to me. In the vision I seemed to be in Battle Creek. I was taken to the Review and Herald office, and the angel messenger bade me, 'Follow me.'" Again she faltered—it was gone from her. She went on with her sermon, and a third time that afternoon she attempted to tell that vision. And again she was not allowed to tell it. But she said, "Of this, I shall have more to say later." She rounded out her sermon in about an hour's time, closed it nicely, and the meeting was dismissed. All had noticed that she was unable to call the vision to mind.

The president of the General Conference, Elder Olsen, came to her. "Sister Mite," he said, will you be with us in the morning?"

"No," she replied, "I'm weary, I've borne my testimony. You must make other plans for the morning meeting" and they did.

As Mrs. White returned to her home, she told the members of her family that she would not be attending the morning meeting. She was tired, and she was going to have a good rest. She was going to sleep in on Sunday morning, and plans were laid accordingly.

That night, after the close of the Conference session, a small group of men met in one of the 'offices in the Review and 'Herald building. At that meeting were representatives of the Pacific Press, who published the American Sentinel; and there were present also the representatives of the Religious Liberty Association. They met to discuss and settle a very -vexing question—the editorial policy of the American Sentinel. Someone locked the door, proposing that those doors would not be unlocked until the question was settled. Ten o'clock passed; eleven o'clock; twelve o'clock struck, and the men were still there—one o'clock, and they had reached no decision; two o'clock, and the doors were still locked, and the men were hard at it.

A little before three o'clock on Sunday morning the meeting ended in a deadlock, with the assertion on the part of the Religious Liberty men, that unless the Pacific Press would accede to their demands and drop the term "Seventh-day Adventist" and "the Sabbath" from the columns of that paper, they would no longer use it as the organ of the Religious Liberty Association. That meant killing the paper. They unlocked the door, and the men went to their rooms, went to bed, and went to sleep.

But God, who never slumbers or sleeps, sent His angel messenger to Ellen White's room at three o'clock that morning. She was aroused from her sleep and instructed that she must go into the workers' meeting at half-past five, and there she must present what was shown to her at Salamanca. She dressed, went to her bureau, took from it the journal in which she had made the record of what had been shown to her. As the scene came clearly to her mind, she wrote mare to go with it.

As the workers passed her home early Sunday morning, my father among others noticed there was a light in her room. "Strange," he said to the man with whom he was walking, "Mother was not planning to attend the meeting today. She seems to have changed her mind." He stepped into the house to see

what she was doing. He found her dressed and putting on her bonnet to go to meeting. She told her son that at three o'clock that morning she had been aroused from her sleep and instructed to go into the workers' meeting and present what was shown to her at Salamanca in the vision.

You may be assured that my father was interested. Five times he had heard her begin to tell it—five times she had been prevented.

They were just getting up from prayer in the Tabernacle as Mrs. White was seen coming in the rear door, a bundle of manuscripts under her arm. The president of the General Conference was the speaker, and he addressed her: "Sister White," he said, "We are happy to see you. Do you have a message for us?"

"Indeed I do," she said, and stepped to the front. Then she began right where she left off the day before. She told them that at three o'clock that morning she had been aroused from her sleep and instructed to go to the workers' meeting at half-past five and there present what had been shown to her at Salamanca, New York.

"In the vision," She said, I seemed to be in Battle Creek. I was taken to the Review and Herald office, and the angel messenger bade me, 'Follow me.' I was taken to a room where a group of men were earnestly discussing a matter. There was a zeal manifest, but not according to knowledge." She told of how they were discussing the editorial policy of the American Sentinel, and she said, "I saw one of the men take a copy of the Sentinel, hold it high over his head, and say, 'Unless these articles on the Sabbath and the second Advent come out of this paper, we can no longer use it as the organ of the Religious Liberty Association.'" Ellen White spoke for an hour, describing that meeting which had been shown to her in vision months before, and giving counsel based upon that revelation. Then she sat down.

The president of the General Conference did not know what to make of it. He had never heard of any such meeting. But they did not wait very long for an explanation; for a man stood up in the back of the room, and he began to speak:

"I was in that meeting last night." "Last night!"

Sister White remarked, "Last night!" I thought that meeting took place months ago, when it was shown to me in vision!"

"I was in that meeting last night, and I am the man who made the remarks about the articles in the paper, holding it high over my head. I am sorry to say that I was on the wrong side; but I take this opportunity to place myself on the right side." He sat down.

Another man stood to speak. It was the president of the Religious Liberty Association. Note his words: "I was in that meeting. Last night after the close of the Conference some of us met in my room in the Review office where we locked ourselves in and there took up and discussed the questions and the matter that has been presented to us this morning. We remained in that room until three o'clock this morning. If I should begin to give a description of what took place and the personal attitude of those in the room, I could not give it as exactly and as correctly as it has been given by Sister White. I now see that I was in error and that the position that I took was not correct. From the light that has been given this morning, I acknowledge that I was wrong."

Others spoke that day. Every man who was in the meeting the night before stood to his feet and bore his testimony, saying that Ellen White had accurately described the meeting and the attitude of those in the room. Before that meeting closed that Sunday morning, the Religious Liberty group were called together, and they rescinded the action they had taken only five hours before.

Now you may say: Why was it that Ellen White was not allowed to tell the vision when five times she tried to tell it. If she had told it, it would have been said that it was not true. No such meeting had taken place. If the counsel that was sent out by her in her manuscripts, based upon this revelation, but not making mention of this particular view, had been followed, the meeting never would have been held. If the counsel given that Sabbath afternoon of how they must hold the light high at the time when Ellen White tried to tell the vision

and was three times prevented--if that counsel had been followed, the meeting never would have been held.

But somehow the men thought they knew better. You know how it is—some say: "Well, perhaps Sister White did not understand," or "We are living in a different day now," or "That counsel applied years ago but it doesn't fit now." You know how we do at times, and so did they in 1891. And then God, in His own time and in His own way, made it clear that it was His work; He was guiding; He was guarding; He had His hand upon the wheel. Ellen White tells us God "has often permitted matters to come to a crisis, that His interference might become marked. Then He has made it manifest that there is a God in Israel." Testimonies, Vol. 9, p. 92

Test #11: Reliability of the health science information

Ellen White was not a scientist and yet her counsels have been confirmed by medical science. Let's take a few examples:

Tobacco is a deadly poison:

In the days of Ellen White there were no scientific studies on the deleterious effects of smoking on health. Rather, some physicians were prescribing tobacco for pulmonary congestion. For example, one of our most respected pioneers, John Loughborough, went to the doctor because of pulmonary congestion and the doctor suggested that he smoke two cigarettes a day. In spite of all this misinformation, Ellen White wrote with great certainty:

*"Tobacco is a slow, insidious, but most **malignant poison**. In whatever form it is used, it tells upon the constitution; it is all the more dangerous because its effects are slow and at first **hardly perceptible**. It excites and then paralyzes the nerves. It weakens and clouds the brain. Often it affects the nerves in a more powerful manner than does intoxicating drink. It is subtler, and its effects are **difficult to eradicate from the system**. Its use excites a **thirst for strong drink** and in many cases lays the foundation for the liquor habit." Counsels to the Church, p. 103*

It is worthy of note that the medical world did not conclude that smoking tobacco was dangerous until the early 1950's. Today medical studies have

shown that second hand smoke can be as deleterious as first hand smoke. This is why in the last 30 years governments have declared war on the tobacco companies.

The Cancer Virus

Ellen White, **long before medical science** discovered that a virus causes cancer, stated as much:

*“Flesh was never the best food; but its use is now doubly objectionable, since disease in animals is so rapidly increasing. Those who use flesh foods little know what they are eating. Often if they could see the animals when living and know the quality of the meat they eat, they would turn from it with loathing. People are continually eating flesh that is filled with tuberculous and cancerous **germs**. Tuberculosis, cancer, and other fatal diseases are thus communicated.” MH 313*

It wasn't until **1956** that Nobel prize-winning physician **Wendell Stanley** of the University of California provided definitive evidence that cancer is indeed caused by a germ or virus. How did Ellen White know this information long before medical science discovered it? Was it a lucky guess or did God reveal it to her?

Birth defects

In **Patriarchs and Prophets** Ellen White affirmed that the intemperate habits of parents are linked with birth defects, a fact that has been confirmed by geneticists:

*“To a great degree parents are responsible not only for the **violent passions and perverted appetites** of their children but for the **infirmities** of the thousands born deaf, blind, diseased, or idiotic.” PP 561*

She further states:

*“Physicians, by administering their drug-poisons, have done very much to increase the depreciation of the race, physically, mentally, and morally. Everywhere you may go you will see **deformity, disease and imbecility**, which in very many cases can be traced directly back to the **drug poisons**, administered by the hand of a doctor, as a remedy for some of life's ills. The so-called remedy has fearfully*

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proved itself to the patient, by stern suffering experience, to be far worse than the disease for which the drug was taken.” 2SM 442, 443

Why are physicians today very careful about prescribing drugs to pregnant women? Simply because they have discovered what God revealed to Ellen White long ago.

The Electrical Brain

In several places in her writings Ellen White affirms that the brain and the nervous system function on the basis of electrical currents:

*“The system is vitalized by the **electrical force** of the brain to resist disease.” CH 181*

*“There are kings and generals who conquered nations, valiant men who never lost a battle, proud, ambitious warriors whose approach made kingdoms tremble. In death these experienced no change. As they come up from the grave, they **resume the current of their thoughts** just where it ceased. They are actuated by the same desire to conquer that ruled them when they fell.” GC 664*

*“Whatever disturbs the circulation of the **electric currents** in the nervous system lessens the strength of the vital powers, and the result is a deadening of the sensibilities of the mind.” Child Guidance, p. 447*

*“The **electric power of the brain**, promoted by mental activity, vitalizes the whole system, and is thus an invaluable aid in resisting disease. This should be made plain.” Education, p. 197*

*“God endowed man with so great **vital force** that he has withstood the accumulation of disease brought upon the race in consequence of perverted habits, and has continued for six thousand years. This fact of itself is enough to evidence to us the strength and electrical energy that God gave to man at his creation . . . If Adam, at his creation, had not been endowed with twenty times as much vital force as men now have, the race, with their present habits of living in violation of natural law, would have become extinct.” CC 21*

“Every one who violates the laws of health must some time be a sufferer to a

greater or less degree. God has provided us with constitutional force, which will be needed at different periods of our lives. If we recklessly exhaust this force by continual over taxation, we shall sometime be losers. Our usefulness will be lessened, if not our life itself destroyed.” Counsels on Education, p. 166

Discoveries by Hans Selye and Paul Tournier have confirmed that man has a constitutional force that can be spent recklessly or carefully.

Prenatal Influences

In **1905** Ellen White wrote about prenatal influences of parents upon their children:

*“The physical conditions of the parents, their dispositions and appetites, their mental and moral tendencies, are, to a greater or less degree, **reproduced in their children.**” The Ministry of Healing, p. 371*

The study of genetics has proved beyond a shadow of a doubt that Ellen White was right!

Masturbation

Many poke fun at Ellen White’s remarks about the **detrimental effects of masturbation** upon the physical and mental nature (not to mention the spiritual as well!!). The enemies of Ellen White affirm that she was seriously misinformed when she wrote that the habitual practice of this vice would cause mental illness. Here are a couple of her statements:

*“Your children have practiced **self-abuse** until the draft upon the brain has been so great, especially in the case of your eldest son, that their minds have been **seriously injured**. The brilliancy of youthful intellect is **dimmed**. The moral and intellectual powers have become **weakened**, while the baser part of their nature has been gaining the **ascendancy**. For this reason your son turns with loathing from religious things. He has been **losing his power of self-restraint**, and has less and **less reverence** for sacred things, and **less respect** for anything of a spiritual character.” 2T 392*

*“What little intellect he has left is of a low order. If he continues in this **vicious practice** he will eventually become **idiotic**. Every indulgence of children who*

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*have attained their growth is a terrible evil and will produce terrible results, enervating the system and **weakening the intellect**. But in those who indulge this corrupting vice before attaining their growth, the evil effects are more plainly marked, and recovery from its effects is more nearly hopeless. The frame is weak and stunted; the muscles are flabby; the eyes become small, and appear at times swollen; the memory is treacherous, and becomes sievelike; and inability to concentrate the thoughts upon study increases.” Testimonies for the Church, volume 2, p. 402*

Was Ellen White right when she said that masturbation affects the mental powers even to the point of leading someone to be idiotic? Let’s see what two prominent physicians have to say about the matter:

Oxford University teacher, Dr. David Horrobin, M. D., Ph. D., Zinc, Vitabooks, Inc., 1981, p. 8:

“The effect of zinc deficiency has particularly profound effects on the male, because extraordinary amounts of zinc are found in the testicles and the prostate gland. . . The amount of zinc in semen is such that one ejaculation may get rid of all the zinc that can be absorbed from the intestines in one day.”

*“In humans, among the most consistent effects of zinc deficiency are changes in mood and behavior. There is **depression**, extreme irritability, apathy and even in some circumstances, behavior which looks like **schizophrenia**. . . It is even possible, given the importance of zinc to the brain, that **19th century moralists were correct** when they said that repeated masturbation could **make one mad!** Similarly, the high livers were also correct when they said that a diet rich in oysters was necessary to compensate for **excessive sexual indulgence**.”*

Dr. Carl Pfeiffer of Harvard University:

*“We hate to say it but in a zinc-deficient adolescent, sexual excitement and excessive masturbation might **precipitate insanity**.” Carl Pfeiffer, Ph. D., M. D., Zinc and other Micronutrients, Keats Publishing, Inc. 1978, p. 45*

What more can we say? We could study about what Ellen White wrote concerning the use of flesh food, salt, sugar, fat, spices. Her counsels on diet have been confirmed over and over again by medical science. How did she

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know about these things with two and a half years of primary education? Were they lucky guesses? Was she just shooting in the dark hoping that she would hit the target?

Test #12: The Integrity of the Prophet's Writings

On repeated occasions during her lifetime Ellen White was accused by those who doubted her prophetic of being influenced by others to write her testimonies. She was accused of deriving her information on education from **Dr. Bell**, her ideas on health from **Dr. Kellogg** and **Drs. Trall and Jackson**, her material on the life of Christ from **William Hanna** and **Alfred Edersheim**, her ideas on church organization from **James White** and **G. I. Butler** and her historical remarks in **The Great Controversy** from **Wylie and D'Aubigne**. In more recent time individuals such as Ronald Numbers, Walter Rea and Don McAdams have accused her of 'borrowing' much of her material from others.

These accusations should not surprise us because in Biblical times the same criticism was leveled against God's messengers. In **2 Chronicles 18** we find an interesting story where King Ahab's servant attempted to influence Micaiah, the Lord's prophet, to give the king a positive message:

*"Therefore please let your word be like the word of one of them [of the false prophets], **and speak encouragement.**"*

Micaiah responded:

"As the LORD lives, whatever my God says, that I will speak" (verses 12, 13).

True prophets always deliver God's message as it comes out of the mouth of God. It bears noting that when Jeremiah was also accused of being influenced. When the prophet told King Azariah not to go down into Egypt, he was accused of being influenced by his scribe, Baruch:

"Now it happened, when Jeremiah had stopped speaking to all the people all the words of the LORD THEIR God, for which the LORD THEIR God had sent him to them, all these words, ² that Azariah the son of Hoshai, Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the proud men spoke, saying to Jeremiah, "You speak falsely! The LORD OUR God has not sent you to say, 'Do not go to Egypt to dwell there.' ³ But

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Baruch the son of Mariah has set you against us, to deliver us into the hand of the Chaldeans, that they may put us to death or carry us away captive to Babylon." (Jeremiah 43:1-3)

It is undeniable that Ellen White was acquainted with the health concepts that were in vogue in her time but she did not parrot their ideas without divine guidance. The fact is that Ellen White disagreed with some of the health concepts of the reformers of her time.

Let's take, for example, the use of salt. The White family had great respect for Dr. Trall. In fact they had so much respect for him that they sponsored Dr. John Harvey Kellogg in 1862 to take a course from Dr. Trall. If anyone would be able to influence Ellen White it would be Dr. Trall! But Ellen did not support Dr. Trall's concepts *carte blanche*. In the July 1869 issue of The Health Reformer (our monthly health journal) there was a two page Q&A section with questions and answers provided by Dr. Trall. One of the questions was whether it was healthful to eat a little salt. Dr. Trall answered categorically that **salt is a poison** and should not be used at all. Did Ellen White merely parrot Dr. Trall's views on the use of salt?

*"I use **some salt**, and always have, because from the light given me by God, this article, in the place of being deleterious, is actually **essential for the blood**. The whys and wherefores of this **I know not**, but I give you the instruction as it is given me." Counsels on Diet and Foods, p. 344*

It is noteworthy that Ellen White did not know the reason why salt was necessary. Modern science has shown that a little salt is absolutely necessary for **good blood chemistry**. So, if salt is so important for the blood, should we use a lot of it? No. In 1884 Ellen White wrote: "*Do not eat largely of salt*" (The Review and Herald, July 29, 1884).

Ellen White was very cautious about reading the health counsels of others:

"As I introduced the subject of health to friends where I labored in Michigan, New England, and in the State of New York, and spoke against drugs and flesh meats, and in favor of water, pure air, and a proper diet, the reply was often made, "You speak very nearly the opinions taught in the Laws of Life, and other

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publications, by Drs. Trall, Jackson, and others. Have you read that paper and those works?" My reply was that I had not, neither should I read them till I had fully written out my views, lest it should be said that I had received my light upon the subject of health from physicians, and not from the Lord. And after I had written my six articles for How to Live, I then searched the various works on hygiene and was surprised to find them so nearly in harmony with what the Lord had revealed to me. And to show this harmony, and to set before my brethren and sisters the subject as brought out by able writers, I determined to publish "How to Live," in which I largely extracted from the works referred to." The Review and Herald, October 8, 1867

What about other counsels of individuals and institutions?

"You blame me for not reading your package of writings. I did not read them neither did I read the letters that Dr. Kellogg sent. I had a message of stern rebuke for the publishing house, and I knew that if I read the communications sent to me, later on, when the testimony came out, you and Dr. Kellogg would be tempted to say, **I gave her that inspiration.**" Letter 301, 1905

"Those who have disregarded the messages of warning have lost their bearings. Some, in their self-confidence, have dared to turn from that which they knew to be truth, with the words, "Who has told Sister White?" These words show the measure of their faith and confidence in the work that the Lord has given me to do. They have before them the result of the work that the Lord has laid upon me, and if this does not convince them, no arguments, no future revelations, would affect them. The result will be that God will speak again in judgment as He has spoken heretofore." Review and Herald, May 19, 1903, p. 8. {3SM 62.1}

"Some are ready to inquire: "Who told Sister White these things?" They have even put the question to me: "Did anyone tell you these things?" I could answer them: "Yes; yes, the angel of God has spoken to me." But what they mean is: "Have the brethren and sisters been exposing their faults?" For the future, I shall not belittle the testimonies that God has given me, to make explanations to try to satisfy such narrow minds, but shall treat all such questions as an insult to the Spirit of God. God has seen fit to thrust me into positions in which He has not placed any other one in our ranks. He has laid upon me burdens of reproof that He has not given to any other one." 3T, pp. 314, 315, 3SM 62, 63

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Between the years **1885 and 1887** Ellen White worked in Europe. While she was visiting Stockholm she wrote in her diary:

“Brother E suggests that it would please the people if I speak less about duty and more in regard to the love of Jesus. But I wish to speak as the Spirit of the Lord shall impress me. The Lord knows best what this people needs.” Selected Messages, volume 3, p. 64

In 1902 Dr. John Harvey Kellogg thought that he could influence Ellen White to support his sanitarium building projects. If there was a person in the denomination who could have influenced Ellen White it was Dr. Kellogg. The White family and the Kellogg family had grown up together. James and Ellen White sent John Harvey to medical school. Dr. Kellogg supported Ellen White’s health reform principles. All of these factors could have played a role in successfully influencing Ellen White. But it was not to be. Some background might be helpful.

In 1901 Elder A. G. Daniells was elected president of the General Conference. In 1902 Elder Daniells planned a health council in Europe and invited Dr. Kellogg to be one of the presenters.

After the council Dr. Kellogg started searching in England for land where he could build a sanitarium. Ellen White had continually admonished Dr. Kellogg that we needed small medical institutions and Dr. Kellogg believed that it was time to set up the medical work in Europe. He found a plot of land and sent a telegram to Elder Daniells who was in Germany at the time inviting him to come and check out the land.

Soon after receiving the telegram Elder Daniells traveled to England and checked out the land. Daniells was impressed. According to Kellogg the land could be purchased for around \$30,000 to \$40,000. Daniells told Kellogg that he liked the land and then asked him where he was going to get the money. Kellogg replied:

“I’ll get the money from the General Conference.”

At that time the General Conference was practically bankrupt. It had more

debts than income. Up till that time the organized work had not operated on a budget. It had borrowed money to send missionaries overseas. Another reason for its indebtedness was that Dr. Kellogg had exerted great influence to convince the General Conference to borrow money for his health institutions in the United States.

But Elder Daniells had already indicated that the General Conference could not continue to operate in this way. He informed Dr. Kellogg that the General Conference did not have the money to purchase the property. He told him:

“Dr. when you come up with the money we will be willing to purchase the property.”

Dr. Kellogg replied:

“We will get the money from the General Conference” to which Elder Daniells replied: *“No, John. The General Conference does not have the money and we can’t continue to incur debts. When you have the money you will be able to go forward with your plans”* to which Kellogg retorted: *“I will get the money from the General Conference, you’ll see.”*

Shortly thereafter the two men parted ways but not on the best terms. Daniells returned to Germany and Kellogg took a ship to New York and then traveled to Battle Creek.

As he traveled, Kellogg planned his strategy. He knew that Ellen White placed great emphasis upon the medical missionary work and therefore he was sure that he could influence her to support his project and help Elder Daniells see the light. So he decided to write Ellen White a letter presenting his project in the most positive light and explaining its marvelous potential to expand the medical missionary work. He explained that the only thing that stood in the way was the intransigent attitude of Elder Daniells.

When Kellogg arrived in Battle Creek he called his secretary and started dictating his letter. When he got to page 10 he was just beginning. When he got to page 20 he was just warming up. Finally on page 71 he signed his name and sent the letter to Ellen White who was living in Elmshaven, California. He left nothing out of the letter that could possibly influence Ellen White to

support him. He suggested that she needed to take a firm stand against Elder Daniells for being so unreasonable.

After a short time Elder Daniels returned from Europe and when he arrived in his office at the General Conference headquarters, his secretary, who was good friends with Dr. Kellogg's secretary, told him about the 71-page letter. As Elder Daniells' secretary was telling him about the contents of the letter Elder Daniells explained that he could feel his blood pressure rising. He said to himself: "This is not right. I can't just let this stand." At the end of the day Daniells returned home and took some sheets of paper saying to himself: "I must tell Ellen White my side of the story."

He wrote one page, then another and when he was beginning the third page he thought to himself: "What am I doing? If Ellen White is God's prophet I don't need to tell her anything about this," so he ripped up the pages and threw them into the wastebasket. He didn't say anything to anyone but his heart he wondered: "What will Ellen White say in a few weeks when I see her at the General Conference Session in Oakland?"

The time for the General Conference Session came. Elder Daniells crossed the continent and arrived in the city of Oakland. When he met Ellen White he saw that Dr. Kellogg's letter had not influenced her in the least. She said: "*Elder Daniells we have a crisis. Every man must abide by his principles. We can't give in now.*"

Dr. Kellogg was extremely angry when he found out that he had not been able to influence God's prophet. With ire in his voice Dr. Kellogg said to Daniells:

"You think you own the General Conference? Just wait till you come back to Battle Creek and I will show you who owns the General Conference."

A short time later, Kellogg organized a medical missionary congress in Battle Creek with three times more delegates than those who had attended the General Conference in Oakland in 1903. But the important point to remember in this story is that Ellen White could not be influenced by men contrary to God's will.

In 1906 Ellen White wrote:

*"There are those who say, "Someone manipulates her writings." **I acknowledge the charge.** It is One who is mighty in counsel, One who presents before me the condition of things. Letter 52, 1906, p. 9. (To Brother and Sister Farnsworth, January 29, 1906.)*

Some in the church have accused Ellen White's secretaries of manipulating and changing her writings but there is no evidence of this. In fact Ellen White adamantly denied it. She stated:

*"My views were written independent of books or of the opinions of others."
Manuscript 7, 1867 3SM 282*

The Gift Surfaced at the Right Time

The key text is Joel 2:28-31. The prophetic gift was to reappear in the church in the context of the darkening of the sun, the moon looking like blood, the falling of the stars and the Great Earthquake. Revelation 6:12, 13 adds details to this scenario. The Great Earthquake took place in Lisbon in **1755**. The darkening of the sun and the moon looking like blood took place in **1780** and the falling of the stars in **1833**. This means that we were to expect the appearance of the prophetic gift in the church shortly after these signs.

The chronological sequence of Revelation 12 also helps us pinpoint the period when the gift would reappear. The sequence of historical events in Revelation 12 is as follows:

- The woman with the child in her womb: The Old Testament Church
- The birth of the child (The Birth of Jesus)
- The catching up of the child (the ascension of Jesus to heaven)
- The dragon's ten horns (the ten divisions of the Roman Empire)
- The woman's flight to the wilderness (1260 years of papal oppression)
- The earth helping the woman (The rise of the United States)
- The final Remnant have the Testimony of Jesus

It is clear that the Testimony of Jesus is one of the characteristics of the final

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remnant and the Testimony of Jesus is the Spirit of Prophecy (Revelation 19:10; 22:8, 9)

Some have stated that after the apostolic era there would be no more prophets. This idea is strange indeed. The Bible teaches that the gift of prophecy will be in the church until the establishment of Christ's everlasting kingdom (See Romans 12:4-8; 1 Corinthians 1:4-7; 12:10; 27, 28; 13:8-13; chapter 14; Ephesians 4:11-13). It would indeed be strange for God to leave His church, in the final days of earth's history, with the greatest dangers and deceptions without any special guidance.

Room to Doubt

Ellen White has made it clear that God will not remove every opportunity to doubt with regards to the inspiration of Scripture and her writings. She stated:

"Satan has ability to suggest doubts and to devise objections to the pointed testimony that God sends, and many think it a virtue, a mark of intelligence in them, to be unbelieving and to question and quibble. Those who desire to doubt will have plenty of room. God does not propose to remove all occasion for unbelief. He gives evidence, which must be carefully investigated with a humble mind and a teachable spirit, and all should decide from the weight of evidence." "God gives sufficient evidence for the candid mind to believe; but he who turns from the weight of evidence because there are a few things which he cannot make plain to his finite understanding will be left in the cold, chilling atmosphere of unbelief and questioning doubts, and will make shipwreck of faith." Testimonies for the Church, volume 5, pp. 675, 676

"One thing is certain: Those Seventh-day Adventists who take their stand under Satan's banner will first give up their faith in the warnings and reproofs contained in the Testimonies of God's Spirit." Selected Messages, volume 3, p. 84

"The very last deception of Satan will be to make of none effect the testimony of the Spirit of God. "Where there is no vision, the people perish" (Proverbs 29:18). Satan will work ingeniously, in different ways and through different agencies, to unsettle the confidence of God's remnant people in the true testimony." Selected Messages, volume 1, p. 48

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"The enemy has made his masterly efforts to unsettle the faith of our own people in the Testimonies . . . This is just as Satan designed it should be, and those who have been preparing the way for the people to pay no heed to the warnings and reproofs of the Testimonies of the Spirit of God will see that a tide of errors of all kinds will spring into life." Selected Messages, volume 3, p. 83 (1890)

"It is Satan's plan to weaken the faith of God's people in the Testimonies. Next follows skepticism in regard to the vital points of our faith, the pillars of our position, then doubt as to the Holy Scriptures, and then the downward march to perdition. When the Testimonies, which were once believed, are doubted and given up, Satan knows the deceived ones will not stop at this; and he redoubles his efforts till he launches them into open rebellion, which becomes incurable and ends in destruction." Testimonies for the Church, volume 4, p. 211

"Many who have backslidden from the truth assign as a reason for their course that they do not have faith in the Testimonies . . . The question now is: Will they yield their idol which God condemns, or will they continue in their wrong course of indulgence and reject the light God has given them reproving the very things in which they delight? The question to be settled with them is: Shall I deny myself and receive as of God the Testimonies which reprove my sins, or shall I reject the Testimonies because they reprove my sins?" Testimonies for the Church, volume 5, p. 675

"In many cases the Testimonies are fully received, the sin and indulgence broken off, and reformation at once commences in harmony with the light God has given. In other instances sinful indulgences are cherished, the Testimonies are rejected, and many excuses which are untrue are offered to others as the reason for refusing to receive them. The true reason is not given. It is a lack of moral courage--a will, strengthened and controlled by the Spirit of God, to renounce hurtful habits." Testimonies for the Church, volume 5, p. 675

"Satan has ability to suggest doubts and to devise objections to the pointed testimony that God sends, and many think it a virtue, a mark of intelligence in them, to be unbelieving and to question and quibble. Those who desire to doubt will have plenty of room. God does not propose to remove all occasion for

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unbelief. He gives evidence, which must be carefully investigated with a humble mind and a teachable spirit, and all should decide from the weight of evidence." "God gives sufficient evidence for the candid mind to believe; but he who turns from the weight of evidence because there are a few things which he cannot make plain to his finite understanding will be left in the cold, chilling atmosphere of unbelief and questioning doubts, and will make shipwreck of faith." Testimonies for the Church, volume 5, p. 675

Various attitudes toward the Testimonies

Ellen White wrote about the various attitudes toward the Testimonies:

"Soon every possible effort will be made to discount and pervert the truth of the testimonies of God's Spirit. We must have in readiness the clear, straight messages that since 1846 have been coming to God's people.

*There will be those once united with us in the faith who will search for **new, strange doctrines**, for something odd and sensational to present to the people. They will bring in all conceivable fallacies, and will present them **as coming from Mrs. White**, that they may beguile souls . . .*

*Those who have treated the light that the Lord has given as a **common thing** will not be benefited by the instruction presented.*

*There are those who will **misinterpret the messages** that God has given, in accordance with their spiritual blindness.*

*Some will yield their faith, and will **deny the truth of the messages**, pointing to them as falsehoods.*

*Some will **hold them up to ridicule**, working against the light that God has been giving for years, and some who are weak in the faith will thus be led astray.*

*But others will be **greatly helped** by the messages. Though not personally addressed, they will be corrected, and will be led to shun the evils specified . . . " 1SM 41, 42*

Ellen White described the process that many follow toward unbelief:

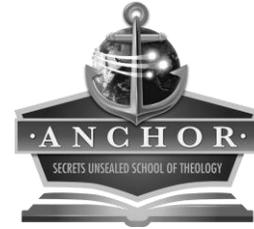
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*"It is Satan's plan to weaken the faith of God's people in the Testimonies." "Satan knows how to make his attacks. He works upon minds [1] **to excite jealousy and dissatisfaction** toward those at the head of the work. The [2] **gifts are next questioned**; then, of course, they have but little weight, and instruction given through vision is disregarded." [3] "**Next follows skepticism** in regard to the vital points of our faith, the pillars of our position, [4] then doubt as to the Holy Scriptures, and [5] then the downward march to perdition. When the Testimonies, which were once believed, are doubted and given up, Satan knows the deceived ones **will not stop at this**; and he redoubles his efforts till he launches them into **open rebellion**, which becomes **incurable** and ends in destruction." "By giving place to doubts and unbelief in regard to the work of God, and by cherishing feelings of distrust and cruel jealousies, they are preparing themselves for **complete deception**. They rise up with bitter feelings against the ones who dare to speak of their errors and reprove their sins." Testimonies for the Church, volume 5, p. 672*

"I saw the state of some who stood on present truth, but disregarded the visions--the way God had chosen to teach in some cases, those who erred from Bible truth. I saw that in striking against the visions they did not strike against the worm--the feeble instrument that God spake through--but against the Holy Ghost. I saw it was a small thing to speak against the instrument, but it was dangerous to slight the words of God. I saw if they were in error and God chose to show them their errors through visions, and they disregarded the teachings of God through visions, they would be left to take their own way, and run in the way of error, and think they were right, until they would find it out too late. Then in the time of trouble I heard them cry to God in agony, "Why didst Thou not show us our wrong, that we might have got right and been ready for this time?" Then an angel pointed to them and said, "My Father taught, but you would not be taught. He spoke through visions, but you disregarded His voice, and He gave you up to your own ways, to be filled with your own doings." Selected Messages, volume 1, p. 40

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by Pastor Stephen Bohr

LESSON #15 - GUIDANCE FOR THE LAST DAYS: DIFFICULT STATEMENTS

I want you to think about the function of a microscope and a telescope. Neither one of these creates reality but rather magnifies it. Microscopes and telescopes do not bring things into existence but rather give us enhanced vision to see what the naked eye cannot see.

One Foundational Principle

The foundational principle that keeps the universe in perfect harmony is love for we are told that God is love:

I John 4:8:

“He who does not love does not know God, for God is love.”

But the question might be asked: What is love? Many things that people do today are done in the name of love when the opposite is true. So we need a broader explanation of what love is so God gave us two great commandments to further magnify the foundational principle of love.

Two-dimensional Love

Deuteronomy 4:12-13: God wrote His Law on two tablets of stone:

*“And the LORD spoke to you out of the midst of the fire. You heard the sound of the words, but saw no form; you only heard a voice. **13** So He declared to you His covenant which He commanded you to perform, the Ten Commandments; and He wrote them on two tablets of stone.”*

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Deuteronomy 6:4, 5: Love for God is the first great commandment—the **vertical** dimension

*"Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one! 5 You **shall love the LORD your God** with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength."*

Leviticus 19:18: Love for the neighbor is the second dimension of love—the **horizontal** dimension

*"You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people, but you shall **love your neighbor as yourself**: I am the LORD."*

Matthew 22:35-39: Jesus described the **bidirectional** dimensions of love:

*"Then one of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question, testing Him, and saying, 36 "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?" Jesus said to him, "'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the **first and great commandment**. 39 And the **second is like it**: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'*

True love thus moves in two directions, **vertical and horizontal**, toward God and toward our fellow human beings. But **what does it mean** to love God and to love our fellow human beings?

Bi-dimensional Love Amplified

Exodus 20:1-17: The two principles are enlarged in the **Ten Commandments**

Vertical love toward God is defined and amplified in the **first four commandments** (describe). **Horizontal** love toward our fellow human beings is defined and amplified in the **last six commandments** (describe).

The Ten Commandments are **apodictic** law rather than **casuistic**. That is to say, the Ten Commandments deal in **general principles** that must be applied to **specific circumstances** in everyday life. In the Ten Commandments there is no description of the **consequences** for violating the various commands. Furthermore, actions like killing and adultery are not clearly defined.

The Ten Commandments are like a **Constitution**—they are what scholars call

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apodictic law. They express **absolute** and **basic general principles** for a stable society but these general principles must then be amplified to deal with specific life situations.

Take for example the **sixth** commandment: *“Thou shalt not kill.”* Does this forbid killing in **war**, killing **animals**, **accidental** killing or manslaughter, performing **abortions**, killing in **self-defense**, **euthanasia**, or killing **tyrants** such as Adolph Hitler?

The sixth commandment does not define **what killing** is, what **if all kinds of killing** are wrong, **why** killing is wrong, the **baleful consequences** of killing or the **penalty** for killing. It simply states a **general principle**: “Thou shalt not kill.”

Amplification in the Holiness Code

The Ten Commandments are further amplified in what has come to be known as the **Holiness Code**. In **Exodus 21-23** the Ten Commandments are **applied to many** (but no all) specific real life situations.

Amplification in the Entire Bible

Matthew 22:40: The law of love is amplified in the **entire Bible**:

*“On these two commandments hang **all** the Law and the Prophets.”*

The entire **Bible** is actually a **commentary** and **amplification** of the Ten Commandments. The **Bible** is what scholars have called **casuistic law** because it gives specific **real life examples** of the violation of the Ten Commandments, the **baleful results** of transgressing them and the **punishment** that follows their transgression.

This is why the Bible in some texts states that **the law will judge us** while in others states that Word of God will judge us (James 2:10-12; Hebrews 4:12-13). The Word of God **defines**, **amplifies** and **applies** the principles of the law to specific real life situations and give us the fullest definition of love.

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Let's take, another commandment as an example, the seventh commandment: ***'Thou shalt not commit adultery.'*** This is an extremely brief statement but it has broad implications that are amplified elsewhere in Scripture.

As we look at the entirety of Scripture we see that the prohibition includes **lust** after a woman in the **mind** (Mt. 5:27-28). It includes getting **divorced** for the wrong reason (Mt. 19:9). The story of David shows the **horrendous consequences** of violating this commandment (II Samuel 11). It also includes **incest** (I Cor. 5:1-5), **prostitution** (Lev. 19:29; I Cor. 6:15, 16), **homosexuality** (Genesis 19:5-8; I Cor. 6:9), **fornication** (I Cor. 6:18) and **lasciviousness**—sexual recklessness and aberrations (I Pet. 4:3). Clearly, the Bible greatly amplifies this commandment. All of these sins denote a lack of love for our fellow human beings.

The Spirit of Prophecy

In **Revelation 12:17; 19:10; 22:9** God promised to give His remnant church the gift of prophecy. The question is this: Why would God give us this gift if we have the Bible?

The answer is that there are certain real life situations that the **Bible does not address** directly. Does the Bible directly address issues such as **pornography and masturbation**? Not in detail but yes in principle. Does this mean that we are allowed to view pornography and practice masturbation with no compunction of conscience because the Bible does not strictly forbid them? The answer would be no. The fact is that God has given a **further amplification** of the Bible for these last days in the Spirit of Prophecy.

The question is frequently asked: why does the last day church need these writings if they have the Bible? Doesn't Ellen White say that the Bible is our **only rule** of faith and practice? Yes she does. But does this mean that we do not need her writings? Why did God give the Spirit of Prophecy if all of God's will is revealed in the Bible? Let's allow Ellen White herself to explain:

*'Brother J would confuse the mind by seeking to make it appear that the light God has given through the Testimonies is **an addition** to the word of God, but in this he presents the matter in a **false light**. God has seen fit in this manner to bring the*

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minds of His people **to His word**, to give them a **clearer** understanding of it." The word of God is **sufficient** to enlighten the most beclouded mind and may be understood by those who have **any desire** to understand it. But notwithstanding all this, some who profess to make the word of God their study are found living in direct opposition to its plainest teachings. Then, to leave men and women **without excuse**, God gives **plain and pointed testimonies**, bringing them **back to the word** that they have neglected to follow." The word of God abounds in **general principles** for the formation of correct habits of living, and the testimonies, general and personal, have been calculated to **call their attention** more especially to these principles." (5T 663-664)

'I recommend to you, dear reader, the Word of God as the rule of your faith and practice. By that Word we are to be judged. God has, in that Word, promised to give visions in the "last days"; **not for a new rule of faith**, but for the comfort of His people, and to **correct those who err** from Bible truth.' (EW 78)

Let's take a few **controversial issues** that are addressed by Ellen G. White to see if she is in harmony with biblical principles.

The Sabbath

Isaiah 58:13, 14 contains the **general principle** that we should not do **our own ways** or our **own pleasure** or speak our **own words** on the Sabbath.

"If you turn away your foot from the Sabbath, from doing **your pleasure** on My holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy day of the Lord honorable, and shall honor Him, not doing **your own ways**, nor finding **your own pleasure**, nor speaking **your own words**, 14 Then you shall delight yourself in the Lord; and I will cause you to ride on the high hills of the earth, and feed you with the heritage of Jacob your father. The mouth of the Lord has spoken."

The question is this: **What are** our own ways, our own pleasure and our own words? How do these **general statements** of principle apply to specific **real life situations**? Does doing these things on the Sabbath impact our **love relationship** with God? What **specific** activities are forbidden on the Sabbath and why? Notice the following counsel from Ellen White:

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*“Let every family of Seventh-day Adventists honor God by a strict regard for his law. The children should be taught to respect the Sabbath. On the day of preparation, **clothing** should be put in proper repair, **shoes** polished and **baths** taken. Then around the family altar all should wait to **welcome God's holy day**, as they would watch for the coming of a dear friend.” *ST*, May 25, 1882*

Nehemiah 13:19, 20: Contains the **general principle** that we are to **guard the edges** of the Sabbath:

*“Then I contended with the nobles of Judah, and said to them, “What evil thing is this that you do, by which you profane the Sabbath day? 18 Did not your fathers do thus, and did not our God bring all this disaster on us and on this city? Yet you bring added wrath on Israel by profaning the Sabbath.” 19 So it was, at the gates of Jerusalem, **as it began to be dark before** the Sabbath, that I commanded the gates to be shut, and charged that they **must not be opened till after the Sabbath**. Then I posted some of my servants at the gates, so that no burdens would be brought in on the Sabbath day.”*

Ellen White **amplifies** this principle:

*“We should jealously **guard the edges** of the Sabbath. Remember that every moment is consecrated, holy time. Whenever it is possible, employers should give their workers the hours from **Friday noon until the beginning of the Sabbath**. Give them time for preparation that they may welcome the Lord's Day with **quietness of mind**. By such a course you will suffer no loss even in temporal things.” *6T* 356*

Is Ellen White really adding anything to Scripture in these statements? No. She is simply amplifying the principles that are found in Scripture. And why does she give these counsels? Does a violation of these counsels impact our love for God?

The Use of Bicycles

The **enemies of Ellen White** have had a heyday with her counsels **against bicycles**. Even sincere people ask: How can anyone seriously believe that she had the prophetic gift when she gave such seemingly **ridiculous counsel**? Where does the Bible address the issue of bicycles? Does riding a bicycle really

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affect our **love relationship** with God and our fellow human beings? Let's see **what** she said, **when** she said it and **why**. After all, she has said herself:

'Regarding the testimonies, nothing is ignored; nothing is cast aside, but time and place must be considered.' (**ISM 57**)

What is the **historical context** of Ellen White's counsels against bicycles?

*"Turn to another scene. In the streets of the city is a party gathered for a bicycle race. In this company also are those who profess to know God and Jesus Christ whom He has sent. But who that looks upon the exciting **race** would think that those who were thus **exhibiting themselves** were the followers of Christ? Who would suppose that any of that party felt their need of Christ? Who would think they realized the **value of their time** and their **physical powers** as gifts **from God**, to be preserved for **His service**? Who thinks of the **danger of accident**, or that **death** may be the result of their **wild chase**? Who have prayed for the presence of Jesus, and the **protection of the ministering angels**? **Is God glorified** by these performances? Satan is playing the game of life for these souls and he is well pleased with that which he sees and hears. **TM 83, 84***

*"In view of the terrible crisis before us what are those doing who profess to believe the truth? My Guide, called me and said: "Follow Me," and I was shown things among our people that were not in accordance with their faith. There seemed to be a bicycle **craze**. **Money** was spent to gratify an enthusiasm in this direction that might better, far better, have been **invested in building houses of worship** where they are greatly needed . . . There were presented before me some strange things in Battle Creek. A **bewitching** influence seemed to be passing as a **wave** over our people there, and I saw that this would be followed by other temptations. Satan works with intensity of purpose to induce our people to invest their **time and money** in gratifying supposed wants. This is a species of **idolatry** . . . While you have been gratifying your inclination in the appropriation of money—**God's money**—for which you must give an account, **missionary work** has been hindered and bound about for want of means and workers to plant the banner of truth in places where the people have never heard the message of warning . . . There were some who were **striving for the mastery**, each **trying to excel the other** in the **swift running** of their bicycles. There was a spirit of **strife and contention** among them as to which should be **the greatest**. The spirit was*

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similar to that manifested in the baseball games on the college ground . . . ” (8T 51-52)

*“You would not be purchasing bicycles, which you could do without, but would be receiving the blessing of God in exercising your physical powers in a **less expensive way**. Instead of investing **one hundred dollars [a small fortune at that time]** in a bicycle, you would consider the matter well, lest it might be at the **price of souls** for whom Christ died, and for whom he has made you responsible.”
*Review and Herald, August 21, 1894**

In **Testimonies to Ministers, p. 84** (written in 1895) Ellen White states that the students were **injuring themselves**, putting their **lives in danger** and struggling for the **supremacy** in their bicycle races.

A careful reading of Ellen White’s counsel concerning bicycles clearly reveals that she would not today condemn the **recreational use** of a bicycle or its use for personal transportation and enjoyment. In her day, Adventists were **mortgaging homes** and tapping into life savings in order to gain the **supremacy** over others. I wonder if Ellen White would have something to say today about **NASCAR** and **motorcycle** races and even events such as the *Tour de France* where great sums of money are spent, lives are put in danger and the struggle for supremacy can be clearly seen.

If Ellen White lived today, I think she might apply her counsel to the luxurious and expensive **cars we drive**, the **gaudy houses** we live in and the **expensive ‘toys’** we indulge in. The circumstances may change but the **universal principle** still applies. Although her specific counsel regarding bicycles does not apply today because times have changed, the **principles** she enunciates are **universal and timeless!!** Let us remember once again Ellen White’s wise counsel concerning her own writings:

*‘Regarding the testimonies, nothing is ignored; nothing is cast aside, but **time and place** must be considered.’ **1SM 57***

If circumstances change, the principles remain but their specific application changes. For Ellen White there are several universal principles: **1)** The wise use of **time**, **2)** the proper use of **money** for the saving of souls, **3)** the protection

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health and life, 4) subduing the spirit of **pride and supremacy**. Any practice which promotes a wrongful use of time, money and health and which promotes a spirit of supremacy is wrong because it ultimately affects our love relationship with God and our fellow human beings!!

Dangerous Amusements

Was Ellen White correct when she wrote about other dangerous amusements where the same principles apply?

*“Some of the most popular amusements, such as **football and boxing**, have become schools **of brutality**. They are developing the same characteristics, as did the games of **ancient Rome**. The **love of domination**, the **pride in mere brute force**, the **reckless disregard of life**, is exerting upon the youth a power to **demoralize** that is appalling.” *Education*, p. 210*

It has always been incomprehensible to me how football players and boxers will have a season of prayer before they go onto the field or into the ring before beating each other’s brains out!!

Theater Attendance

Obviously, there is no direct Biblical injunction which says: ‘*You shall not go to the movies,*’ because there were **no movies** in biblical times. But there was certainly live theatrical entertainment in Greece and in Rome. The question is: Are there **Biblical principles** that would lead us to abstain from such a practice? Notice the following biblical texts:

Philippians 4:8-9

*“Finally, brethren, whatever things are **true**, whatever things are **noble**, whatever things are **just**, whatever things are **pure**, whatever things are **lovely**, whatever things are of **good report**, if there is any **virtue** and if there is anything **praiseworthy** — **meditate** on these things.”*

Romans 12:1, 2

“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.

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2 And **do not be conformed to this world**, but be transformed by the **renewing of your mind**, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.”

Isaiah 33:14, 15

“Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?” 15 He who **walks righteously** and **speaks uprightly**, he who despises the **gain of oppressions**, who gestures with his hands, **refusing bribes**, who **stops his ears** from hearing of bloodshed, and **shuts his eyes** from seeing evil.”

2 Corinthians 3:18

“But we all, with unveiled face, **beholding** as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, **are being transformed** into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.”

“It is a law both of the **intellectual and the spiritual nature** that by beholding we become changed. The **mind gradually adapts** itself to the subjects upon which it is **allowed to dwell**. It becomes assimilated to that which it is **accustomed to love and reverence**. Man will never rise higher than his standard of purity or goodness or truth. If self is his loftiest ideal, he will never attain to anything more exalted. Rather, he will constantly sink lower and lower. The grace of God alone has power to exalt man. Left to himself, his course must inevitably be downward.” GC 555

2 Corinthians 6:14-18:

“Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness? And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever? And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: “I will dwell in them and walk among them. I will be their God, and they shall be My people.” Therefore “Come out from among them and be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, and I will receive you.” ‘I will be a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty.”

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Do the movies enhance our love for God and our fellow human beings? Do they encourage us to embrace and practice the truth? Do they lead us to use pure language? Do they encourage us to respect the sanctity of marriage? Do they teach us to respect human life and property? Do they teach us to respect and honor our parents? I think you know the answers to all of these questions.

A growing number of Adventist youth (and, sad to say, youth pastors and adults) today enjoy going to the movies. In biblical times and in the days of Ellen White motion pictures did not exist. But both in Bible times and in the days of Ellen White live dramatic presentations did exist. Please read the following description given by Ellen White and tell me honestly if she is adding to Scripture or simply amplifying Scripture and applying it to a contemporary practice:

*“Among the most dangerous resorts for pleasure is the theater. Instead of being a school for morality and virtue, as is so often claimed, it is the very **hotbed of immorality**. Vicious habits and **sinful propensities** are **strengthened** and **confirmed** by these entertainments. Low songs, lewd gestures, expressions, and attitudes **deprave the imagination** and **debase the morals**. Every youth who habitually attends such exhibitions will be **corrupted in principle**. There is no influence in our land more powerful to **poison the imagination**, to destroy religious impressions, and to blunt the relish for the tranquil pleasures and sober realities of life than theatrical amusements. The love for these scenes increases with every indulgence as the desire for **intoxicating drink** strengthens with its use. The only safe course is to shun the theater, the circus, and every other questionable place of amusement.”* (The Adventist Home, p. 516)

Competitive Sports in our Schools

There is a strong and growing trend toward competitive intramural sports in our denominational schools today. Is this trend in harmony with the Bible? The fact is that the Bible does not address this particular issue but Ellen White does:

*“I do not condemn the simple exercise of playing ball; but this, even in its simplicity, may be **overdone**. I shrink always from the almost sure result that follows in the wake of these amusements. It leads to an **outlay of means** that*

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should be expended in bringing **the light of truth to souls** that are perishing out of Christ. The amusements and expenditures of means for **self-pleasing** that lead on step by step to **self-glorifying**, and the educating in these games for pleasure produce a love and passion for such things that is not favorable to the perfection of Christian character.

The way that they have been conducted at the college does not bear the impress of heaven. It does not **strengthen the intellect**. It does not refine and **purify the character**. There are threads leading out through the habits and customs and worldly practices, and the actors become so **engrossed and infatuated** that they are pronounced in heaven lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God. In the place of the intellect becoming strengthened to do better work as students, to be better qualified as Christians to perform the Christian duties, the exercise in these games is filling their brains with thoughts that **distract the mind from their studies**. . . . Is the eye single to the **glory of God** in these games? I know that this is not so. There is a losing sight of God's way and His purpose. The employment of intelligent beings, in probationary time, is superseding God's revealed will and substituting for it the speculations and inventions of the human agent, with Satan by his side to imbue with his spirit. . . . The Lord God of heaven protests against the burning passion **cultivated for supremacy** in the games that are so **engrossing**." (AH 499-500)

The question is: Is Ellen White **adding to the Bible** when she frowns on competitive sports in our schools? The answer is that in principle she is adding nothing. She is simply taking biblical principles and **applying them** to a practice that did not exist in biblical times. Ask yourself the following questions:

- Have circumstances changed?
- Are players still maimed for life?
- Is there still a spirit of supremacy?
- Is there still an unnecessary outlay of means?
- Are competitive sports a wise outlay of precious time?
- Are there things that will better develop the intellect and the physical nature?
- Do competitive sports make you more useful in life?

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- Do competitive sports better prepare us preach the gospel to those who are lost in sin?

Personal Adornment

The **Bible is clear** that adornment should not be external but rather internal of the heart. Yet many in the Adventist church today say that this counsel does not apply today.

It is more than interesting that specific things that the **Bible does not explicitly forbid** (such as going to the movies) are justified today and things that the **Bible does explicitly forbid** (such as the use of jewelry) are justified today. In the preparation of people for baptism the issue of jewelry is seldom brought up anymore. Yet both the apostle Paul and the apostle Peter are clear on this point:

I Timothy 2:9-10

*“ . . . in like manner also, that the women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with propriety and moderation, **not** with braided hair or gold or pearls or costly clothing, but which is proper for women professing godliness, with **good works.**”*

I Peter 3:1-4

*“Wives, likewise be **submissive** to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives, 2 when they observe your **chaste conduct** accompanied by fear. 3 **Do not** let your adornment be **merely [a word not in the original] outward**—arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel—4 rather let it be the **hidden person** of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God.”*

Ellen White is even more explicit as to the reason why the adornment should not be outward. It has to do with love for our neighbor:

*“There are many whose hearts have been so hardened by prosperity that they forget God, and forget the **wants of their fellow man.** Professed Christians adorn themselves with jewelry, laces, costly apparel, while the **Lord's poor suffer** for the*

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*necessaries of life. Men and women who claim redemption through a Savior's blood will squander the means entrusted to them for the **saving of other souls**, and then grudgingly dole out their offerings for religion, giving liberally only when it will bring honor to themselves. These are idolaters.” (2BC 1012; ST, January 26, 1882)*

*“Elder Simpson explains the prophecies by the means of charts, and makes it very plain that the end of all things is at hand. In some cases entire families have taken their stand to obey God, as in 1844. All are brought over the ground from the beginning, and many believe as the prophecies relating to the past, present, and future are explained. Jewelry, which cost many hundreds of dollars, has been given to Elder Simpson to be **sold for the cause**. There is no spirit of excitement in this movement. No fanaticism attends it. The truth takes hold of hearts; and men and women give their rings and bracelets although no call has been made for them to strip themselves of **these idols**. The work is earnest and quiet. The people take off their jewelry of their own freewill, and bring it to Elder Simpson as an offering up of their idols.” (14MR 250-251)*

Did you notice in these statements that the use of jewelry negatively impacts our love for our fellow human beings? Should not our money be invested in the necessary things of life and in the salvation of souls rather than on ornaments that attract attention to us?

Eating Clean Flesh Foods

It is clear that the **Bible permits** the eating of certain kinds of flesh foods (Deuteronomy 14; Leviticus 11). If this is the case, why does Ellen White write that we should **not eat even clean flesh** foods in the last days? Is she contradicting the Bible or is there a deeper issue involved? First, let's read a few of her categorical statements:

*'Flesh was **never the best** food [Genesis 1:29]; but its use is now **doubly objectionable, since disease in animals is so rapidly increasing**. Those who use flesh foods little know what they are eating. Often if they could see the animals when living and know the quality of the meat they eat, they would turn from it with loathing. People are continually eating flesh that is filled with tuberculous*

and cancerous germs. Tuberculosis, cancer, and other fatal diseases are thus communicated.” Child Guidance, p. 382

“Is it not time that **all** should aim to dispense with flesh foods? How can those who are seeking to become pure, refined, and holy, that they may have the companionship of heavenly angels, continue to use as food anything that has **so harmful an effect** on soul and body? How can they take the life of God's creatures that they may consume the flesh as a luxury? Let them, rather, return to the wholesome and delicious food given to man **in the beginning**, and themselves practice, and teach their children to practice, mercy toward the dumb creatures that God has made and has placed under our dominion?” (The Ministry of Healing, p. 317)

“The **moral evils** of a flesh diet are not less marked than are the physical ills. Flesh food is injurious to health, and whatever affects the body has a corresponding effect on the mind and the soul.” Counsels to the Church, p. 230

“The intellectual, the moral, and the physical powers are depreciated by the **habitual use** of flesh meats. Meat eating **deranges** the system, **beclouds** the intellect, and **blunts** the moral sensibilities. We say to you, dear brother and sister, your safest course is to **let meat alone**.” Counsels to the Church, pp., 231, 232

Why would Ellen White give us such counsel when she knew full well that the Bible allows the eating of clean meats? It must be underlined that the Bible does allow for the consumption of clean meats but the **fat and the blood** must be first removed. This is something that meat eaters today (except for Orthodox Jews) do not do.

Objectionable features of flesh foods:

- **Diseased blood** and flesh transmits deadly maladies such as Mad Cow's Disease and cancer
- **High cholesterol** levels leads to heart attacks and strokes
- **Saturated fat** leads to heart attacks and strokes
- **Growth hormones** ingested by the animals causes disease

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- **Purines** that are contained in the meat act as a stimulant upon the body. Though Ellen White did not understand the reason why meat stimulates the system, hormonal studies have proved that she was right:

“When the use of flesh food is discontinued, there is often a sense of weakness, a lack of vigor. Many urge this as evidence that flesh food is essential; but it is because foods of this class are stimulating, because they fever the blood and excite the nerves, that they are so missed. Some will find it as difficult to leave off flesh eating as it is for the drunkard to give up his dram; but they will be the better for the change.” Counsels on Diet and Foods, p. 396

- The **moral and spiritual sensibilities** are blunted when bloody and fatty meat is consumed

So, why did God allow the consumption of clean meats (minus the fat and blood) in biblical times while he forbids them today? An illustration will help us understand the reason.

I grew up in the city of Caracas, Venezuela. Running through the city is the Guaire River that is basically the sewer and garbage dump for the city. The government has posted signs everywhere warning people not to use the water from this river. Yet one hundred and fifty years ago there was no prohibition to swim in the river, fish in it and use the water to drink. So why were the people allowed to use the water then and not now? I think the answer is obvious. What was safe then is not safe now. Circumstances have changed and the change in circumstances demands a change in counsel.

God did allow the eating of clean flesh foods in biblical times. Back then the animal world was less diseased and growth hormones were not injected into the animals and they were not fed food that was not made for them. Have things changed? Of course they have. What was safe then is not safe now! Would you expect God to say: “In the past I said that clean flesh foods could be eaten and ‘I, the Lord, change not’ so go right ahead and continue eating these foods even though I know that they will make you sick?” Notice that God does not change the principle but rather takes into account the circumstances in order to be in harmony with His own principle?

Smoking Tobacco and Drinking Coffee

I was once holding a series of evangelistic meetings in Albuquerque, New Mexico. As I was driving to an appointment one day, I was listening to a religious call-in program where people could call to ask biblical questions. As I was listening, a caller came on the air and asked the pastor in the studio: *“Sir, I have two questions: First of all, is it a sin to smoke? And the second question is: Will God send me to hell for smoking?”*

I was intrigued by the question and wondered how the host would answer. The answer came quickly:

“The answer to your first question is ‘no’ because you can’t find anywhere in the Bible where God says: ‘Thou shalt not smoke.’ And with regards to your question whether God will send you to hell for smoking, to the contrary, you will probably make it to heaven a lot faster.”

In the 19th century physicians were prescribing tobacco for ailments such as asthma, bronchitis and emphysema. Until 1940 the American Medical Society affirmed that there was no hard evidence to indicate that smoking tobacco had any relationship to lung and other types of cancer. How times have changed!

It is a known fact that the Bible does not address the issue of smoking. Does the silence of the Bible on this specific topic allow us to smoke? Ellen White has written:

*“God has written His law upon every nerve and muscle, every fiber and function of the human body. The indulgence of unnatural appetite, whether for tea, coffee, tobacco, or liquor, is intemperance, and is at war with the laws of life and health. By using these forbidden articles a condition of things is created in the system that the Creator never designed. **This indulgence in any of the members of the human family is sin** . . . The eating of food that does not make good blood is working against the laws of our physical organism, and is a violation of the law of God. The cause produces the effect. Suffering, disease, and death are the sure penalty of indulgence” Evangelism 265-266*

Isn't Ellen White adding to the Bible here by saying that smoking is a sin? Is she not going beyond Scripture in forbidding this practice? Of course not! She is simply applying biblical principles to real life situations that did not exist in biblical times.

What **Biblical principles** stand behind Ellen White's counsel? Let's see:

1. Exodus 20:13: 'Do not kill' and it has been proven that tobacco kills
2. 1 Cor. 3:16-17: Our body is the temple of the holy Spirit and we must not defile it
3. 1 Cor. 10:31: If we eat or drink or whatever we do we must do to the glory of God
4. Deut. 6:5: We must honor God with all of our strength
5. 1 Pet. 2:11: The Bible forbids sinful lusts that war against the soul
6. Nothing unclean will enter heaven (Revelation 21:27)

What about coffee? It is clear that nowhere does the Bible forbid the drinking of coffee. It seems like coffee has gone through a 'conversion experience' in recent years. I know many church leaders and members who are addicted to 'Starbucks' and do their utmost to justify their habit. What does Ellen White have to say?

"Coffee is a hurtful indulgence. It temporarily excites the mind to unwonted action, but the aftereffect is sad—prostration and exhaustion of the physical, mental, and moral forces. The mind becomes enervated, and unless through determined effort the habit is overcome, the activity of the brain is greatly lessened." CH 441

Masturbation

Ellen White calls it the 'secret vice', 'solitary vice' and 'self-abuse'. She affirms that the mind and the body are weakened by this habit. She says it diminishes the energy of the brain and as a result the brilliance of the young mind is clouded. She states that if a person continues this habit they will eventually develop **dementia**.

Some Adventists have made fun of Ellen White's counsel on this matter saying that masturbation can actually be a good thing to relieve stress. Notice Ellen White's counsel:

*"Their [some students at Battle Creek College] **thoughts** were upon demoralizing matters, and both mind and body were enfeebled through the habit of **self-abuse**. It was this **vile practice**, not over-study that caused the frequent illness of these children and prevented them from making the advancement which the parents desired." 5T 91*

*"Your children have practiced **self-abuse** until the draft upon the brain has been so great, especially in the case of your eldest son, that their minds have been **seriously injured**. The brilliancy of youthful intellect is **dimmed**. The moral and intellectual powers have become **weakened**, while the baser part of their nature has been gaining the **ascendancy**. For this reason your son turns with loathing from religious things. He has been **losing his power of self-restraint**, and has less and **less reverence** for sacred things, and **less respect** for anything of a spiritual character." 2T 392*

*"What little intellect he has left is of a low order. If he continues in this **vicious practice** he will eventually become **idiotic**. Every indulgence of children who have attained their growth is a terrible evil and will produce terrible results, enervating the system and **weakening the intellect**. But in those who indulge this corrupting vice before attaining their growth, the evil effects are more plainly marked, and recovery from its effects is more nearly hopeless. The frame is weak and stunted; the muscles are flabby; the eyes become small, and appear at times swollen; the memory is treacherous, and becomes sievelike; and inability to concentrate the thoughts upon study increases." 2T 402*

Was Ellen White right when she said that masturbation affects the mental powers even to the point of leading someone to be idiotic? Let's see what two prominent physicians say:

Oxford University teacher, Dr. David Horrobin, M. D., Ph. D., [Zinc](#), Vitabooks, Inc., 1981, p. 8:

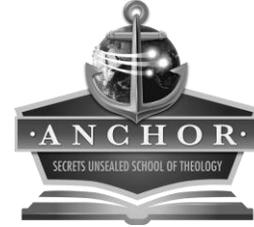
“The effect of zinc deficiency has particularly profound effects on the male, because extraordinary amounts of zinc are found in the testicles and the prostate gland . . . The amount of zinc in semen is such that one ejaculation may get rid of all the zinc that can be absorbed from the intestines in one day.”

*“In humans, among the most consistent effects of zinc deficiency are changes in mood and behavior. There is **depression**, extreme irritability, apathy and even in some circumstances, behavior which looks like **schizophrenia** . . . It is even possible, given the importance of zinc to the brain, that **19th century moralists were correct** when they said that repeated masturbation could **make one mad!** Similarly, the high livers were also correct when they said that a diet rich in oysters was necessary to compensate for **excessive sexual indulgence.**”*

Dr. Carl Pfeiffer of Harvard University:

*“We hate to say it but in a zinc-deficient adolescent, sexual excitement and excessive masturbation might **precipitate insanity.**” Carl Pfeiffer, Ph. D., M. D., Zinc and other Micronutrients, Keats Publishing, Inc. 1978, p. 45*

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“Believe His Prophets: Prophetic Guidance in the Advent Movement”

by Pastor Stephen Bohr

LESSON # 16 - HOW TO STUDY ELLEN WHITE: THE BASE CRIME OF AMALGAMATION

A Troubling Statement

A few years ago one of my church members came to my office and by the tone of his voice I could tell that he was greatly troubled. He told me that while he was surfing the Internet he came across one of those websites that are inimical to Ellen G. White. His curiosity peaked when he read an article which attempted to prove that Ellen White believed and taught that before the flood, animals and humans had cross-bred and produced hybrid offspring that were part human and part animal.

In all sincerity he asked:

“How can I believe that Ellen White was a true prophet when she taught such an unscientific concept?”

I told him that Ellen White did not teach any such thing and I promised to study the matter further to give him a more detailed answer in the near future.

Here is the Ellen White quotation in question with the key portions emphasized:

“But if there was one sin above another which called for the destruction of the race by the flood, it was the base crime of amalgamation of man and beast which defaced the image of God, and caused confusion everywhere. God purposed to destroy by a flood that powerful, long-lived race that had corrupted

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their ways before him.” *Spirit of Prophecy, volume 1, p. 69*

According to the **three page printout** that the church member gave me, strong expressions such as [1] ‘**base crime,**’ [2] ‘man **and** beast,’ [3] ‘**defaced** the image of God,’ and [4] ‘**confusion** everywhere’ could not refer to sexual relations between human beings; rather the article affirmed that Ellen White believed the ridiculous idea that the **confusion** everywhere was the result of **cross-breeding** between humans and animals. But was this **assumption valid?**

How to Study Difficult Statements

Principle #1: Pray for an **open heart** and **divine guidance**

Principle #2: Study the text for yourself

Principle #3: Look at how the writers used words and expressions **in other parts** of their writings. Allow Paul to explain Paul and Ellen White to explain Ellen White!

Principle #4: Take into account the immediately preceding and succeeding **context** of the text under study

Principle #5: Study the meaning of words as they were used in the times when the writer wrote

Principle #6: Study the grammar to help ascertain the meaning

Principle #7: **Apply** what you learned to your **own personal life.** Information without implementation is of no value.

Applying the Principles

So let’s begin our study together and apply these principles to our study:

We begin by stating that the **same Holy Spirit** that inspired the **Scriptures** inspired **Ellen White,** This being the case, the **same principles** that we apply to the study of Scripture must also be applied to the writings of Ellen White. Also, before opening the Scriptures we must open our heart without any **preconceived ideas.** We must **pray that God** will help us not to impose our

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ideas upon the text but rather allow the Scriptures to speak for themselves. This is the first and most important principle.

Long ago the apostle Peter affirmed that his colleague, the **apostle Paul**, wrote some things that are hard to understand. But **instead** of blaming Paul for not being clearer in his statements, Peter blamed those who are **ignorant and unstable** and twist these hard sayings:

2 Peter 3:16, ESV: *“There are some things in them that are hard to understand, which the **ignorant and unstable twist** to their own destruction, as they do the **other Scriptures**.”*

The **same** can be said about the writings of **Ellen G. White**. **She also wrote** some difficult things to understand (under the guidance of the **same Spirit** that guided the apostle Paul) which the **ignorant and unstable today**, twist to their own destruction.

Don't take what **others say** about a text no matter **how persuasive** their arguments may appear. It is so easy to become **mere reflectors** of what others have said or written. Study the text **for yourself**.

The **question** is: how can we determine the **correct meaning** of statements that are hard to understand?

The answer is that we must allow **Paul to interpret his own writings** and **Ellen White** to interpret hers. That is to say, we must go to **other passages** where the writers clarify what they meant in the difficult passages.

So when the church member came with the question, I decided to **look up the key expressions** in the **controversial** quotation to find out how Ellen White used them **elsewhere in her writings**. In this way I allowed Ellen White to be **her own interpreter**. The research was rewarding indeed!

One Sin above Another

In the controversial quotation Ellen White states that there was **one sin** above another that led to the destruction of the world by the flood, the sin of **amalgamation of man and beast**. Does she **clarify elsewhere** in her writings what the sin of amalgamation was that led to the destruction of the

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world? Was it the **crossbreeding** of humans with animals? Let's allow **Ellen White herself to explain** what the sin was:

*"**Unhallowed marriages** of the **sons of God** with the **daughters of men** resulted in apostasy which ended in the **destruction of the world by a flood.**"*
5T 93

So the amalgamation that led to the flood was the **intermarriage or amalgamation** of the **faithful and the unfaithful**, not the sexual union of humans with animals.

But does is Ellen White's view in harmony with the Bible?

Genesis 6:1, 2 and 4: There was a union of the sons of God with the daughters of men:

*"Now it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born to them, ² that the **sons of God** saw the **daughters of men**, that they were beautiful; and they **took wives** for themselves of all whom they chose. There were **giants [nephilim]** on the earth in those days, and **also afterward**, when the **sons of God** came in to the **daughters of men** and they bore children to them. Those were the mighty men who were of old, men of renown."*

In **Genesis 6:5** we are told that **immediately after** the sons of God went in to the daughters of men the **wickedness** of humanity **increased** to such a degree that it led to **the flood**:

*"**Then** the LORD saw that the **wickedness** of man was great in the earth, and that **every intent** of the thoughts of his heart was **only evil continually.**"*

The Sons of God and the Giants

But **who** were the 'sons of God'?

Many commentators and Bible versions today teach that the sons of God were **fallen angels** that had sexual relations with **human women** and the result was a race of **giant hybrids**, part demon and part human.

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This is the view of **Jewish tradition**. Some **Bible translations and paraphrases** have followed the lead of Jewish tradition and have translated the word 'giants' as '*nephilim*' (NIV, ESV) '*children of the supernatural beings*' (CEV) '*the fallen ones*' (Young's Literal Translation] '*evil beings from the spirit world*' (Living Bible)

So, **who** are the sons of God and the giants? The **context** rather than the **interpreters and Bible versions** must give us the answer. Let's take a look at the immediate context:

- Genesis 4: The Genealogy of **Cain** (the wicked)
- Genesis 5: The Genealogy of **Seth** (the righteous)
- Genesis 6: The **sons of God** (righteous) and the **daughters of men** (wicked)

But aren't the angels called 'the sons of God' in the **book of Job**? Yes. But here we have another very important principle. Just because a word or expression means one thing in one context does not mean that it means the **same thing in another context**. For example, **a lion** can refer to Christ, Satan, Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar or Judah. **Leaven** can symbolize sin or the secret of church growth. A **sword** can represent the Bible or the punitive power of the state to punish transgressions of the civil code.

It is true that the expression 'sons of God' is **used of angels** (Job 1:8; 2:1; 38:7) but in **other contexts** it is used of human beings who have been converted to the Lord. Let's give just one example:

Romans 8:14:

"For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God."

The 'giants' cannot be a hybrid amalgamation of angels with human women for at least three reasons:

- There were giants both **before** and **after** the sons of God came in to the daughters of men
- There were *nephilim* **in Canaan** long after the flood (Numbers 13:33)
- Furthermore, Jesus said that angels **do not marry** nor are they given in marriage.

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But there is something very important in **Jewish tradition** that is quite accurate: There was something that the ‘sons of God’ **saw** in the ‘daughters of men’ that attracted them. What did the ‘daughters of men’ have that the ‘daughters of God’ did not have? Here is the answer:

Jewish Tradition:

*“Flee therefore, fornication, my children, and command your wives and your daughters, that they **adorn** not their heads and faces to deceive the mind, because every woman who uses these wiles hath been reserved for eternal punishment. For thus they **allured the Watchers** who were before the flood . . .”*
T. Reuben 5:5-7

*“And it came to pass when the sons of men began to multiply on the face of the ground, and beautiful daughters were born to them, that the **sons of the great ones** saw that the daughters of men were beautiful, with **eyes painted** and **hair curled**, walking in **nakedness of flesh**, and they conceived lustful thoughts; and they **took them wives** of all they chose.”* Targum of Pseudo Jonathan 6:1-2

Base Crime

The article on the internet suggested that because Ellen White wrote that amalgamation was a ‘base crime’ she could **not have meant simple illicit sexual relations** between human beings because the expression ‘base crime’ is **too strong to describe sex between human beings**.

As I did my research, however, I discovered that Ellen White uses the expression ‘base crime’ only **one other time** in all of her published writings (although she uses the words ‘base’ and ‘crime’ separately in other places). It is imperative that we examine that lone reference. Describing the accusation that was **hurled at Joseph** by Potiphar’s wife when he refused her adulterous advances, Ellen White remarks:

*“And when he was accused, and a **base crime** was falsely laid to his charge, he did not sink in despair. In the consciousness of innocence and right he still trusted God. And God, who had hitherto supported him, did not forsake him.”* **SR**
102

Thus Ellen White defines a 'base crime' as **the sin of adultery**. This is a far cry from the idea that a 'base crime' must be **crossbreeding** between humans and animals!

Meaning of 'Amalgamation'

According to **Webster's 1828 Dictionary**, which most likely would have been the one that Ellen White used, the word 'amalgamation' is defined as "*the **mixing** or **blending** of two different things.*"

The crucial question at this point is: According to Ellen White, **what were those two different things** that were blended or mixed before the flood? **Was it humans with animals?** Once again, let's **allow Ellen White herself** to explain what she meant by the word 'amalgamation'. In the following statement, notice how Ellen White uses the words 'amalgamated' and 'confused' when she describes the danger of God's faithful people **uniting with unbelievers**:

*"There is constant danger that the **obedient and the disobedient** in the world and in the nominal churches will become so **amalgamated** that the **line of demarcation** between him that serveth God and him that serveth Him not will become **confused** and indistinct." Manuscript Releases, volume 18, p. 26*

And again:

*"Those who profess to be followers of Christ, should be living agencies, co-operating with heavenly intelligences; but by **union with the world**, the character of God's people becomes tarnished, and through **amalgamation** with the **corrupt**, the fine gold becomes dim." Review and Herald August 23, 1892*

Concerning the reason why the **Jews so frequently lost their identity** as God's peculiar people, Ellen White explains:

*"It came to be a common practice to **intermarry** with the heathen. The Israelites rapidly lost their abhorrence of idolatry. Heathen customs were introduced. Idolatrous mothers brought their children up to observe heathen rites. The Hebrew faith was fast becoming a **mixture** of **confused** ideas." FE 499*

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Did you notice in these statements that Ellen White used the words '**amalgamation**' and '**confused**' which are the very words that appear in the controversial statement that we are analyzing?

So, who were the 'men' that amalgamated before the flood? In the book Patriarchs and Prophets, which was an **expansion of *The Spirit of Prophecy***, volume 4 where the controversial statement is found, Ellen White clearly explained what she meant by the amalgamation of man before the flood:

*"For some time the **two classes [the female descendants of Cain and the male descendants of Seth]** remained **separate [the opposite of 'amalgamate']**. The race of Cain, spreading from the place of their first settlement, dispersed over the plains and valleys where the children of Seth had dwelt; and the latter, in order to escape from their contaminating influence, withdrew to the mountains, and there made their home. So long as this **separation [which is the opposite of 'amalgamate']** continued, they maintained the worship of God in its purity. But in the lapse of time they ventured, little by little, to **mingle [a synonym of 'amalgamate']** with the inhabitants of the valleys. This **association** was productive of the worst results. "The sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair." The **children of Seth**, attracted by the beauty of the **daughters of Cain's descendants**, displeased the Lord by **intermarrying [in other words, 'mixing']** with them. Many of the worshipers of God were beguiled into sin by the allurements that were now constantly before them, and they lost their peculiar, holy character. **Mingling [which a synonym of the word 'amalgamate']** with the **depraved**, they became like them in spirit and in deeds; the restrictions of **the seventh commandment [the same commandment that Potiphar's wife had tried to get Joseph to transgress]** were disregarded, "and they took them wives of all which they chose." The children of Seth went "in the way of Cain" (Jude 11); they fixed their minds upon worldly prosperity and enjoyment and neglected the commandments of the Lord. Men "did not like to retain God in their knowledge;" they "became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened." Romans 1:21 Therefore "God gave them over to a mind void of judgment." Verse 28, margin. Sin spread abroad in the earth like a **deadly leprosy**. PP 81, 82*

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Man and Beast

It will also be noticed that Ellen White did not write that there was amalgamation of man with beast. Both in the reference above and the one that follows she refers to amalgamation of man and beast, not man with beast. That is to say, humans amalgamated with humans and beasts with beasts!

“Every species of animal which God had created were preserved in the ark. The flood destroyed the confused species [of animals] that God did not create, which were the result of amalgamation. Since the flood there has been amalgamation of man and beast, as may be seen in the almost endless varieties of species of animals, and in certain races of men [there is no third category of hybrid man/beast].” 3SG 75

It will be noticed that immediately after writing that amalgamation of man and beast continued after the flood, Ellen White states that the result could be seen in the ‘almost endless variety of species of animals,’ and in ‘certain races of men.’ The result of the amalgamation, in other words, affected the animal kingdom (‘species of animals’) and the human kingdom (‘certain races of men’) but no mention is made of a human/animal hybrid.

Defacing the Image of God

Also significant is the declaration that this amalgamation defaced the image of God. What does Ellen White mean when she says that amalgamation of man and beast defaced the image of God? Does she mean that the defacing was due to the crossbreeding of humans with animals? Once again we must allow Ellen White to interpret Ellen White:

“Polygamy was practiced at an early date [Lamec married two women in the line of Cain: Genesis 4:19]. It was one of the sins that brought the wrath of God upon the antediluvian world. Yet after the Flood [do you remember that Ellen White wrote that there was also amalgamation after the flood?] it again became widespread. It was Satan's studied effort to pervert the marriage institution, to weaken its obligations and lessen its sacredness; for in no surer way could he deface the image of God in man and open the door to misery and vice.” PP 338

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What is the sin that defaced the image of God and opened the door to misery and vice, that is to say, to confusion? **Was it the interbreeding of humans with animals?** Of course not! Ellen White clearly explains that it was the **perversion of the marriage institution** by the practice of polygamy!

In another place Ellen White describes how illegitimate relationships between the Israelites and the nations that surrounded them **effaced the image** of God:

*“Commerce with other nations brought the Israelites into **intimate contact** with those who had no love for God, and their own love for Him was greatly lessened. Their keen sense of the high and holy character of God was deadened. Refusing to follow in the path of obedience, they transferred their allegiance to Satan. The enemy rejoiced in his success in **effacing the divine image** from the minds of the people that God has chosen as His representatives.” Fundamentals of Christian Education, p. 499*

Ellen White repeatedly underlines the fact that unbridled passions and intemperate habits defaced the image of God in man, but not once does she affirm that illicit sexual relations between human beings and animals did so. Regarding Satan Ellen White states:

*“By his power he had controlled cities and nations until their sin provoked the wrath of God to destroy them by fire, water, earthquakes, sword, famine, and pestilence. By his subtlety and untiring efforts he had **controlled the appetite and excited and strengthened the passions** to so fearful a degree that he had **defaced and almost obliterated the image of God in man**. His physical and moral dignity were in so great a degree destroyed that he bore but a faint resemblance in character and noble perfection of form to the dignified Adam in Eden.” Confrontation, pp. 34, 35*

What can we learn?

What can we learn from what I have shared in this sermon? I believe that we can glean at least **three important lessons** that will help us in our spiritual walk with the Lord.

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The First Lesson

First of all, there are a **plethora of websites** that despise Ellen White and her writings. The vast majority of objections that these websites raise against Ellen White have been **soundly answered** by the Ellen G. White Estate on its website. What I have found is that **most of the venom** that is hurled at Ellen White is a **rehash of the objections** that were raised in the past by **disgruntled** former members such as **Dudley M. Canright** who lost confidence in Ellen White because she constantly **rebuked his pride** and self-sufficiency. Disgruntled Adventists who have an ax to grind sponsor many of these websites.

My personal recommendation is that people **not waste their time reading** these faith-destroying websites. Those who sponsor them have **no desire to embrace the truth**. When the White Estate provides answers to their objections they simply come up **with new ones**.

Why waste our time on those who have no desire to embrace the truth? The sole purpose of these websites is to lead people to **doubt Ellen White's prophetic gift**. While these websites **mangle, mishandle and manhandle** the writings of Ellen White, many a **sincere soul** is turned against her writings for **lack of knowledge**. This study on amalgamation is just one example of how these websites put words in Ellen White's mouth, **twist her intended meanings**, and fail to allow her to explain her own writings.

The Second Lesson

The **second lesson** we can glean from this study is that it is rebellion against God for a Seventh-day Adventist **to marry someone** who is not of the same faith. This may sound harsh but it is the truth. We have been warned:

*"Never should God's people venture upon forbidden ground. God forbids marriage between **believers and unbelievers**. But too often the unconverted heart follows its own desires, and **marriages unsanctioned** by God are formed. Because of this many men and women are without hope and without God in the world. Their noble aspirations are dead; a chain of circumstances holds them in Satan's net. Those who are ruled by passion and impulse will have a bitter*

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harvest to reap in this life, and their course may result in the loss of their souls.”
Counsels to the Church, p. 121

Someone might want to rationalize that it would be wrong to classify a Christian from **another denomination** as an unbeliever. But Ellen White has clearly explained the word ‘unbeliever’ as one who has **not accepted the truth for this time**. She once wrote some wise counsel to a woman who was laying plans to marry a non-Adventist:

*“My sister, dare you disregard these plain and positive directions? As a child of God, a subject of Christ's kingdom, the purchase of His blood, how can you connect yourself with one who does not acknowledge His claims, who is not controlled by His Spirit? The commands I have quoted are not the word of man, but of God. Though the companion of your choice were in all other respects worthy (which he is not), yet **he has not accepted the truth for this time; he is an unbeliever**, and you are forbidden of heaven to unite yourself with him. You cannot, without peril to your soul, disregard this divine injunction.”* *Testimonies for the Church, volume 5, p. 364*

The Third Lesson

The **final lesson** we can learn is that our beloved **church** must be very careful not to amalgamate **with the world** lest we lose our identity:

*“Those who profess to be followers of Christ, should be living agencies, co-operating with heavenly intelligences; but by **union with the world**, the character of God's people becomes tarnished, and through **amalgamation** with the **corrupt**, the fine gold becomes dim.”* *Review and Herald August 23, 1892*

We must shun the temptation to embrace **worldly beliefs and practices** and incorporate them into our church. Seventh-day Adventists must **remain distinct from the world**. Our **music, worship styles, evangelistic methods, lifestyle** and **theology** must be kept untarnished by the world.

The apostle Paul wisely warned the Corinthians:

*“Do not be **unequally yoked** together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness?*

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And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever? And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I will dwell in them and walk among them. I will be their God, and they shall be My people." Therefore "Come out from among them and be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, and I will receive you." 'I will be a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty.' 2 Corinthians 2:14-18

James 4:4

*"Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that **friendship with the world** is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God."*

I John 2:15-17

*"Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. **16** For all that is in the world ó the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life ó is not of the Father but is of the world. **17** And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever."*

The mindset of the world: **Money, power, things, glitz, glamour, show and selfishness**. Have we become tainted with this way of thinking? How much have we thought about the **second coming, our future life** compared to our present life?

Amalgamation of plants and animals

*"Bones of men and animals are found in the earth, in mountains and in valleys, showing that much larger **men** and **beasts** once lived upon the earth. I was shown that very large, powerful **animals** existed before the flood which do not now exist." 3SG 92*

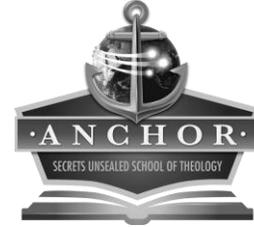
*"There was a class of very large **animals** which perished at the flood. God knew that the strength of man would decrease, and these mammoth animals could not be controlled by feeble man." 4aSG 121*

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*“Not one noxious **plant** was placed in the Lord's great garden, but after Adam and Eve sinned, poisonous herbs sprang up. In the parable of the sower the question was asked the Master, "Didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? How then hath it tares?" The Master answered, "An enemy hath done this." All tares are sown by the evil one. Every noxious herb is of his sowing, and by his ingenious methods of **amalgamation [plant with plant]** he has corrupted the earth with tares” (Manuscript 65, 1899) 1BC 1086*

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LESSON #17 - ELLEN WHITE AND REVELATION 16-19

Ellen White on the Timing of Revelation 18:6-24

There are three chapters toward the end of The Great Controversy where Ellen White begins the chapter with a Bible passage that presents the central theme of the entire chapter.

- On page 603, at the beginning of the chapter on *“The Final Warning”* Ellen White cites Revelation 18:1, 2, 4. This chapter contains her commentary on the Loud Cry of Revelation 18:1-5.
- On page 613, at the beginning of the chapter on *“The Time of Trouble”* she quotes Daniel 12:1. This chapter is her commentary on the close of probation and the ensuing time of trouble.
- Pages 635, 636 begin the chapter titled *“God’s People Delivered”*. Although Ellen White does not begin this chapter with a Biblical quotation, a careful examination of these two pages at the beginning of the chapter clearly indicate that she is interpreting the meaning of the fifth, sixth and seventh plagues that will be poured out at the very end of the time of trouble (see below).
- On page 653, at the beginning of the chapter on *“The Desolation of the Earth”* Ellen White quotes Revelation 18:5-10, 11, 3, 15-17. Therefore this chapter is Ellen White’s commentary on the fulfillment of Revelation 18:5-24.

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The Structure of GC, pp. 635, 636

The **first two pages** of the chapter “God’s People Delivered” (pp. 635-652) contain Ellen White’s commentary on the fifth, sixth and seventh plagues:

GC 635: After the **first four plagues** are poured out (GC 627-629), the multitudes (waters) that support Babylon are swirling and are **about to rush** upon God’s people to execute the death decree. At this point, the harlot is sitting on many waters with the intent of destroying God’s people:

*“With shouts of triumph, jeering, and imprecation, **throng** [multitudes] of evil men are **about to rush** [waters rush: Isaiah 17:12, 13] upon their **prey** [God’s people].”*

GC 635: Suddenly when the darkness of the **fifth plague** falls upon the earth, the raging waters of the spiritual Euphrates are suddenly **arrested**. This is the **sixth plague**, the drying up of the Euphrates:

*“The **angry multitudes** are suddenly **arrested** [dried up]. Their mocking cries die away. The objects [the faithful remnant] of their murderous rage are forgotten.”*

GC 636: **God’s voice** is then heard saying ‘it is done’ which marks the outpouring of the **seventh plague**:

*“In the midst of the angry heavens is one clear space of indescribable glory, whence comes the **voice of God** like the sound of many waters, saying: “It is done.” **Revelation 16:17.** **That voice** shakes the heavens and the earth.”*

The Desolation of the Earth

In the very next chapter (“The Desolation of the Earth”) Ellen White **picks up** at the very same point where she left off in The Great Controversy, pp. 635, and 636. This means that she is going to amplify the events that occur when God delivers His people at the moment of the seventh plague:

*“**When the voice of God turns the captivity of His people** [GC 635, 636], there is a terrible awakening of those who have lost all in the great conflict of life.” GC 654*

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This quotation on the second page of the chapter ‘*The Desolation of the Earth*’ takes us **back to the moment** when the voice of God delivered His people at the time of the seventh plague. This provides us with the **precise chronological point** for the fulfillment of Revelation 18:6-24. Revelation 18:6-24 is a description of the **seventh plague**. It is a vivid description of how the wicked will wail and lament when they forsake Babylon and Babylon falls. Ellen White vividly describes the scene:

*“The people [waters] see that **they have been deluded**. They accuse one another of having led them to destruction; but all unite in heaping their bitterest condemnation upon **the ministers**. **Unfaithful pastors** have prophesied **smooth things**; they have led their hearers to **make void the law** of God and **to persecute** those who would keep it holy. Now, in their despair, **these teachers** confess before the world their work of deception. The **multitudes are filled with fury**. “We are lost!” **they cry [this is their lament and wailing]**, “and you are the cause of our ruin;” and they **turn upon the false shepherds**. The very ones that once admired them most will pronounce the most dreadful curses upon them. The very hands that once crowned them with laurels will be raised **for their destruction**. The swords that were to slay God’s people are now employed **to destroy their enemies**. Everywhere there is strife and bloodshed.”
GC 655, 656*

The following paragraph captures in summary form the **central theme** of Revelation 18:6ff:

*“The **rich [the merchants]** prided themselves upon their superiority to those who were less favored; but they had obtained their **riches** by violation of the law of God. They had neglected to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, to deal justly, and to love mercy. They had sought to **exalt themselves** and to obtain the homage of their fellow creatures. Now they are stripped of all that made them great and are left destitute and defenseless. They **look with terror** upon the destruction of the idols that they preferred before their Maker. They have sold their souls for earthly **riches** and **enjoyments**, and have not sought to become rich toward God. The result is, their lives are a failure; their **pleasures** are now turned to **gall**, their treasures to corruption. The gain of a lifetime is swept away in a moment. The rich **bemoan** the destruction of their grand houses, the*

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*scattering of their gold and silver [in the light of James 5]. But their **lamentations** are silenced by the fear that they themselves are to perish with their idols.” GC 654*

Thus the central theme of Revelation 18:6ff is the collapse of the **world political and economic** system that supported the Babylonian harlot and her daughters. At that point the kings, the merchants and the multitudes will see that they are lost and that their riches are worthless. And they are infuriated primarily at the wicked religious leaders who have deceived them with a prosperity gospel!

The entire chapter is written in the literary style of a **lamentation or funeral dirge**. When the Babylonian system collapses, the multitudes will realize that their **religious leaders have deceived them** and they will turn on them. Their religious leaders encouraged them to get rich and to persecute those who keep the Sabbath. Both Ezekiel 7:15-19 and James 5:1-7 point forward to this time.

Ezekiel 7:15-19

*“They will throw their **silver** into the streets, and their **gold** will be like refuse; their **silver and their gold** will not be able to deliver them in the day of the **wrath of the LORD**; they will not satisfy their souls, nor fill their stomachs because it became their stumbling block of iniquity. **20** 'As for the **beauty of his ornaments**, He set it in majesty; but they made from it the images of their **abominations** their detestable things; therefore I have made it like refuse to them. **21** I will give it as plunder into the hands of strangers, and to the wicked of the earth as spoil; and they shall defile it.”*

James 5:1-6 points to the same point of time:

*“Come now, you **rich, weep and howl** for your miseries that are coming upon you! **2** Your **riches** are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. **3** Your **gold and silver** are corroded, and their corrosion will be a witness against you and will **eat your flesh** like fire. You have heaped up **treasure in the last days**. **4** Indeed the wages of the laborers who mowed your fields, which you kept back by fraud, cry out; and the cries of the reapers have reached the ears of the Lord*

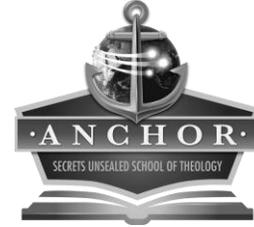
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of Sabaoth. **5** You have lived on the earth in **pleasure and luxury**; you have **fattened your hearts** as in a day of **slaughter**. **6** You have condemned, you have **murdered the just**; he does **not resist you**.”

GC 641: On this page Ellen White quotes Revelation 19:11, 14, 16 thus completing the cycle of Revelation 16-19.

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LESSON #18 - ELLEN WHITE AND THE 24 ELDERS

Ellen White Identifies the 24 Elders

In the last three pages of **The Desire of Ages 833-835**, Ellen White describes the **expectancy** of the heavenly beings as they **anticipate** the ascension of Jesus and the **exuberant joy** they experience as He **enters the gates** of the New Jerusalem. I have added some of my own comments in **brackets** to help identify the various beings that are present:

*“All heaven was waiting to welcome the Savior to the celestial courts. As **He ascended**, He led the way, and the **multitude of captives [notice that when Jesus arrives in heaven with the captives, the 24 elders are already there]** set free at His resurrection followed. The **heavenly host**, with shouts and acclamations of praise and celestial song, attended the joyous train.*

As they drew near to the city of God, the escorting angels give the challenge:

*“Lift up your heads, O ye gates;
And be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors;
And the King of glory shall come in.”*

Joyfully the waiting sentinels respond:

“Who is this King of glory?”

This they say, not because they know not who He is, but because they would hear

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the answer of exalted praise:

*"The Lord strong and mighty,
The Lord mighty in battle!
Lift up your heads, O ye gates;
Even lift them up, ye everlasting doors;
And the King of glory shall come in."*

Again is heard the challenge, "Who is this King of glory?" for the angels never weary of hearing His name exalted. The escorting angels make reply:

*"The Lord of hosts;
He is the King of glory." Ps. 24:7-10*

Then the portals of the city of God are opened wide, and the **angelic throng** sweep through the gates amid a burst of rapturous music.

There is the **throne [Revelation 4:2]**, and around it the **rainbow** of promise **[Revelation 4:3]**. There are **cherubim and seraphim [Revelation 4:6-8]**. The **commanders** of the angel hosts, **the sons of God**, the **representatives of the unfallen worlds [Revelation 4:4]** are assembled. The **heavenly council** before which Lucifer had accused God and His Son, the **representatives** of those sinless realms over which Satan had thought to establish his dominion,--all are there to **welcome** the Redeemer. They are eager to celebrate His triumph and to glorify their King.

But He waves them back. Not yet; He cannot now receive the coronet of glory and the royal robe. He enters into the presence of His **Father [the one seated on the throne]**. He points to His wounded head, the pierced side, the marred feet; He lifts His hands, bearing the print of nails **[the lamb as though it had been slain]**. He points to the tokens of His triumph; He presents to God the wave sheaf, those raised with Him as representatives of that great multitude who shall come forth from the grave at His second coming **[the representatives of the worlds were already there when He presented the wave sheaf]**. He approaches the **Father [the one seated on the throne]**, with whom there is joy over one sinner that repents; who rejoices over one with singing. Before the foundations of the earth

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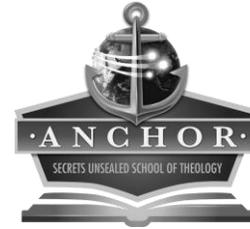
were laid, the Father and the Son had united in a covenant to redeem man if Satan should overcome him. They had clasped Their hands in a solemn pledge that Christ should become the surety for the human race. This pledge Christ has fulfilled. When upon the cross He cried out, "It is finished," He addressed the Father. The compact had been fully carried out. Now He declares: Father, it is finished. I have done Thy will, O My God. I have completed the work of redemption. If Thy justice is satisfied, "I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am." [The sealed book will reveal who will inherit with Jesus] John 19:30; 17:24

The voice of God is heard proclaiming that justice is satisfied. Satan is vanquished. Christ's toiling, struggling ones on earth are "accepted in the Beloved." Eph. 1:6. Before the heavenly angels and the representatives of unfallen worlds [notice how the two groups are distinguished], they are declared justified. Where He is, there His church shall be. "Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other." Ps. 85:10. The Father's arms encircle His Son, and the word is given, "Let all the angels of God worship Him." Heb. 1:6

With joy unutterable, rulers and principalities and powers acknowledge the supremacy of the Prince of life. The angel host prostrate themselves before Him, while the glad shout fills all the courts of heaven, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing." **Rev. 5:12**

Songs of triumph mingle with the music from angel harps, till heaven seems to overflow with joy and praise. Love has conquered. The lost is found. Heaven rings with voices in lofty strains proclaiming: "Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever." **Rev. 5:13**

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LESSON #19 - ELLEN WHITE'S UNDERSTANDING OF REVELATION 11:18

Revelation 11:18 summarizes the entire second half of the book of Revelation. There are five successive events in this verse:

- The **anger** of the nations (Revelation 12-14)
- The arrival of **God's wrath** (Revelation 15-19)
- The time for the **judgment of the wicked** dead (Revelation 20)
- The time to **reward** the prophets, the saints and those who fear God's name (22:12)
- **Destroy** those who destroy the earth (Revelation 20: 7-9, 14, 15)

Ellen White clearly understood the sequence of events in Revelation 11:18:

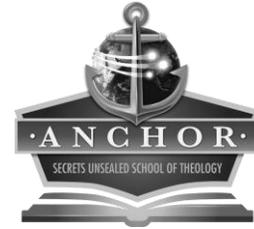
*“At the commencement of the holy Sabbath, January 5, 1849, we engaged in prayer with Brother Belden's family at Rocky Hill, Connecticut, and the Holy Ghost fell upon us. I was taken off in vision to the most holy place, where I saw Jesus still interceding for Israel. On the bottom of His garment was a bell and a pomegranate. Then I saw that Jesus would not leave the most holy place until every case was decided either for salvation or destruction, and that the wrath of God could not come until Jesus had finished His work in the most holy place, laid off His priestly attire, and clothed Himself with the garments of vengeance. Then Jesus will step out from between the Father and man, and God will keep silence no longer, but pour out His wrath on those who have rejected His truth. I saw that the **anger of the nations**, the **wrath of God**, and the **time to judge the dead** were **separate and distinct**, one **following** the other, also that Michael*

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had not stood up, and that the time of trouble, such as never was, had not yet commenced. The nations are now getting angry, but when our High Priest has finished His work in the sanctuary, He will stand up, put on the garments of vengeance, and then the seven last plagues will be poured out.” EW 36

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LESSON #20 - SOME AMAZING DETAILS CONFIRMED

Let's take a few moments to examine some statements from Ellen White where she does not add to the Scriptures but rather helps us clarify certain concepts:

The End of Judas

The Bible seems to be contradictory when it describes the end of Judas. Let's compare the story in the gospels and in the book of Acts:

Matthew 27:5

“Then he threw down the pieces of silver in the temple and departed, and went and hanged himself.”

Acts 1:16-19

*“Men and brethren, this Scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit spoke before by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus; **17** for he was numbered with us and obtained a part in this ministry.” **18** (Now this man purchased a field with the wages of iniquity; and **falling headlong, he burst open in the middle and all his entrails gushed out.**”*

Notice how Ellen White beautifully reconciles the two apparently contradictory accounts:

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*“They hurried Jesus away with loud shouts of triumph; but their noise ceased for a time when they passed a retired place, and saw at the foot of a lifeless tree the dead body of Judas, who had betrayed Christ. It was a most revolting spectacle; **his weight had broken the cord** by which he had hung himself to the tree, and, in falling, his body had become **horribly mangled**, and was then being devoured by dogs. The mutilated remains were ordered to be buried at once, and the crowd passed on; but there was less noisy mockery, and many a pale face revealed the fearful thoughts within. Retribution seemed already to be visiting those who were guilty of the blood of Jesus.” 3SP 148 □*

When did God sanctify the Sabbath?

It is commonly thought that Adam and Eve were commanded to keep holy the first Sabbath of creation week. Ellen White begs to differ. In every statement she makes it clear that the Sabbath was sanctified when the day ended after God had rested the entire day. Adam and Eve could not have kept the Sabbath holy before it was made holy. They could not have followed God’s example before God gave the example and they could not keep the fourth commandment until they had worked six days.

The **biblical testimony**:

Genesis 2:3:

*“Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, **because** in it He **rested** from all His work which God had created and made.” [See the cause and effect use of the word “because” in Genesis 2:23]*

Exodus 20:11: God **rested** and **then sanctified** the Sabbath

*“For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and **rested** the seventh day. **Therefore** the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.” (See the cause and effect use of the word “therefore” in Genesis 2:24).*

*“**After** resting upon the seventh day, **God sanctified it**, or **set it apart**, as a day of rest **for man**.” Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 47*

*“**Because** He **had** rested upon the Sabbath, “God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it,”—set it apart to a holy use. **He gave it to Adam** [notice that God did not give it to Adam until after the day ended] as a day of rest. It was a memorial of the work of creation, and thus a sign of God's power and His love.” The Desire of Ages, p. 281*

*“The Lord's day mentioned by John was the Sabbath, the day on which Jehovah rested after the great work of creation, and which He blessed and sanctified **because He had rested** upon it.” My Life Today, p. 259*

*“God blessed and sanctified the seventh day, **because** He rested upon it from all His wondrous work of creation.” Testimonies for the Church, volume 4, p. 247*

*“The first six days of each week are given to man for labor, because God employed the same period of the first week in the work of creation. On the seventh day man is to refrain from labor, in **commemoration of the Creator's rest**.” PP 111 [you cannot commemorate something that has not already taken place]*

*“Hallowed [**made holy**] **by the Creator's rest** and blessing, the Sabbath was kept by Adam in his innocence in holy Eden [notice that Adam kept the Sabbath after it had been hallowed and blessed and this happened when the seventh day had ended].” GC 453*

*“Instead of keeping God's own rest-day, which he sanctified **after** he had rested upon it, and **set it apart for man** to observe and reverence, they honor a Papal institution.” Review and Herald, September 16, 1862*

The question is this: Was Ellen White in harmony with Scripture when she stated that the Sabbath was sanctified when it ended? Absolutely!

Jesus changing His garments

Hebrews 8:1-2: while the door of probation is open Jesus is **clothed as a high priest**:

“Now this is the main point of the things we are saying: We have such a High Priest, who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, ² a Minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle which the Lord erected, and

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not man.”

Revelation 19:11-16: When Jesus returns to the earth He is clothed **as a king**. This means that He must have changed His garments before He returns:

“Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He **judges and makes war**. **12** His eyes were like a flame of fire, and on His head were **many crowns**. He had* a name written that no one knew except Himself. **13** He was clothed with a **robe dipped in blood [garments of vengeance]**, and His name is called The Word of God. **14** And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses. **15** Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should **strike the nations**. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself **treads the winepress** of the **fierceness and wrath** of Almighty God. **16** And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written: **KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS**.

“Then I saw Jesus **lay off His priestly attire** and clothe Himself with His most **kingly robes**. Upon His head were **many crowns, a crown within a crown**. Surrounded by the angelic host, He left heaven. **The plagues** were falling upon the inhabitants of the earth. Some were denouncing God and cursing Him. Others rushed to the people of God and begged to be taught how they might escape His judgments. But the saints had nothing for them. The last tear for sinners had been shed, the last agonizing prayer offered, the last burden borne, the last warning given.” EW 281

“The nations are **now** getting angry, but when our High Priest has finished His work in the sanctuary, He will stand up, **put on the garments** of vengeance, and then the seven last plagues will be poured out” CET 100.

Time No Longer

Revelation 10:6, KJV

“And swear by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, **that there should be time no longer.**”

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Ellen White remarks about the expression ‘*that there should be time no longer:*’

*“This time, which the Angel declares with a solemn oath, is **not the end of this world’s history, neither of probationary time, but of prophetic time**, which would precede the advent of our Lord. That is, the people will not have another message upon definite time. After this period of time, reaching from 1842 to 1844, there can be **no definite tracing of the prophetic time**. The longest reckoning reaches to the autumn of 1844.” Christ Triumphant, p. 344*

Scholars have struggled with the expression ‘*that there should be time no longer.*’ Albert Barnes lists several scholars each with their own interpretation. Jon Paulien and Ranko Stefanovic contrary to Ellen White, believe that the expression should be translated, ‘*that there would no longer be any delay.*’ One thing is clear: the time referred to in this verse cannot mean the end of human history for at least two reasons:

1) This announcement that time would be no longer is made during the period of the **sixth trumpet** and Jesus does not come to take over his kingdom until the seventh trumpet (Revelation 11:15-19)

2) After the announcement was made that “*time will be no longer,*” John was instructed to **prophesy again** (Revelation 10:11). How could he do this if the world had come to an end? The end of “time” referred to in this verse is not the end of the world, but rather, the end of the **prophetic time periods**. Once again, the word “time” is employed to describe the events on God’s prophetic calendar.

The translation “*there should no longer be any delay*” is incorrect. In the book of Revelation the word **chronos** is used three other times and in none of them can the word be translated in such a way (2:21; 6:11; 20:3) In fact this word is translated “time” in over **30 places** in the New Testament and it is not translated ‘delay’ by modern versions except in this verse. The New Testament had a way to express a delay and that is the word **chronizo** that is used in **Matthew 24:48** where the servant states: “*my master is delayed.*”

The translation “delay” obscures the link between Revelation 10:6 and Daniel 10 and 12. C. Mervyn Maxwell expressed it well:

“In Daniel 12 the ‘man’ swore that the book would be closed until the time of the end, that is, until the time when the 1260 days and the 2300 days would come to an end. In Revelation 10 the ‘angel’ holds the book open and swears that time—that is, prophetic time—has come to an end.” C. Mervyn Maxwell, God Cares, volume 2, p. 305

In Daniel 12:4 we are told that the little book was sealed until the time of the end and then he sees a man clothed in linen who raises his hand to swear by the Creator that the book will remain sealed for 3 ½ times and then all will be fulfilled. Notice that the book is opened first (Revelation 10:1, 2), then seven thunders utter their voices, then the angel declares that time will be no longer. Thus there is a difference between the opening of the little book in 1798 and the declaration that time will be no longer which happens after the book is opened in 1844. Then when the message from the book is finished, the mystery of God comes to an end and probation closes.

It is obvious that the declaration: “*time will be no longer*” cannot have been made by the angel before the 42 months (Revelation 11:2; 13:5), 1260 days (Revelation 11:3; 12:6), 3 ½ times (Revelation 12:14; Daniel 7:25), 3 ½ days (Revelation 11:9, 11) and 2300 days (Daniel 8:14) were fulfilled.

The Identity of the Little Book

Daniel 12:4

*“But you, Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book **until** the time of the end; many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase.”*

Revelation 10:1-2

*“I saw still another mighty angel coming down from heaven, clothed with a cloud. And a rainbow was on his head; his face was like the sun, and his feet like pillars of fire. ² He had **a little book open in his hand.**”*

“In the Revelation all the books of the Bible meet and end. Here is the

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complement of the book of Daniel. One is a prophecy; the other a revelation. The book that was sealed is not the Revelation, but **that portion** of the prophecy of Daniel relating to the **last days**. The angel commanded, "But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end." **Daniel 12:4.**" AA, p. 585

"The message of salvation has been preached in all ages; but **this message [the first angel's message]** is a part of the gospel which could be proclaimed **only in the last days**, for **only then** would it be true that the hour of judgment **had come**. The prophecies present a **succession of events** leading down to the opening of the judgment. This is especially true of the book of Daniel. But **that part** of his prophecy which related to the **last days**, Daniel was bidden to close up and seal "to the time of the end." **Not till we reach this time** could a message concerning the **judgment** be proclaimed, **based** on the **fulfillment of these prophecies**. But at the **time of the end**, says the prophet, "many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." **Daniel 12:4.**" GC, p. 355

"The words of the angel to Daniel relating to the **last days** were to be understood in the **time of the end**. At that time, "many shall run to and fro, and **knowledge shall be increased**." "The wicked shall do wickedly: and **none of the wicked shall understand**; but the **wise shall understand**." Daniel 12:4, 10" DA, p. 234

"The unsealing of the little book was the **message in relation to time.**" Manuscript Releases, volume 1, p. 99

"Honored by men with the responsibilities of state and with the secrets of kingdoms bearing universal sway, Daniel was honored by God as His ambassador, and was given many revelations of the mysteries of ages to come. His wonderful prophecies, as recorded by him in **chapters 7 to 12** of the book bearing his name, **were not fully understood even by the prophet himself**; but before his life labors closed, he was given the blessed assurance that "**at the end of the days**"--in the **closing period of this world's history**--he would again be permitted to stand in his lot and place. **It was not given him to understand all that God had revealed of the divine purpose**. "Shut up the words, and seal the book," he was directed concerning his prophetic writings; these were to be sealed "**even to the time of the end**." "Go thy way, Daniel," the angel once more directed the faithful

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messenger of Jehovah; "for the words are closed up and sealed till **the time of the end**. . . . Go thou thy way till the end be: for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot **at the end of the days**." Daniel 12:4, 9, 13 Prophets and Kings, p. 547

What knowledge is to be increased? (Evangelists)

The Iron and Clay

*"The iron and the clay represent the **mingling of church craft and statecraft**. This union is weakening all the power of the churches. This investing the **church with the power of the state** will bring evil results. Men have almost passed the point of God's forbearance. They have **invested their strength in politics**, and have united with the papacy. But the time will come when God will punish those who have made void His law, and their evil work will recoil upon themselves." (MS 63, 1899) 4BC 1168, 1169*

Jeremiah 18:1-6 explains that the clay represents **God's Old Testament people**, Israel:

*"The word which came to Jeremiah from the Lord, saying: "Arise and go down to the **potter's** house, and there I will cause you to hear My words." Then I went down to the **potter's** house, and there he was, making something at the wheel. And the vessel that he made of **clay** was marred in the hand of the **potter**; so he made it again into another vessel, as it seemed good to the **potter** to make. Then the word of the Lord came to me, saying: "O house of Israel, can I not do **with you** as this **potter**?" says the Lord. "Look, as the **clay** is in the **potter's hand**, so **are you** in My hand, O house of Israel!"*

Genesis 2:7 (with **Isaiah 64:8**): When God created the physical body of man he made it out of **potter's clay**. The body was perfect with all of its members but it had no life. God breathed **the spirit** into the body and then all of the organs and members began to fulfill their **particular function**

"And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being."

*"But now, O Lord, You are our Father; **we are the clay**, and You our potter; and all we are the work of Your hand."*

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Colossians 1:18: Symbolically speaking the **Church is the body of Christ**:

*“And He is the head of the body, **the church**, Who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence.”*

According to **Acts 2:1** ten days before the day of Pentecost, the members of the body of Christ came together as one:

*“When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with **one accord** in one place.”*

Acts 2:2-4: God then breathed the Holy Spirit into the body (see also, John 22:22, 23)

*“And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. 3 Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. 4 And they were **all filled with the Holy Spirit** and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.”*

I Corinthians 12:7-13: Now all the members of the body began to function in perfect harmony with the head and each fulfilled its particular function

“But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all: 8 for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit, 9 to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healings by the same Spirit, 10 to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another different kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. 11 But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills. 12 For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. 13 For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body — whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free — and have all been made to drink into one Spirit.”

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Ezekiel 37:10, 11: Israel is compared to a valley of dry bones. God brings the members of the body together, puts his Spirit in them and they live. These dry bones represent the **house of Israel**

“So I prophesied as He commanded me, and breath came into them, and they lived, and stood upon their feet, an exceedingly great army. 11 Then He said to me, “Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They indeed say: ‘Our bones are dry, our hope is lost, and we ourselves are cut off!’”

Revelation 17:1, 2 describes the same **mixture of Church and state** but uses different symbolism. Instead of referring to the mixture of iron and clay it refers to a fornicating relationship between the apostate **harlot Church** and the **kings of the earth**

*“Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and talked with me, saying to me, ‘Come, I will show you the judgment of the **great harlot** who sits on many waters, 2 with whom the kings of the earth **committed fornication**, and the inhabitants of the earth were made drunk with the wine of her fornication.”*

Revelation 18:1-3: The union of the iron and clay represents the same reality as the harlot fornicating with the kings of the earth:

“After these things I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority, and the earth was illuminated with his glory. 2 And he cried mightily with a loud voice, saying: “Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and has become a dwelling place of demons, a prison for every foul spirit, and a cage for every unclean and hated bird! 3 For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich through the abundance of her luxury.”

The Garden of Eden a little piece of heaven on earth

Ezekiel 28:13

“You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone was your covering:

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the sardius, topaz, and diamond, beryl, onyx, and jasper, sapphire, turquoise, and emerald with gold. The workmanship of your timbrels and pipes was prepared for you on the day you were created.”

*“Adam had themes for contemplation in the works of God in Eden, which was **heaven in miniature**.” 1BC 1082*

*“As his feet touch the mountain, it parts asunder, and becomes a very great plain, and is prepared for the reception of the holy city **in which is the paradise of God the garden of Eden**, which was taken up after man's transgression. Now it descends with the city, more beautiful, and gloriously adorned than when removed from the earth.” 3SG 83, 84*

*“The earth was clothed with beautiful verdure, while myriads of fragrant flowers of every variety and hue sprang up in rich profusion around them. Everything was tastefully and gloriously arranged. **In the midst of the garden** stood the tree of life, the glory of which surpassed all other trees. Its fruit looked like apples of gold and silver, and was to perpetuate immortality. The leaves contained healing properties.” SR 22*

*“The pure and lovely Garden of Eden, from which our first parents were driven, remained until God purposed to destroy the earth by a flood. God had planted that garden and specially blessed it, and in His wonderful providence He withdrew it from the earth, and **will return it to the earth** again more gloriously adorned than before it was removed from the earth. God purposed to preserve a specimen of His perfect work of creation free from the curse wherewith He had cursed the earth.” SR 58*

Serpents could fly

*“The serpent was then one of the wisest and most beautiful creatures on the earth. It **had wings**, and while **flying through the air** presented an appearance of dazzling brightness, having the color and brilliancy of burnished gold.” PP 53*

In the **artwork of antiquity** the serpent is portrayed quite frequently as having wings. It is clear that in the minds of the ancients there was still a remnant of the original character of the serpent.

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Genesis 3:14:

*"So the LORD God said to the serpent: "Because you have done this, you are cursed more than all cattle, and more than every beast of the field; **on your belly you shall go**, and you shall eat dust all the days of your life."*

Isaiah 14:29

*"Do not rejoice, all you of Philistia, because the rod that struck you is broken; for out of the serpent's roots will come forth a viper, and its offspring will be a fiery **flying serpent**."*

God had warned Adam and Eve

Genesis 3:1: Eve was **expecting an angel** to tempt her at the tree and this is the reason why Satan used a serpent as his medium of temptation:

*"Now the serpent was more **cunning** than any beast of the field that the LORD God had made. And he **said to the woman**, "Has God indeed said, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden'?"*

*"Our first parents were **not left without a warning** of the danger that threatened them. Heavenly messengers opened to them the history of Satan's fall and his plots for their destruction, unfolding more fully the nature of the divine government, which the prince of evil was trying to overthrow." PP 52*

*"**Had she been addressed by a being like the angels**, her fears would have been excited; but she had no thought that the fascinating serpent could become the medium of the fallen foe." PP 53*

Was Adam with Eve when she was tempted?

Genesis 3:6

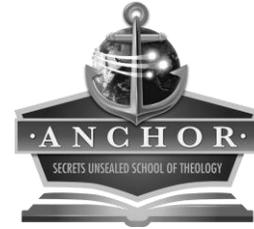
*"So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband **with her**, and he ate.*

Genesis 3:12

*"Then the man said, "The woman whom You gave to be **with me**, she gave me of the tree, and I ate."*

*"The angels had cautioned Eve to beware of **separating herself from her husband** while occupied in their daily labor in the garden; with him she would be in less danger from temptation than if she were alone. But absorbed in her pleasing task, she unconsciously wandered from his side." PP 53, 54 341*

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LESSON # 21 - ELLEN WHITE: THE MESSENGER OF THE LORD (Mal 2:6-7) By Dr. Douglas Waterhouse (5/16/14)

In the following pages I have put together a few samples (among many) that illustrate Ellen White’s remarkable insights and amazing understanding. Her inspired insights and predictions demonstrably stand head and shoulders above supposedly worldly keepers of learning. The unbelieving doubter needs to know that Ellen’s formal education closed when she was but 9 years old!

Prediction: A multiplication of the written Word

Under inspiration Ellen White predicted that *“While other books might be destroyed, [the Bible] was to be immortal. And near the close of time, when the delusions of Satan should increase, it was to be so multiplied that all who desired it might have a copy”* (EW 220)

Prediction fulfilled: In Ellen White’s day no one could possibly have foreseen our exciting new era of computer typesetting and instant desktop publishing, when material can reach millions of readers in seconds on the World Wide Web – and without a sheet of paper! Today’s youth live with computer screens. They are completely comfortable with social media devices so that the whole Bible (including all of Ellen White’s writings) can be held under a touch screen in one hand. Who needs to go to the library or the bookstore? Hundreds of millions around the world are on global telecom; changing the way we learn. It’s irreversible. God’s written Word is readably and easily available to all – just as predicted. Who could have foreseen this most startling technological advance back in the horse and buggy days of the 19th century?

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Prediction: The Truth on Climate Change

Led by the Spirit, Ellen wrote:

“The restraining Spirit of God is even now being withdrawn from the world. Hurricanes, storms, tempests, fire and flood, disasters by sea and land, follow each other in quick succession.”

Tellingly she adds:

“Science seeks to explain all these. The signs thickening around us, telling of the near approach of the Son of God, are attributed to any other than the true cause. Men cannot discern the sentinel angels restraining the four winds...” (6T 408).

Our daily news brings confirmation:

Exactly as predicted, leading scientists are attempting – unsuccessfully -- to explain the extreme weather events. Many say that man-made global warming is the cause of the on-going disasters. This in spite of the fact that persistent cold temperatures just recently resulted in a vicious ice storm that made Christmas week (in 2013) a nightmare from the Midwest to Maine; shattering stately trees that had stood for generations. Four of the five Great Lakes experienced rare and unusual near-total ice coverage.

Predictions from so-called climate models turn out to be consistently wrong. The U.K.’s national weather service concedes that there has been no change in global temperature in the last 17 years even though greenhouse gas emissions keep rising. The most recent computer projections suggest that if the world was warming, California should be getting wetter and not be now stricken by her current drought (2013-2014). In other words, top climate scientists seek but fail to find a creditable reason for changing weather patterns that have brought: extreme droughts, heat waves, floods, tropical cyclones and even unexpected global sea ice levels!

And it is not just weather for the earth also is experiencing sudden earthquakes, tsunamis, unusual floods, huge landslides and raging fires. Scientists remain at a loss; for they cannot explain the rash of ongoing calamitous events. But inspiration lays out the true cause of the current happenings in the heavens, earth, and sea.

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Addendum. As a supplement Mrs. White adds: “*Satan works through the elements also to garner his harvest of unprepared souls. He has studied the secrets of the laboratories of nature, and he uses all his power to control the elements as far as God allows*” (GC 589).

What did the god Dagon look like?

In 1 Samuel 5:4 we read that the chief Philistine deity Dagon “*had fallen face downward on the ground before the ark of the Lord, and the head of Dagon and both his hands were lying cut off upon the threshold; only the trunk [the dagyn: fishy-part] of Dagon was left to him.*”

Outside of this verse there is no indication of what the god looked like by authoritative sources, such as early Jewish writers in the Talmud, the Targum, or by Josephus. Later authors of the early Christian era (Jerome and Talmudic tradition) do point out that the Semitic root *dag* (in *dagyn*) means: “fish.” In spite of these early hints, and the revealing description provided by Scripture, modern scholars unequivocally reject the fish identity.

Every one of the modern Bible Dictionaries and Commentaries—even the highly esteemed *Encyclopedia Judaica* (5:1222)--speak of the idol--not as a god of the sea--but rather an inland god associated with weather and mountains. A patron of seed, vegetation and crops, Dagon supposedly is completely without any fish character. Linguists tend to interpret the root *dgn* (*dagan*) as meaning “grain.” Hence, today’s ruling majority of the well educated have reached the conclusion that the Philistine god is a vegetation-deity. [**Among many sources consulted:** *The Anchor Bible Dictionary* [1992] volume 2, p. 2; *The Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible* [1962]. Volume A-D, p. 756)]

Ellen White, however, is of a different opinion:

Concerning the Philistine god she says:

“*The upper part of this idol was like that of a man, and the lower part was in the likeness of a fish*” (PP 586).

Archaeology to the rescue: During a 1961 archaeological excavation within the ancient Philistine city of Gaza, a Hellenistic statue of a god was brought to the surface. The face and torso was found to be sculptured in the shape of a man, while

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the lower body was seen to possess a scaly, double fish-tail--a merman with fins instead of feet! The chief excavator put forth his belief that the statue was none other than the god Dagon. His conclusion was based on the fact that not only was Gaza's principle patron deity the god Dagon (Judges 16:21-23), but Jerome (*circa* A.D. 395) had clearly stated (in Latin) that Dagon was a *piscis trititae*: a "marine (fishlike) divinity." Given the archaeological evidence, Dagon turns out to have been what the Greeks called a "*triton*,"—that is, a sea god whose upper body is that of a man and his lower extremities a tail of a fish.

Conclusion: In light of convincing evidence, the inspired pen of the Ellen White (uneducated by earthly standards) trumps that of the current opinion-makers who supposedly are the most knowledgeable! **Source:** Labib Habachi. "A Statue of a 'Triton' from Gaza," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 20 (1961): 47-49.

Addendum: The reason why Dagon was so highly esteemed in antiquity is found in a cherished Mesopotamian tradition that at the dawn of civilization, before historical records were kept, a person (whom Babylonian priests called "Oannes") brought forth from the sea knowledge and technology above any thing subsequently achieved by humanity. Memorialized as Oannes-from-the-sea, this wise man reasonably may be identified as a legendary memory of Noah. He frequently is depicted as a totally human figure, but having his back partially enclosed by a large fish costume (as an emblem).

Was it not Noah who came forth miraculously from the ocean, teaching men how to live, compile laws, and how to worship? Remembered as the Grand Master, who founded all the essentials of civilized life (its crafts, mathematical figuring, and organizing community-living, etc.), Oannes was worshiped as an amphibious Dagon by both Canaanites and Philistines. Given this historical background, when Jonah also miraculously came forth from the sea, the people of Nineveh--not surprisingly--were predisposed to give he-who-came-forth-from-a-large-fish their rapt attention; believing him to be a member of the tribe of Oannes!

Among sources consulted: Robert K.G. Temple. *The Sirius Mystery*: Rochester VT: Destiny Books, 1987, pp. 125-126. Cyrus H. Gordon, *Before Columbus*: New York: Crown Publishers, Inc., 1971, pp. 53, 76. A.L. Oppenheim. *Ancient Mesopotamia*. Chicago Press, 1964, p. 365, n. 24. F.S. Bodenheimer, *Animal and*

Man in Bible Lands. Figures and Plates, Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1972, pp. 11-58 (Figure 48).

How many gem-stones were on the breastplate?

The conventional wisdom, as promulgated in all Bible Dictionaries and in every Bible Commentary, is that the square breastplate of Israel's high priest was affixed with a total of twelve stones. Namely, a discrete set of twelve precious gems centrally placed in four parallel rows of three stones each. Each different colored gem represented one of the twelve "sons of Israel" (Exodus 28:16-20; 39:9-13).

The well-versed Jewish historian Josephus, writing around A.D. 75, similarly reports that the twelve gems were configured in four rows (*Wars of the Jews* V.5.7; *cf. Antiq. of the Jews* III.7.5). Accordingly, highly respectable Jewish publications unanimously present the breastplate (in both words and pictures) as possessing but twelve stones--gem-stones that are centrally placed in the middle of the breastplate.

The understanding of Ellen White differs:

In contrast to all modern reference works, Ellen White states that there also existed another additional set of affixed twelve jewel-stones that formed a border on the square breastplate.

Her words:

"Over the ephod was the breastplate . . . It was in the form of a square . . . the border was formed of a variety of precious stones, the same that form the twelve foundations of the [square] city of God. Within the border were [another, additional emplacement of] twelve stones set in gold, arranged in rows of four . . . engraved with the names of the tribes . . . (Exodus 38:29)" (PP 351)

In other words, the breastplate contained not 12, but 24 stones. In the autumn of 1981 the truthfulness of Sister White's claims were demonstrated. That year saw an article appear in the prestigious *Journal of Biblical Literature* that set forth an authentic memory of the inventory of stones worn by the Hebrew high priest. Preserved by early Jewish writers-- in the Targum, Midrash, and Cabbalistic literature--was the affirmative information that in addition to the four parallel rows of twelve stones, there also were gem-stones in a quadratic figure, placed along the edges of the square.

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The stone configuration corresponded to the quadripartite Sanctuary Encampment of the wilderness (Numbers 2), in which the order of the Israelite camp had an arrangement of three tribes (in a horizontal row) on each of the four sides of the central Sanctuary. (Thus forming a square). *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan*--a work authored by a student of Hillel (who in the late 1st century B.C. founded a school of rabbinic leaders)--provides the information that the colors of the breastplate border-jewels correspond to the colors of the twelve tribal banners.

The concluding assessment of the 1981 article is that: The stone inventory of *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan* “is noteworthy [in] that the stones are not mentioned in four parallel rows, but rather in connection with the quadratic order of the camp, namely three per side (cf. Rev 21:13, 16, 19-20).” **Source:** William W. Reader, “The Twelve Jewels of Revelation 21:19-20: Tradition History and Modern Interpretation,” *Journal of Biblical Literature*, 100/3 (September 1981): 433-457.

Addendum: Does the high priest enter the Most Holy Place without his breastplate?

Leviticus 16 (the Day of Atonement chapter) refers to the high priest as wearing plain linen garments upon going “*in the holy place*” (*boqqodesh*: literally “in the holy” [verse 23; cf. verse 4]). Accordingly, nearly all modern Commentaries carry the assertion that it is only after the completion of the Day of Atonement rites are ended--and only then--does the high priest lay aside his penitent’s plain-garb (which has no breastplate) and puts on his magnificent cloth-of-gold costume.

In other words, the notion is put forward that when the high priest officiated within the Most Holy Place he is dressed in garments of unadorned humility! Such a conclusion places Ellen White’s contrary opinion as completely out of odds with the majority of the modern world’s academic authorities. In sharp contrast, she unquestionably writes that when the high priest entered within the Most Holy Place he indeed was fully attired, not in plain linen, but rather clothed with his sacred, royal vestments (EW 251).

“The high priest always entered [the Most Holy Place] with trembling . . . If he remained an unusual time in the most holy, the people were often terrified, fearing that because of their sins, or some sin of the priest, the glory of the Lord had slain

him. But when the sound of the tinkling of the bells upon his garments was heard, they were greatly relieved. He then came forth and blessed the people” (4SG-a 10)

Two pertinent observations clear up the confusion.

(1) Observation One: The phrase “*in the holy* [place]” (Leviticus 16:23) is not a reference to entering within the inner Tabernacle (as usually assumed). For as the Hebrew scholar Menahem Haran points out, “in the holy” actually denotes the approach to the sanctity of the outer Altar. The Hebrew text of Exodus 29:37 even calls the outer Altar of Burnt Offering: “Holy of holies” (*cf.* the Hebrew of Exodus 40:10).

Furthermore, in Scripture the designation “*the holy place*” (literally “the holy”) does not serve as a definitive technical term. The drink offering for the outer Altar (outside the inner Tabernacle), for example, is spoken of as taking place “in the holy place” (Numbers 28:7). Indeed, *haqqodesh* (“the holy”) also has reference to every one of the Sanctuary articles of furniture (as in Numbers 4:15, 20).

(2) Observation Two: According to God’s direct command, when the high priest enters, or leaves the Tabernacle he is to be wearing his heavy and stately golden vestments, the bells on the skirt of his ephod-robe sounding, “*lest he die*” (Exodus 28:35). As the text makes clear, it was mandatory (on pain of death) that the jingling of the bells were to be heard within the Tabernacle--not just on the Day of Atonement, but also when the high priest is walking up to the inner altar, or retracing his steps from it (Exodus 39:26; 1 Samuel 2:28). When, however, his duties call him to be outside the Tabernacle-tent to offer sacrifice (in the outer court), then

“ . . . the high priest laid aside his pontifical robes and officiated in the white linen dress of an ordinary priest, so Christ laid aside His royal robes and garbed Himself with humanity and offered sacrifice, Himself the priest, Himself the victim” (AA 33)

As Josephus puts it:

“ . . . the high priest did not wear these [sacred] garments at other times, but a more plain habit; he only did it when he went into the most sacred part of the temple . . .” (Wars of the Jews V.5.7).

Source consulted: Menahem Haran. *The Temples & Temple Service in Ancient Israel*, Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1978. Pages 172, 218, 227

Additional note:

The Outer Court, containing the Altar of Burnt Offering (emblem of the Cross [John 1:29; Rev 5:6]) was a representation of the arena of Christ's earthly ministry. The Inner Court of hanging curtains, with its inwrought figures of angels (Exodus 26:1, 31; cf. Ezekiel 41:17-18, 20), represented heaven--the Mercy Seat being an emblem of the Throne of God (Isa 37:16; Numbers 7:89).

Christ "*fulfilled one phase of His priesthood by dying on the cross for the fallen race [as represented by the shedding of sacrificial blood in the Outer Court]. He is now fulfilling another phase by pleading before the Father the case of the repenting, believing sinner [as represented by the officiating high priest in the Inner Court]*" (Ellen G. White, Manuscript 42, 1901)

Are there Scale Balances within the Sanctuary?

Several times Ellen White refers to the character of our lives as "*being weighed in the balances of the sanctuary*" (5T 279; 8T 247). The difficulty in that statement lies in the fact that for modern readers of Scripture there apparently are no scale-balances to be found within the Sanctuary. The puzzling statement turns out to be wonderfully resolved once the significance of the word *qaneh* is understood. *Qaneh*--in Hebrew--is literally the (sturdy bamboolike) stalk of a cane-reed. (The English word "cane" is derived from *qaneh*). Significantly, however, *qaneh* is the word that is used to signify the shaft that holds up the sacred Sanctuary-Lampstand (Exodus 25:31, 37:15, 18). And, additionally, *qaneh* also means a beam possessing balancing scales. In the latter sense we have the following Isaiah passage: "...*weigh out silver in the qaneh*" (Isa 46:6, RSV). Literally meaning: "weigh out" silver ingots by means of the *qaneh*-beam [with its scale balances]."

Qaneh thus has (in the Hebrew mind) a linkage with both lamp and weighing scales. That sort of linkage is similarly discovered in the Hebrew word *kabodh*. Although literally meaning "weighty," the word also is understood to mean "glory,"--as (for example) in reference to God's garment of "light" (Exodus 16:7). The double entendre is based on the ancient notion that weight not only designate monetary values, but also express estimates of character--the "gravitas" of a

person's reputation (Isa 5:13). Hence, Job says: "*Let me be weighed in a just balance, and let God know my integrity*" (Job 31:6). The pen of inspiration captures the connection with light: "*...we must be judged by the light and privileges the Lord has granted us*" (5T 624; cf. 2T 70).

In traditional Jewish thought, the Sanctuary *Menorah* (candelabrum) symbolized the light of the *Torah* (the Word). Of the Messiah the Lord said: "*Behold My Servant...a bruised *qaneh* [the central shaft of the Lampstand] He will not break. And a dimly burning wick He will not quench*" (Isaiah 42:1, 3; cf. Matt 12:20).

In the synonymous parallelism (in which the thought of the first line finds clarification in the second line) we learn that God's faithful Servant will never allow the Light held-up by the *qaneh* to become completely extinguished.

Extra Note:

It was the duty of the high priest to keep the wicks of the Menorah ever burning: four (of the seven) during the night and three burning during the day.

Addendum 1. A further metaphorical application:

During Biblical times, the *qaneh*, "a straight reed," additionally was employed as a measuring-rod. An Ezekiel passage reads: ". . . *the length of the measuring qaneh in the man's hand was six long cubits...*" (Ezekiel 40:5). A metaphorical application to the concept of measuring may now be discerned. For when the Old Testament prophets refer to measuring Jerusalem and her Sanctuary--by the use of a *qaneh*--the measuring can be understood in a figurative sense as referring to the restoration of the City and Temple after the Babylonian Captivity (as in Ezekiel 40:2-5; Zechariah 2:2).

This Old Testament understanding is alluded to in the Revelation passage: "*Rise and measure the temple of God and the altar and those who worship there*" (11:1). The measuring--that needs to be done--is to be understood in a spiritual sense--indicating the restoration of the Sanctuary-message after centuries of misunderstanding and neglect.

In referencing the text of Rev 11:1, Ellen White in a subtle manner, brings out the deeper meaning inherent in the Hebrew understanding of *qaneh*: "*Thus we measure the temple and the altar, or the ministration connected with the temple*

and the work and the position of our High Priest; and we measure the worshipers with that part of the rod which relates to character, namely, the ten commandments” (R&H Jan 21, 1890).

Can the Sanctuary Candelabrum be associated with an individual?

Ellen White employs a peculiar choice of words when she writes: “. . . *when the [end-time] test will come . . . Those who have assumed the ornaments of the sanctuary, but are not clothed with Christ’s righteousness, will then appear in the shame of their own nakedness” (PK 188; Maranatha 196).*

A depiction on the wall, found within an ancient Jewish catacomb at Beth-She’arim, Israel, illustrates the meaning of the curious phrase “*assumed the ornaments of the sanctuary.*” A human figure (presumably the local priest) is shown flanking the side of a recessed niche--a niche designed to represent a synagogue apse. What is unusual, and a striking feature of the depiction, is that the “priest” is shown standing right up against a seven branched, sanctuary-candelabrum --as though the *Menorah* was part and parcel of his persona! He obviously represents the “messenger of the Lord” (Mal 2:7), who makes his appearance every Sabbath, standing in front of a *Menorah*.

Although not generally known, it was the common custom during New Testament times for the Scriptural-Word to be liturgically read by a reader (=chanter) fronting a Sanctuary lampstand (*cf.* Rev 1:13). Worship during that era was based on the format of the synagogue’s established Jewish orthodoxies (that originated from Ezra). Hence, in James 2:2 the term employed for the place of Christian worship is not “ecclesia,” but rather “synagogue.” The synagogue’s raised podium (*bema*), enclosed by the curved walls of a recessed-apse, was the place where two separate and discrete citations from the Bible were featured every Sabbath morning (*cf.* Acts 13:15). For truth is sustained on the evidence of more than one witness (Deuteronomy 17:6; 19:15; 1 Tim 5:19).

The Christian service began with an assigned portion of the Old Testament, given in front of a seven-branched lampstand (on the congregation’s right-side)--at a place known as “the Seat of Moses” (Matt 23:2; Acts 15:21). A corresponding, subordinate citation from the New Testament (followed by a homily) then was

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delivered from a separate left-side lectern called: “Chair of Elijah.” This explains why the “two witnesses” of Rev 11:4 are characterized by allusions to the ministry of Elijah and Moses (Rev 11:6). The ministry of Moses was “kingly” (Exodus 7:1); the ministry of Elijah “priestly” (interpretive). Furthermore, the two witnesses are referred to as “two olive trees, even . . . two lampstands” (Rev 11:4; Ps 52:8)--that is, two seven-branched candelabrum; each having treelike branches. Each branch respectively held aloft a miniature lamp (*lampades* [Rev 4:5]) filled with olive oil. The two trees of light “stand before the Lord of the earth” (Rev 11:4)--perceived as two lesser lights flanking the entranceway to that of an inner greater Light. For centered within the synagogue’s recessed apse, prominently enthroned, and “perpetually” illuminated by a large hanging-lamp, was the Word (John 1:1). The ceiling lamp served to remind the congregation that they were in the presence of the divine Shekinah “Glory-of-the-Lord” (Ezekiel 1:28). Kept in a “holy ark” (cabinet-container), representing the Ark of the Covenant, the Word was inscribed on leather rolls; each Scroll of Scripture possessing top staves crowned with royal diadems. Hence the telling statement in Revelation: “. . . *He is called . . . The Word of God . . . He has a name inscribed, King of kings and Lord of lords*” (Rev 19:13, 16).

The Qaneh in its guise as Canon: During the Christian era, the word *qaneh* (rendered in the Greek as *kanon*) was passed-on into the English language as “canon” – a standard-rule to judge by--a standard that measures up to an accepted, genuine criterion. The term Sacred Canon, of course, is in reference to the books of the Bible; anciently: –books recognized as partnered next to the Menorah’s *qaneh* (the emblem of inerrant, Spirit-filled-Light).

In a synagogue setting, it would be anathema to allow a secular, uninspired book anywhere near the sacred candelabrum. The councils of the church acknowledged and then officially ratified what already had been settled as Sacred Canon by the aggregate consensus of believers.

Another canon: Additionally, a clergyman serving in a cathedral or collegiate church may receive the designation “canon.” For he is one who supposedly measures-up to the canon, or church-rule.

Sources: L. Yarden. *The Tree of Light: A Study of the Menorah*. Ithaca NY: Cornell University Press, 1971. Figure 113. Joseph Gutmann (ed.). *The*

Synagogue: Studies in Origins, Archaeology and Architecture. New York: KTAV Publishing House, Inc. 1975. Page 234. Y. Shiloh. "Torah Scrolls and the Menorah Plaque from Sardis," *Israel Exploration Journal* 18 (1968): 54-57. *Encyclopaedia Judaica*. Vol. 5. Jerusalem: Keter Publishing House Jerusalem Ltd., Israel. 1982. A stone "seat of Moses" was unearthed from the *circa* third century synagogue at Chorazin, Galilee (pictured on page 494). "Christian liturgy and forms of worship bear the mark of Jewish origins and influence indebted to the example of the synagogue. The reading of passages from the "Old" and the "New" Testaments is a Christian version of the synagogue reading from the Torah and the Prophets" [Acts 13:15, 27] (page 510).

Statements having significant standing:

While scholarly publications of the world remain at a complete loss in attempting to explain the true identity of the Two [lampstand] Witnesses of Rev 11:3-6, the pen of inspiration correctly points out that the "two witnesses represent the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament" (GC 267). An identity reinforced by the Psalmist: "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path" (Ps 119:105).

In a striking corollary to the synagogue's worship format, in which the preacher's homily --from the Chair of Elijah--was delivered from that of a secondary, derivative light--an allocated disbursement-quota from that of the inner Greater Light (the ark's Sacred Canon)--we have this insightful testimony:

"Little heed is given to the Bible, and the Lord has given a lesser light [Ellen White's writings] to lead men and women to the greater light [God's Word as the unerring standard]" (*Evangelism* 257; *7BC* 877).

Ellen White always was cognizant of the position of God's Word as the supreme test of Christian faith and practice. In accordance with her sentiments, the Seventh-day Adventist Church does not consider Sister White's writings as either a substitute for, or an addition to the Sacred Canon.

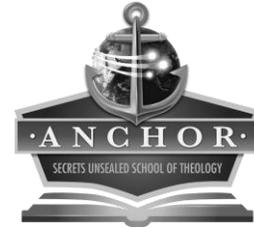
When she was asked if she was a prophet, she "ever responded, *I am the Lord's Messenger*" (1 *SM* 31-32; cf. Mal 2:7). While the Church believes that our feet stand on the solid rock of the Scriptures, the Church also believes that Ellen White was given a prophetic gift to help the Church keep her feet on the solid path that

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leads to the Kingdom.

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by Pastor Stephen Bohr

**LESSON # 22 - HENRY ALFORD, THE INSPIRATION OF THE
EVANGELISTS AND OTHER NEW TESTAMENT WRITERS,
The New Testament for English Readers,
volume 1, chapter 1, section 6, pp. 20-27**

1. The results of our inquiries hitherto may be thus stated:—That our three Gospels have arisen independently of one another, from sources of information possessed by the Evangelists:—such sources of information, for a very considerable part of their contents, being the narrative teaching of the Apostles; and, in cases where their personal testimony was out of question, oral or documentary narratives, preserved in and received by the Christian Church in the apostolic age;—that the three Gospels are not formal, complete accounts of the whole incidents of the sacred history, but each of them fragmentary, containing such portions of it as fell within the notice, or the special design, of the Evangelist.

2. The important question now comes before us, *In what sense are the Evangelists to be regarded as having been inspired by the Holy Spirit of God?* That they were so, in some sense, has been the concurrent belief of the Christian body in all ages. In the *second*, as in the *nineteenth* century, the ultimate appeal, in matters of fact and doctrine, has been to these venerable writings. It may be well then first to inquire on what grounds their authority has been rated so high by all Christians.

3. And I believe the answer to this question will be found to be, *Because they are regarded as authentic documents, descending from the apostolic age, and presenting to us the substance of the apostolic testimony.* The Apostles being raised up for the special purpose of *witnessing to the Gospel history*,—and these memoirs having been universally received in the early church as embodying their testimony, I see no escape left from the inference, that they come to us with *inspired authority*. The Apostles themselves, and their contemporaries in the ministry of the Word, were singularly

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endowed with the Holy Spirit for the founding and teaching of the Church; and Christians of all ages have accepted the Gospels and other writings of the New Testament as the written result of the Pentecostal effusion. The early Church was not likely to be deceived in this matter. The reception of the Gospels was *immediate and universal*....

4. Upon the authenticity, i.e. the *apostolicity* of our Gospels, rests their claim to inspiration. Containing the substance of the Apostles' testimony, they carry with them that special power of the Holy Spirit which rested on the Apostles in virtue of their office, and also on other teachers and preachers of the first age. It may be well then to inquire of what kind that power was, and how far extending.

5. We do not find the Apostles transformed, from being men of individual character and thought and feeling, into mere channels for the transmission of infallible truth. We find them, humanly speaking, to have been still distinguished by the same characteristics as before the descent of the Holy Ghost. We see Peter still ardent and impetuous, still shrinking from the danger of human disapproval;—we see John still exhibiting the same union of deep love and burning zeal;—we find them pursuing different paths of teaching, exhibiting different styles of writing, taking hold of the truth from different sides.

6. Again, we do not find the Apostles *put in possession at once* of the divine counsel with regard to the Church. Though Peter and John were full of the Holy Ghost immediately after the Ascension, neither at that time, nor for many months afterwards, were they put in possession of the purpose of God regarding the Gentiles, which in due time was specially revealed to Peter, and recognized in the apostolic council at Jerusalem.

7. These considerations serve to show us in what respects the working of the Holy Spirit on the sacred writers was analogous to His influence on every believer in Christ; viz. in the retention of individual character and thought and feeling,—and in the gradual development of the ways and purposes of God to their minds.

8. But their situation and office was *peculiar and unexampled*. And for its fulfillment, peculiar and unexampled gifts were bestowed upon them. One of these, which bears very closely upon our present subject, was, the *recalling by the Holy Spirit of those things which the Lord had said to them*. This was His own formal promise, recorded

in John 14:26. And if we look at our present Gospels, we see abundant evidence of its fulfillment.

What unassisted human memory could treasure up saying and parable, however deep the impression at the time, and report them in full at the distance of several years, as we find them reported, with every internal mark of truthfulness in our Gospels? What invention of man could have devised discourses which by common consent differ from all sayings of men—which possess this character unaltered notwithstanding their transmission through men of various mental organization—which contain things impossible to be understood or appreciated by their reporters at the time when they profess to have been uttered—which enwrap the seeds of all human improvement yet attained, and are evidently full of power for more? ...

9. And let us pursue the matter further by analogy. Can we suppose that the light poured by the Holy Spirit upon the *sayings* of our Lord would be confined to such sayings, and not extend itself over the other parts of the narrative of His life on earth? Can we believe that those miracles, which though not uttered in words, were yet *acted parables*, would not be, under the same gracious assistance, brought back to the minds of the Apostles, so that they should be placed on record for the teaching of the Church?

10. And, going yet further, to those parts of the Gospels which were wholly out of the cycle of the Apostles' own testimony,—can we imagine that the divine discrimination which enabled them to detect the “lie to the Holy Ghost,” should have forsaken them in judging of the records of our Lord's birth and infancy,—so that they should have taught or sanctioned an apocryphal, fabulous, or mythical account of such matters? *Some account* of them must have been current in the apostolic circle; for Mary the mother of Jesus survived the Ascension, and would be fully capable of giving undoubted testimony to the facts. (See notes on Luke 1:2.) Can we conceive then that, *with her among them*, the Apostles should have delivered other than a true history of these things? Can we suppose that St. Luke's account, which he includes among the things *delivered by those who were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word* from the first, is other than the true one, and stamped with the authority of the witnessing and discriminating Spirit dwelling in the Apostles? ...

11. But if it be inquired, *how far* such divine superintendence has extended in the *framing of our Gospels as we at present find them*, the answer must be furnished by no preconceived idea of what ought to have been, but by *the contents of the*

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Gospels themselves. That those contents are *various*, and *variously arranged*, is token enough, that in their selection and disposition we have human agency presented to us, under no more direct divine guidance, in this respect, than that *general leading*, which in main and essential points should ensure entire accordance. Such leading admits of much variety in points of minor consequence. Two men may be equally led by the Holy Spirit to record the events of our Lord's life for our edification, though one may believe and record, that the visit to the Gadarenes took place before the calling of Matthew, while the other places it after that event; though one in narrating it speaks of two demoniacs,—the other, only of one.

12. And it is observable, that in the only place in the three Gospels where an Evangelist speaks of himself, he expressly lays claim, not to any supernatural guidance in the arrangement of his subject-matter, but to a diligent tracing down of all things from the first; in other words, to the care and accuracy of a faithful and honest compiler. After such an avowal on the part of the editor himself, to assert an immediate revelation to him of the *arrangement to be adopted* and the *chronological notices to be given*, is clearly not justified, according to his own showing and assertion. The value of such arrangement and chronological connection must depend on various circumstances in each case:—on their definiteness and consistency,—on their agreement or disagreement with the other extant records; the preference being in each case given to that one whose account is the most minute in details, and whose notes of sequence are the most distinct.

13. In thus speaking, I am doing no more than even the most scrupulous of our Harmonizers have in fact done. In the case alluded to in paragraph 11, *there is not one of them who has not altered the arrangement*, either of Matthew, or of Mark, and Luke, so as to bring the visit to the Gadarenes into the same part of the Evangelic history. But, if *the arrangement itself were matter of divine inspiration*, then have we *no right to vary* it in the slightest degree, but must maintain (as the Harmonists have done in other cases, but never, that I am aware, in this), *two distinct visits to have been made at different times, and nearly the same events to have occurred at both*. I need hardly add that a similar method of proceeding with all the variations in the Gospels, *which would on this supposition be necessary*, would render the Scripture narrative a heap of improbabilities; and strengthen, instead of weakening, the cause of the enemies of our faith.

14. And not only of the *arrangement* of the Evangelic history are these remarks to be understood. There are certain minor points of accuracy or inaccuracy, of which human

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research suffices to inform men, and on which, from want of that research, it is often the practice to speak vaguely and inexactly. Such are sometimes the conventionally received distances from place to place; such are the common accounts of phenomena in natural history, etc. Now in matters of this kind, the Evangelists and Apostles were not supernaturally informed, but left, in common with others, to the guidance of their natural faculties.

15. The same may be said of citations and dates from history. In the last apology of Stephen, in which he spoke, being full of the Holy Ghost, and with divine influence beaming from his countenance, we have at least two demonstrable inaccuracies in points of minor detail. And the occurrence of similar ones in the Gospels would not in any way affect the inspiration or the veracity of the Evangelists.

16. It may be well to mention one notable illustration of the principles upheld in this section. What can be more undoubted and unanimous than the testimony of the Evangelists to *the resurrection of the Lord*? If there be one fact rather than another of which the Apostles were witnesses, *it was this*: and in the concurrent narrative of all four Evangelists it stands related beyond all cavil or question. Yet of all the events which they have described, *none is so variously put forth in detail*, or with so many minor discrepancies. And this was just what might have been expected, on the principles above laid down. The great fact that the Lord *was risen*,—set forth by the ocular witness of the Apostles, who had seen Him,—became from that day first in importance in the delivery of their testimony. The *precise order* of His appearances would naturally, from the overwhelming nature of their present emotions, be a matter of minor consequence, and perhaps not even of accurate enquiry till some time had passed. Then, with the utmost desire on the part of the women and Apostles to collect the events in their exact order of time, some confusion would be apparent in the history, and some discrepancies in versions of it which were the results of separate and independent enquiries; the traces of which pervade our present accounts. But what fair-judging student of the Gospels ever made these variations or discrepancies a ground for doubting the veracity of the Evangelists as to the fact of the Resurrection, or the principal details of the Lord's appearances after it?

17. It will be well to state the bearing of the opinions advanced in this section on two terms in common use, viz., *verbal* and *plenary* inspiration.

18. With regard to *verbal inspiration*, I take the sense of it, as explained by its most strenuous advocates, to be, that every word and phrase of the Scriptures is absolutely

and separately true,—and, whether narrative, or discourse, took place, or was said, in every most exact particular as set down. Much might be said of the *a priori* unworthiness of such a theory, as applied to a Gospel whose character is the freedom of the Spirit, not the bondage of the letter; but it belongs more to my present work to try it by applying it to the Gospels as we have them. And I do not hesitate to say, that being thus applied, its effect will be to destroy altogether the credibility of our Evangelists. Hardly a single instance of parallelism between them arises, where they do not relate the same thing indeed in substance, but expressed in terms that if literally taken are incompatible with each other. To cite only one obvious instance. The *Title over the Cross* was written in Greek, and being reported in Greek by the Evangelists, must represent not the Latin or Hebrew forms, but *the Greek form*, of the inscription. According then to the verbal-inspiration theory, each Evangelist has recorded the *exact words* of the inscription; *not the general sense*, but the *inscription itself*,—*not a letter less or more*. This is absolutely necessary to the theory. Its advocates must not be allowed, with convenient inconsistency, to take refuge in a common-sense view of the matter wherever their theory fails them, and still to uphold it in the main. And how it will here apply, the following comparison will show:

Matthew, *This is Jesus the King of the Jews.*

Mark, *The King of the Jews.*

Luke, *This is the King of the Jews.*

John, *Jesus of Nazareth the King of the Jews.*

Of course it must be understood, that *I* regard the above variations in the form of the inscription as in fact no discrepancies at all. They entirely prevent our saying with perfect precision what was the form of the inscription, but they leave us the spirit and substance of it. In all such cases I hold with the great Augustine, whose words I have cited in my note on Matt. XIV, when treating of the varying reports of the words spoken by the Apostles to our Lord during the storm on the lake of Galilee,—and cannot forbear citing here again: “*The sense of the Disciples waking the Lord and seeking to be saved, is one and the same: nor is it worth while to enquire, which of these three was really said to Christ. For whether they said any one of these three, or other words, which no one of the Evangelists has mentioned, but of similar import as to the truth of the sense, what matters it?*”

19. Another objection to the theory is, that if it be so, the Christian world is left in uncertainty what her Scriptures are, as long as the sacred text is full of various

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readings. *Some one manuscript must be pointed out to us*, which carries the weight of verbal inspiration, or *some text whose authority shall be undoubted*, must be promulgated. But manifestly neither of these things can ever happen. To the latest age, the reading of some important passages will be matter of doubt in the Church; and, which is equally subversive of the theory, though not of equal importance in itself, there is hardly a sentence in the whole of the Gospels in which there are not varieties of diction in our principal MSS., baffling all attempts to decide which was its original form.

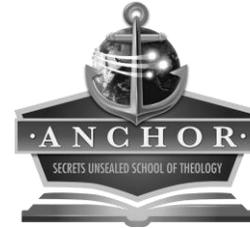
20. The fact is that this theory uniformly gives way before intelligent study of the Scriptures themselves; and is only held, consistently and thoroughly, by those who have never undertaken that study. When put forth by those who have, it is never carried fairly through; but while broadly asserted, is in detail abandoned.

21. If I understand *plenary inspiration rightly*, I hold it to the utmost, as entirely consistent with the opinions expressed in this section. The inspiration of the sacred writers I believe to have consisted in the fullness of the influence of the Holy Spirit especially raising them to, and enabling them for, their work,—*in a manner which distinguishes them from all other writers in the world, and their work from all other works*. The men were full of the Holy Ghost—the books are the pouring out of that fullness through the men,—the conservation of the treasure in earthen vessels. The treasure is ours, in all its richness: but it is ours as only it can be ours,—in the imperfections of human speech, in the limitations of human thought, in the variety incident first to individual character, and then to manifold transcription and the lapse of ages.

22. Two things, in concluding this section, I would earnestly impress on my readers. First, that we must take our views of inspiration not, as is too often done, from *a priori* considerations, but *entirely from the evidence furnished by the Scriptures themselves*: and secondly, that the *men were inspired*, the *books are the results of that inspiration*. This latter consideration, if all that it implies be duly weighed, will furnish us with the key to the whole question.

The New Testament for English Readers,
Vol. 1, Chapter 1, Section 6, pp. 20-27.
From the Deanery, Canterbury, May 4, 1863

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LESSON #23 - THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CONFLICT SERIES CHART

A Publication of the History of the Great Controversy

Visions of the Great Controversy from 1848 to 1858 (Life Sketches, p. 162)

Basic Vision
Mar. 14, 1858

Spiritual Gifts,
Vol. I (1858)
Early Writings
pp. 145-295

Spiritual Gifts,
Vols. III, IV

Spirit of Prophecy
Vols. I-IV

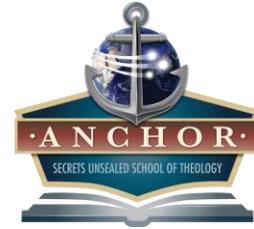
The Conflict Series

The Fall of Lucifer	The Fall of Man	David	Birth of Christ	Ascension of Christ	Destruction of Jerusalem	New Earth
	III IV	Solomon		(A Brief Overview)		
	Vol. I 1870		Vol. II 1877	Vol. III 1878	Vol. IV 1884	
	Patriarchs & Prophets 1890	Prophets & Kings 1917	The Desire of Ages 1898	Acts of the Apostles 1911	The Great Controversy 1888 and 1911	

*Spiritual Gifts, Vol. II (1860), an autobiographical book

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LESSON #24 - STEPHEN SMITH AND THE UNREAD TESTIMONY

By Arthur L. White

This is the story of Stephen Smith. It is constructed from the records of the early days as found in the manuscript vault of the Ellen G. White Publications. His name is used with his expressed permission.

It was in 1850 that Stephen Smith, a man in middle life, accepted the third angel's message. He loved the Sabbath truth, and he rejoiced in the Advent message. Mrs. Smith and the children too loved this truth. They lived in the vicinity of Washington, New Hampshire, where the Adventists first began to keep the Sabbath in 1844. It was not long before Brother Smith was giving his time and strength to heralding his new-found faith. Though he travelled a good bit, the Washington, New Hampshire, church was his home church.

But in those early days, as sometimes today, discordant voices were heard, as now and then someone came along with so-called new light. Stephen Smith was swept off his feet with some such teaching concerning the spiritual advent of Christ, and began to push his new-found but strange views. Having turned from one of the fundamentals of the message, he employed his influence to undermine confidence in the leaders of the work, and was especially critical of Elder and Mrs. White.

We find him next at a conference of the believers held in Washington, New Hampshire, in late October, 1851. Here seventy-five of the believers assembled, some coming from other States. Elder and Mrs. White were there, Stephen Smith was bitter in his criticism and opposition. He was ardent in promulgating his discordant views. Near the close of the Sabbath, Mrs. White was taken off in vision, and the state of

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things in Washington was revealed to her. In plain words she told the brethren what she had been shown. The handwritten record of that early day reads, "The vision had a powerful effect. All acknowledged their faith in the visions except Brother and Stephen Smith." Before the conference closed, the assembled group, because of his discordant views, withdrew the hand of fellowship from Brother Smith. The next year, however, after a seeming change of heart and deep confession, Stephen Smith was back in the church again, but not for long.

Clinging to the Sabbath truth, but in bitter opposition to the visions, poor Mr. Smith was ready to join this little group and that offshoot party, each of which claimed to have new light for God's people. He saw no need for the Spirit of Prophecy_ His sympathies were first with the Messenger Party till it came to naught. He espoused the 1854 time setting till this collapsed, and then he was off with the Marion Party, with their no-organization, no sanctuary, and no-Spirit-of-Prophecy teachings. The true nature of these discordant teachings was clearly seen by the church as the Lord opened up the true significance through the visions to Mrs. White, but Mr. Smith felt no need of these warnings and counsels.

Now, the Lord loved Stephen Smith. During this time of wavering and alienated sympathies, a vision was given to Sister White pointing out his dangers, showing the ultimate result of his course of action, but assuring him of God's love and acceptance if he repented. Painstakingly Mrs. White wrote out what had been revealed to her and closed the epistle with an appeal to turn from his waywardness and walk with God's people. At this time the Whites were residing at Battle Creek, Michigan, so the communication was sent to Mr. Smith by post.

Calling at the post office for his letters shortly thereafter, Mr. Smith was handed a long envelope, and his eyes fell on the return address, Mrs. E. G. White, Battle Creek, Michigan.

Mrs. White has written me a testimony," he said to himself, as in anger he felt the blood rushing to his cheeks, "and I don't want any testimony." In silence he held it for a time in his trembling hand, uncertain as to what he should do. "No, I'll not read it," he to himself Is he pushed the unopened envelope into his pocket and hurried home. Reaching the house, he noticed the trunk over in the corner, and immediately he knew what to do with the letter. In anger he raised the lid, reached down, and lifted the contents enough so that he could slip the unopened letter into the bottom of the trunk.

He slammed the lid down and locked it tight. For twenty-eight years, that testimony lay on the bottom of his trunk unopened and unread.

Now, Stephen Smith went on his own way. I hardly need to describe the course he took. One who knew him well said that he "had the most withering, blighting, tongue of any man I ever, heard. He could say the meanest things, in the meatiest, most cutting way of any man I ever met." He was particularly bitter in his criticism of Mrs. White and the Spirit of Prophecy. Mrs. Smith, who remained loyal to the message, and the children, had an unhappy time indeed. Manifesting such a spirit and such an attitude, Stephen Smith spent what should have been the best years of his life.

Twenty-seven years rolled by. It was now 1884, and his hair had turned white and his back was bent. One day he picked up from the parlor table a copy of *The Review and Herald*—and the *Review* should be on the parlor table of every Adventist home. As he turned its pages and his eye caught the name of Ellen G. White as the author of one of the articles, he stopped to read it, and when he finished he said to himself: "That's the truth." The next week he got hold of another issue of the *Review*, and there was another article from the pen of Sister White, and he said again, "That's God's truth."

And that is the real test of the Spirit of Prophecy, isn't it? It is the way the Lord speaks to our hearts from the pages of the Spirit of Prophecy books, that constitutes the strongest evidence that the work is of God.

From week to week Stephen Smith read. He began to soften in his words and his attitudes. His wife and others noticed the change.

The next summer, 1885, Eugene W. Farnsworth was asked to go back to his old home church at Washington, New Hampshire, to hold revival meetings. This he was happy to do. It was his father, William Farnsworth, right there in the little frame church, who in 1844 had taken his stand for the Sabbath. The word soon got around that Eugene Farnsworth was coming to hold meetings. Stephen Smith, now living at Unity, twelve miles to the north, wanted to see Eugene again and hear him preach. He had known him as a lad and had seen him grow up. So the old man journeyed the twelve miles to Washington to be present at the meeting to be held Sabbath morning. He sat in the audience and Elder Farnsworth preached. His topic was the rise of the Seventh-Day Adventist Movement—a movement of prophecy.

When Elder Farnsworth had finished his sermon, a rustle was heard in the audience and Stephen Smith was struggling to his feet. He wanted to speak, but Elder Farnsworth did not know whether he dared let him speak or not. He expected that if he did speak, it would be a tirade of ridicule and of criticism, but he thought perhaps he had better let the man get it out of his system. This is what Smith said:

"I don't want you to be afraid of me, brethren, for I haven't come to criticize you—I've quit that kind of business." He then reviewed the past; he told how he had opposed church organization and "most everything else;" he referred to his connection with the Messenger Party, his sympathy with the Marion Party, and his general hatred of our work and our people. Finally, he said, he had been comparing notes for a year or two, and he'd seen those parties, one after another, go down, and those who had sympathized with them come to confusion.

"Facts," he said, "are stubborn things. But the facts are that those who have opposed this work have come to nought, and those who have been in sympathy with it have prospered, have grown better, more devoted and godlike. Those who have opposed it have only learned to fight and debate, and they've lost all their religion. No honest man can help seeing that God is with the Advent movement and against us who have opposed it. I want to be in fellowship with this people in heart and in the church."

After this public confession Stephen Smith began to review his past experience. On Thursday he recalled that letter in the bottom of his trunk. It had been years since he had thought of it. For the first time in twenty-eight years he wanted to know what was inside that envelope.

He found the key [and] with trembling hand he unlocked the old trunk, lifted up the lid, and reached down to the bottom feeling for the envelope. Finally he had it in his hand. He pulled it out, looked at it for a minute, and then tore it open. He slipped out the folded handwritten 'sheets, dropped into a chair, and read.

There he read a picture of what his life would be if he followed the course he had embarked upon. He read of bitterness and disappointment. There he read an accurate picture of what his life had been, for he hadn't changed his way. There he read an appeal to turn to God.

Sabbath morning he was back again at Washington. He did not want to miss the meeting. Elder Farnsworth, who knew nothing of this experience, preached on the

Spirit of Prophecy, and he no sooner finished than old Stephen Smith was on his feet again. Listen to his words: "I received a testimony myself twenty-eight years ago, took it home, locked it up in my trunk, and never read it until last Thursday." He said he didn't believe the testimony, although he didn't know a word that was in it. He said he was afraid to read it, for fear it would make him mad, but he said, "I was mad all the time nearly anyway."

Finally he said, "Brethren, every word of that testimony for me is true, and I accept it. I have come to that place where I finally believe the testimonies are all of God. And if I had heeded the one God sent to me as well as the rest, it would have changed the whole course of my life, and I would have been a very different man. Any man that's honest must say that they lead a man toward God and the Bible always. If he's honest, he'll say that; if he won't say that, he's not honest.

"If I had heeded them, it would have saved me a world of trouble. The testimony said there was to be no more definite time preached after the '44 movement, but I thought I knew as much as an 'old woman's visions,' as I used to term them. May God forgive me. But to my sorrow I found the visions were right, and the man who thought he knew it all was all wrong, for I preached the time in '54, and I spent all I had, when if I had heeded them, I should have saved myself all that and much more. The testimonies are right and—I am wrong.

"Brethren," he concluded, "I'm too old to undo what I've done. I'm too feeble to get out to our large meetings, but I want you to tell our people everywhere that another rebel has surrendered."

Our first reaction is one of joy that old Stephen Smith, even late in life, came to see the light and walk in the light. Then we think of the situation. There in his old trunk, unopened and unread, was a message that God sent to save him from a wrong course—a message that God sent to bless and guide him—but there it, lay, unopened and unread, and Stephen Smith went on in his own way. According to his own testimony that message, if it had been read and had been heeded, would have changed his life, and he would have lived a godly, useful life. But the testimony was unheeded because it was unread.

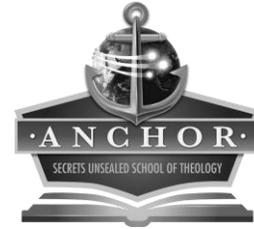
And then I think of our experience—yours and mine. Over on the shelf are those Spirit of Prophecy books—books filled with counsel for us. If they are not on the shelf, we can easily secure them. These books are filled with counsel that meets the

problems we are confronted with today. They are filled with light as to the experiences before the church. There's hardly a page that does not bring a positive message to our hearts. True, our names are not mentioned there, but the messages deal with our experiences. They give us guidance and furnish help in living the Christian life and in making decisions each day. If we leave those books on the shelf unopened and unread, are we any less responsible than was old Stephen Smith? Review and Herald, August 6, 1953.

We are pleased to be able to report that Stephen Smith lived the later years of his life a sweet, consistent, loving Christian. The chastening of the Lord indeed yielded ‘the peaceable fruit of righteousness.’

Story told by Arthur L. White and is found in Notes and Papers, pp. 351-354

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ADDENDUM: THE FIRST FRUITS

One Death, One Resurrection, much Fruit

John 12:20-24: This occurred the week of the crucifixion:

*“Now there were certain Greeks among those who came up to worship at **the feast**. 21 Then they came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida of Galilee, and asked him, saying, “Sir, we wish to see Jesus.” 22 Philip came and told Andrew, and in turn Andrew and Philip told Jesus. 23 But Jesus answered them, saying, “The **hour has come** that the Son of Man **should be glorified**. 24 Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and **dies**, it remains **alone**; but if it dies, it produces **much grain**.”*

Jesus was that **grain of wheat**. Like the grain of wheat, He **died and was buried** in the tomb and on the third day He **sprouted forth** to new life. But the result of his death and resurrection is that there will be **much fruit**, and not only a **singular grain**. From the one grain that is planted, an innumerable number of seeds come forth.

The Chronology of the First Three Hebrew Feasts

6th day (14th of Nissan): Passover the **Lamb slain**

7th day (15th of Nissan): Ceremonial Sabbath of **Unleavened Bread**

1st day (16th of Nissan): The **first fruits** were waved before the Lord

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The First-fruit Ceremony

The first fruit ceremony consisted in the following elements:

- First-fruits of the barley harvest were cut in the field
- Several stocks of grain were formed into a sheaf
- The sheaf was then waved before the Lord
- Each individual Israelite waved their own sheaf but the priest officiated a sheaf at the entrance to the tabernacle of meeting
- The waving of the sheaf took place at 9 am. We know this because the Holy Spirit was poured out at 9 am and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit took place at the third hour!! (Acts 2:15)
- There is a debate among scholars about when the wave sheaf was to be presented before the Lord. The text in Leviticus states that it was to be waved before the Lord on the day after the Sabbath. The question is: Was it to be waved the day after the first day of after the ceremonial Sabbath of Unleavened Bread or was it to be waved before the Lord the day after the weekly Sabbath?
- As it applies to Christ, it actually makes no difference, because it just so happens that the ceremonial Sabbath of Unleavened bread and the weekly Seventh day Sabbath coincided while Jesus rested in the tomb. Jesus died on the Passover and the very next day began the Feast of Unleavened Bread!

Leviticus 23:9-12: Let's read about the wave sheaf ceremony:

"The Lord said to Moses, 10 "Speak to the Israelites and say to them: 'When you enter the land I am going to give you and you reap its harvest, bring to the priest a sheaf of the first grain you harvest. 11 He [the priest] is to wave the sheaf before the Lord so it will be accepted on your behalf; the priest is to wave it on the day after the Sabbath."

Each feast pointed forward punctually to some important event in Christ's ministry of salvation so the first-fruits must be typological.

Firstborn from the Dead

Before we address the meaning of the first-fruits which were waved before

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the Lord, let's dedicate a few moments to **another matter**. The **apostle Paul** explained that Jesus arose from death as the **firstborn** from the dead:

Colossians 1:18

*“And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the **firstborn from the dead**, that in all things He may have the **preeminence**.”*

The expression ‘firstborn from the dead’ **cannot mean** that Jesus was the **first to come** forth from the grave. **At least four were resurrected** in the Old Testament and **three** in the New Testament before the resurrection of Jesus:

- **Moses**
- The son of the **widow of Zareptah**
- The man who touched **Elisha's bones**

- **The daughter of Jairus**
- The son of the **widow of Nain**
- **Lazarus**

The expression, ‘firstborn from the dead’, means that the resurrection of Jesus makes all other resurrections possible. The apostle Paul assures us that if Jesus did not resurrect from the dead, our **faith is vain** and we are **still in our sins**. Jesus was not the first to resurrect but His resurrection **determines ours**. After all, He said: *“Because I live, you will live also.”* **(John 14:19)**

In order to serve as our Mediator, Advocate and Intercessor, Jesus would have to be alive. Without His priesthood there would be no application of His death and life to us and without this we would be doomed (Hebrews 7:25, 26; 1 John 2:1; 1 Timothy 2:5)

Romans 4:24-25

*“But for us also, to whom it shall be **imputed, if we believe** on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; 25 who was delivered for our offences, and was **raised again** for our **justification [forgiveness]**.”*

1 Corinthians 15:16-18: The death of Jesus would have had **no value to save us** from our sins if He had not resurrected because He has to **apply personally** His life and death to those who believe!

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*“For if the dead do not rise then Christ is not risen. 17 And if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are **still in your sins!** 18 Then also those who have fallen asleep in Christ **have perished.**”*

The First-fruits from the Dead

Notice what happened on resurrection morning:

John 20:17

*“Jesus said to her, “Do not **cling** to Me, for I have **not yet ascended** to My Father; but go to My brethren and say to them, ‘I **am ascending** to My Father and your Father, and to My God and your God.’”*

Some **Bible versions** have contended that the expression ‘*don’t touch me*’ really means ‘*don’t cling to me*’. But is this the case? The word ‘touch’ is used repeatedly in the New Testament to describe the **act of touching**, not necessarily clinging.

For example, the NIV translates the Greek word *japto* with the word ‘touch’ in every single verse (35 of 36) except in this one. Notice the following examples:

- Jesus touched **a leper** and he was healed (Matthew 8:3). Did Jesus cling to the leper?
- The woman who touched the hem of Christ’s garment (Mark 5:31). **If she was clinging** to Jesus, the Lord would not have asked who touched the hem of His garment!
- The **multitude** wanted to touch Jesus in order to be healed (Luke 6:19)
- **Parents** brought their children to Jesus so that He would touch them (Luke 18:15)
- Jesus touched the **eyes of the blind** and they could see (Matthew 20:34). Did Jesus cling to the eyes of the blind?

Why would Jesus say to Mary ‘*don’t cling to me because I have not yet ascended to my Father*’ if He would not ascend until forty days later? Was there a risk that Mary would cling to Jesus and **detain Him** for **40 days**?

Further, the verb ‘**ascending**’ that is used in this verse (*‘I am **ascending** to my Father and your Father’*) is in the **first person, indicative, active tense**. Jesus is not referring to his ascension forty days after His resurrection because he

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would have used the **future tense** rather than the present!

The **evening** of the **very day** that Jesus told Mary not to touch Him, He **encouraged His disciples** to “touch me and see”.

Ellen White has some interesting information on the encounter of Jesus with Mary Magdalene in the **Garden of Gethsemane** the morning of the resurrection:

Early Writings, pp. 187, 188:

*“Jesus spoke to her with His own heavenly voice, saying, “Mary!” She was acquainted with the tones of that dear voice, and quickly answered, “Master!” and in her joy was **about to embrace Him**; but Jesus said, “Touch Me not; for I am not yet ascended to My Father: but go to My brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto My Father, and your Father; and to My God, and your God.” Joyfully she hastened to the disciples with the good news. **Jesus quickly ascended to His Father** to hear from His lips that He accepted the sacrifice, and to receive all power in heaven and upon earth.”*

In **Matthew 28:19**, before His final ascension to heaven Jesus said:

*“All power **has been given [indicative passive aorist]** to me in heaven and on earth”. Thus, before His ascension from the Mount of Olives, Jesus had **already received** from His Father all power in heaven and on earth!!*

Let’s continue reading about what happened **after** Jesus told Mary not to touch Him:

Early Writings, pp. 187, 188:

*“Angels **like a cloud surrounded the Son of God** and bade the everlasting gates be lifted up, that the King of glory might come in. I saw that while Jesus was with that bright heavenly host, in the presence of God, and surrounded by His glory, He did not forget His disciples upon the earth, but **received** power from His Father, that He might **return** and impart power to them [**He did in the Upper Room when He breathed upon them the Holy Spirit**]. The **same day** He returned and showed Himself to His disciples. **He suffered them then to touch Him**; for **He had ascended** to His Father and **had received** power.”*

Jesus fulfilled the Wave Sheaf ceremony when He made this **quick journey** to

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heaven on the morning of the resurrection:

The Desire of Ages, pp. 785, 786:

*“Christ arose from the dead **as the first fruits** of those that slept. He was the **antitype of the wave sheaf**, and His resurrection took place **on the very day** when the wave sheaf was to be presented **before the Lord**. For more than a thousand years this symbolic ceremony had been performed. From the harvest fields the first heads of ripened grain were gathered, and when the people went up to Jerusalem to the Passover, the sheaf of first fruits was waved as a **thank offering** before the Lord. Not until this was presented could the sickle be put to the grain and it be gathered into sheaves. The sheaf dedicated to God represented the harvest. So Christ the first fruits represented the **great spiritual harvest** to be gathered for the kingdom of God.”*

1 Corinthians 15:20: Paul referred to the **wave sheaf** ceremony when he wrote:

*“But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the **first-fruits** of those who have fallen asleep.”*

Ellen White was in **perfect harmony** with Paul on the typological meaning of the wave sheaf ceremony:

1 Corinthians 15:22-23

*“For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ **all shall be made alive**. 23 But each one in **his own order**: **Christ the first-fruits**, afterward those who are Christ's **at His coming**.”*

The First-Fruits at Pentecost

Leviticus 23:15-18: There were also first-fruits offered on the **day of Pentecost**. The Feast of Pentecost was the time when the **wheat harvest** was gathered in so the first-fruits were those of the wheat harvest:

*‘And you shall count for yourselves from the **day after the Sabbath [the day of the resurrection]**, from the day that you **brought the sheaf** of the wave offering: seven Sabbaths shall be **completed**. 16 Count fifty days **to the day** after the seventh Sabbath; then you shall offer a **new grain offering** to the Lord. 17*

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You shall bring from your dwellings **two wave loaves** of two-tenths of an ephah. They shall be of **fine flour**; they shall be baked **with leaven**. They are the **first-fruits** to the Lord.”

The Symbols

In order to understand this ceremony we need to interpret what is represented by the **new grain loaves** and the **leaven**.

The **loaves** represent the **church** or **God's people** and the leaven represents the **growth** of God's people:

Matthew 13:33

*“Another parable He spoke to them: “The kingdom of heaven is **like leaven**, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till it was **all leavened**.”*

But you might say: Doesn't leaven **represent sin** and wickedness? Yes it does.

1 Corinthians 5:6-8

*‘Your glorying is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? 7 Therefore **purge out the old leaven**, that you may be a **new lump**, since you truly are **unleavened**. For indeed Christ, our **Passover** was sacrificed for us. 8 Therefore let us keep the feast [**of Passover and Unleavened Bread**], not with **old leaven**, nor with the leaven of **malice and wickedness**, but with the **unleavened** bread of sincerity and truth.’*

But the context is of vital importance. The leaven in 1 Corinthians 5:6-8 is in the context of the **Passover** when the bread had no leaven because Jesus had no sin. But the context of Matthew 13:33 is not the Passover but rather the **Feast of Pentecost**:

Ellen White remarks about the parable of the leaven that was put in the dough:

*“But in the Savior's parable, leaven is used to represent **the kingdom of heaven**. It illustrates the **quickenings**, assimilating **power of the grace of God**.”*

*None are so vile, none have fallen so low, as to be beyond the working of this power. In all who will submit themselves to the **Holy Spirit** a new principle of life is to be **implanted**; the lost image of God is to be restored in humanity.*

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*But man cannot transform himself by the exercise of his will. He possesses no power by which this change can be effected. The leaven--something **wholly from without**--must be put **into the meal** before the desired change can be wrought in it. So the grace of God must be received by the sinner before he can be fitted for the kingdom of glory. All the culture and education which the world can give will fail of making a degraded child of sin a child of heaven. The renewing energy must come from God. The change can be made only **by the Holy Spirit**. All who would be saved, high or low, rich or poor, must submit to the **working of this power**." *Christ's Object Lessons*, pp. 96, 97*

Two Groups at Pentecost

But the question might be asked: Why two loaves? Isn't the church one loaf? The answer is yes but with a qualification:

One group **resurrected** with Jesus on the first day of the week:

Matthew 27:51-53

*"Then, behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth quaked, and the rocks were split, 52 and the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised; 53 and **coming out of the graves after His resurrection**, they went into the holy city and appeared to many."*

This group of resurrected saints was presented **before the Father at Pentecost**:

The Desire of Ages, p. 829:

*"The time had come for Christ to ascend to His Father's throne. As a **divine conqueror** He was about to return **with the trophies of victory** to the heavenly courts."*

Selected Messages, volume 1, p. 304:

*"They were the multitude of captives that ascended with Him as **trophies [this is the terminology of a conquering general who is bringing back with him the trophies of His victory]** of His victory over death and the grave.'*

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*“So those who had been raised were to be presented **to the universe as a pledge** of the resurrection of all who believe in Christ as their personal Savior. The same power that raised Christ from the dead **will raise His church**, and glorify it with Christ, as His bride, above all principalities, above all powers, above every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in the heavenly courts, the world above. The victory of the sleeping saints will be glorious on the morning of the resurrection. **Satan's triumph will end**, while **Christ will triumph** in glory and honor. The Life-giver will crown with immortality all who come forth from the grave.” 1SM 305, 306*

The Desire of Ages, pp. 833, 834

*“But He waves them back. Not yet; He cannot now receive the coronet of glory and the royal robe. He **enters into the presence of His Father**. He points to His wounded head, the pierced side, the marred feet; He lifts His hands, bearing the print of nails. He points to the **tokens of His triumph**; He presents to God the **wave sheaf**, those raised with Him as **representatives** of that **great multitude** who shall come forth from the grave at His second coming. “*

Who were these more specifically?

The Desire of Ages, p. 786: It is more than ironic that those who Satan laid into the grave because of their witness to the truth should now rise to proclaim Christ's victory:

*“They were those who had been co-laborers with God, and who at **the cost of their lives** had borne testimony to the truth. Now they were to be witnesses for Him who had raised them from the dead.”*

Ephesians 4:7-13

*“But to each one of us **grace** [the Greek word is *xaris* where we get the word *charismata* from] **was given** according to the measure of Christ's **gift** [the gift is no doubt the Holy Spirit because the identical word is used in **Luke 11:13**]. 8 Therefore He says: “When He **ascended on high**, He led **captivity captive**, and **gave gifts** to men.” 9 (Now this, “He ascended” — what does it mean but that He also first descended into the lower parts of the earth? 10 He who descended is also the One who **ascended far above all the heavens**, that He might fill all things.) 11 And He Himself **gave** [connect with the word*

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*'gave' in verse 8] some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, 12 for the **equipping** of the saints for the work of ministry, for the **edifying** of the body of Christ, 13 till we all come to the **unity** of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ."*

There can be no doubt that the event here described is the **victorious ascension** of Christ to heaven **followed by Pentecost** when **the gift** of the Holy Spirit was poured out and with Him **the gifts** upon the **nascent church**:

- An clear allusion to His **death and burial** by the expression, 'he **descended** into the **lower parts** of the earth'
- A clear reference to the occasion of **His ascension** as seen in the expression '**when** he ascended on high' (mentioned twice in the passage)
- A clear allusion to taking **captivity captive** when he ascended
- He gave the **gift**
- Along with the gift came the **gifts**

What is meant by the expression: 'He led captivity captive'?

Verse 1: Psalm 68 is a Psalm of victory of the Lord over His enemies and the procession that follows to the heavenly Mt. Zion where the sanctuary is:

*"Let God arise, let His **enemies be scattered**; let those also who hate Him **flee** before Him."*

Verse 4: He is coming **on the clouds** to the **Holy Place** in the midst of a **joyful celebration** with singing:

*"Sing to God, **sing praises** to His **name**; extol Him who **rides on the clouds**, by His **name Yah**, and **rejoice** before Him."*

This verse must be connected with **Psalm 24:8, 9** where the **Lord is ascending** to His **Holy Hill** and the order is given to **open up the gates** for the King of Glory **come in**:

*"Lift up your heads, O you gates! And be lifted up, you everlasting doors! And the King of glory shall **come in**. 8 Who is this King of glory? The **LORD [YHWH]** strong and mighty, The **LORD [YHWH] mighty in battle**."*

"Believe His Prophets: Prophetic Guidance in the Advent Movement"

The Desire of Ages, p. 833

*“All heaven was waiting **to welcome** the Savior to the celestial courts. As He ascended, He led the way, and the multitude of captives set free at His resurrection followed. The heavenly host, with **shouts and acclamations of praise and celestial song**, attended the joyous train.”*

Contrary to what Dwight Nelson has taught, **Psalm 68:11** is not referring to **the women** who proclaimed the good news of the **resurrection** of Jesus but rather the **acclaim** of the heavenly beings **forty days later** in Christ’s procession to the holy place of the **heavenly sanctuary** upon His ascension:

Psalm 68:11, KJV

*“The Lord gave the word: **great was the company** of those that published it.”*

Notice the immediately preceding verse of **Psalm 68:17** (New International Reader’s Version):

*“God has come **with** tens of thousands of his chariots. He **has come** with thousands and thousands of them. The Lord has come from Mount Sinai. He has **entered his holy place**.”*

Notice **verse 24, NIV**:

*“Your **procession** has come into view, O God, the **procession** of my God and **King into the sanctuary** [Psalm 24 the order is given for the gates to open so that the King of glory could come in].”*

Notice **verse 35**:

*“O God, You are more awesome than Your **holy places**. The God of Israel is He who gives **strength** and **power** to His people [Jesus had prophesied that His people would receive power at Pentecost].”*

Remember that there were two loaves of first-fruits at Pentecost. The first loaf represents those who resurrected with Jesus and the second represents the first fruits from **among the living** were converted on the Day of Pentecost:

Acts 2:37-39

“Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the

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rest of the apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" 38 Then Peter said to them: "Repent, and let every one of you be **baptized** in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."

Acts 2:41

*"Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about **three thousand souls** were added to them."*

1 Thessalonians 4 describes the final harvest of the **last fruits** from among the living and the dead:

1 Thessalonians 4:15-18

"For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. 16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord."



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“Believe His Prophets: Prophetic Guidance in the Advent Movement”

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INSPIRATION AND THE ELLEN G. WHITE WRITINGS

A Reprint of Articles Published in the *Adventist Review*

By ARTHUR L. WHITE

Arthur L. White has worked with the Ellen G. White trustees since 1929, first as secretary to William C. White for four years, next as assistant secretary to the Ellen G. White Estate for four years, and then as secretary of the Estate for 41 years. He is now writing a comprehensive biography of Ellen White, as well as continuing as a lifetime trustee of the Ellen G. White Estate.

[Written in 1979]

Inspiration and the Ellen G. White Writings

Two groups of articles published in the *Adventist Review* are reproduced in this reprint--the first, a series of four articles published under the title "Toward an Adventist Concept of Inspiration," appeared in issues dated January 12, 19, 26, and February 2, 1978; the second series, published under the title "The Ellen G. White Historical Writings," appeared in the issues of July 12, 19, 26 and August 2, 9, 16, and 23, 1979.

Accompanying the articles is a statement by the former editor of the *Review*, Kenneth H. Wood. The statement has been adapted from an editorial published originally with the second series of articles.

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Important Articles About Ellen G. White

Some subjects are of special interest to spiritually-minded people. One of these is inspiration/revelation--how God, an infinite, transcendent Being, communicates with His earthly children.

The *Adventist Review* in two series of articles from the pen of Arthur L. White has brought to the attention of Seventh-day Adventists certain phases of this important subject. The first, a series of four articles titled "Toward an Adventist Concept of Inspiration," was published in January and February, 1978, and the second, a series of seven, was published in July and August, 1979, under the title "Ellen G. White's Sources for the Conflict Series Books."

Because of the intense current interest in these matters, and to make these articles available for continued study, the two series of articles have been brought together in this reprint.

In the 1978 series, Elder White, then secretary of the Ellen G. White Estate, has written from decades of firsthand experience in working with inspired documents. In these four articles he clarifies some of the concepts necessary for a better understanding of how inspiration operates.

In the second series of seven articles, he takes us behind the scenes to show how Ellen White worked in preparing the books that present the great controversy story, and provides new, carefully documented information and insights on some aspects of the working of inspiration in the experience of Ellen G. White as she prepared her historical writings. We believe that every reader, no matter how well informed on the way inspiration works, will learn something from these articles.

Not all the material is new, of course. The elements that are repeated are included chiefly for two reasons--to present a balanced picture and to provide information that readers may have missed in previously published books and Review articles.

Four facts should, perhaps, be kept clearly in mind as one reads these articles.

1. *Inspired writings do not come to us "untouched by human hands."* They are not written by God and handed to us as were the Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai. In communicating God's messages to the human family, the inspired writer involves himself in much hard labor. Unless God gives him specific words, as He does sometimes in visions when the prophet hears heavenly beings speaking, he must find for himself the words that set forth accurately the truths God has revealed to him. In this process he may draw upon his own vocabulary, find words in a dictionary or thesaurus, borrow expressions from the writings of uninspired writers, or be aided by assistants. "Inspiration acts not on the man's words or his expressions but on the man himself, who, under the

influence of the Holy Ghost, is imbued with thoughts. But the words receive the impress of the individual mind."--*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 21.

People seldom think of this when they read the Bible or the writings of Ellen G. White. They tend to think that literary works containing inspired messages were created *ex nihilo*, somewhat as was the world during Creation week. (Some people also think of the Review as originating in this way. They forget the work of authors, editors, typesetters, proofreaders, pressmen, computer operators, mailers, and a host of others who were involved in producing and delivering the magazine.)

We think Elder White's series of articles will be particularly helpful in that it will provide a behind-the-scenes glimpse of how Ellen G. White wrote her books and how they were prepared for publication.

2. *In communicating with the human family*, God inspired persons, not writings. Inspiration acted on the person, not on literary products. The apostle Peter declared: "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Peter 1:21). "It is not the words of the Bible that are inspired, but the men that were inspired."--*Ibid.*

This is an important point, and it must not be misunderstood. Speakers and others often call the Bible "the inspired Word of God"; and rightly so. Mrs. White's statement refers to methodology, not authority. God inspires people, not words. People can think; works cannot. People can be impressed by the Holy Spirit; words cannot.

3. *Inspiration involves a variety of methods in communicating truth and God's will.* Some Bible writers were given visions and dreams. Others, who had no visions, were given special understandings and insights into divine mysteries. Others were given special guidance in selecting and recording events and historical incidents. Still others were given special wisdom in understanding and interpreting the meaning of events. On the latter point it is well to note that historical events may be observed and recorded by both inspired people and uninspired people. Numerous writers could have recorded the fact that three men were crucified on a Friday in A. D. 31. But without an inspired person to provide the meaning of the event, the happening would have been seen as little different from numerous other crucifixions. One of the major functions of inspiration is to enable people to see the meaning of events, and to interpret them in the light of the great controversy between Christ and Satan.

4. *The message of an inspired writer does not depend for its authority on whether it is accompanied by the label, "This is God's Word."* In Old Testament times the prophets often began or ended their messages with statements such as "The Lord spake thus," "The word of the Lord came unto me," "The Lord said," or "The Lord hath spoken it" (see, for example, Isa. 1:24; 8:11; Eze. 6:1; Hosea 1:2; Obadiah 18). New Testament writers, while at times mentioning the origin of their messages (e. g., Rev. 1:1, 2), usually did not. They depended on the writings to be self-authenticating as messages from God. In her earlier writings, Mrs. White often used the expression "I was shown," but later, especially when writing for the general public, she did not. This change of practice did not indicate any difference in the authority of the message communicated.

If kept in mind, the four points that we have mentioned will aid in understanding and appreciating the information set forth by Elder White in this compilation of Review articles. The articles represent the mature thinking and experience of one who has spent 50 years gaining increased

familiarity with documents given through inspiration, and studying how Ellen G. White, his inspired grandmother, did her work.

In 1890 Mrs. White wrote: "The very last deception of Satan will be to make of none effect the testimony of the Spirit of God. . . . Satan will work ingeniously, in different ways and through different agencies, to unsettle the confidence of God's remnant people in the true testimony."-- Letter 12, 1890, quoted in *Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 48.

Because Satan is today making supreme efforts to undermine confidence in the writings of the Spirit of Prophecy, we feel convinced that the end of all things is near. Now is the time for us to build faith and know what we believe. This series of articles should strengthen confidence in God, His church, and His inspired messenger.

Kenneth H. Wood

Toward an Adventist concept of inspiration - 1

Ellen White's Experience and Writings

How do Seventh-day Adventists understand inspiration? Is the Seventh-day Adventist concept different from concepts commonly held?

In several aspects the Adventist concept is different. It partakes neither of the modernistic, liberal views that destroy the authority of God's Word nor the ultraconservative views that make the prophet a mere automaton -a machine, as it were speaking or writing words he is impelled to utter or to record.

As Seventh-day Adventists we are uniquely fortunate in approaching this question. We are not left to find our way, drawing our conclusions only from writings penned 19 centuries and more ago, which have come down to us through varied transcriptions and translations. Concerning inspiration, with us it is an almost contemporary matter, for we have had a prophet in our midst.

What is more, rather than having in our possession only relatively short documents or a handful of letters, as is the case with the extant records of the Bible prophets, we have the full range of Ellen G. White writings penned through a period of 70 years, embodying her published books, her 4,600 periodical articles, and her manuscripts, letters, and diaries. We have also the testimonies of her contemporaries' eyewitness accounts of those who lived and worked closely with her. Both she and they discussed many points touching on the visions and on the manner in which the light was imparted to her, and how she, in turn, conveyed the messages to those for whom they were intended. In other words, the eyewitnesses discussed the operation of inspiration.

Further, she wrote in a modern language, so a large number of people today can study her writings in the original language, without needing to depend on a translation. Rarely, too, is it necessary to depend upon a transcription.

If we accept Ellen White as an honest witness, then her observations concerning her work, her statements on inspiration, and her declaration as to the work of the prophets of old are particularly significant to us. Thus what she has said of the work of the prophet in action can well form a basis for arriving at an accurate understanding of inspiration.

We shall discuss the subject as she did without resorting to theological language or definitions.

First of all, we should note that when the Lord imparts light to the prophets He does not confine Himself to one fixed procedure. "God . . . in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets" (Heb. 1:1).

Therefore, one must not look for a uniform pattern that will govern all the procedures in this matter of God's giving His messages to human instruments. This is an important point.

Second, the prophet is a normal human being with all the faculties possessed by such a being. He sees, hears, smells, meditates, reads, eats, sleeps, worships, speaks, and travels, as do other people. At the time of his call to the prophetic office he may or may not be well informed in some lines of knowledge. All through his life subsequent to his call to the prophetic office, he continues to gain information in most matters in the same manner in which we all obtain such information. Being called to the prophetic office does not blot from his mind information gained in past experiences, nor does it block his mental faculties from continuing to obtain information as he did before his call to the prophetic office.

Being called in a unique manner to the service of the Lord as a prophet, he is in a position to receive special information from God. This may be in the fields of theology and religious experience. It may be in the field of history, recounting the special guidance of God for His people or for individuals, or warning of the perils incident to Satan's determination to destroy the work of God or the hope of souls. It may be in the field of physiology, nutrition, or hygiene. It may be in the realm of eschatology. It may be in the field of education or church administration. It may be in the revealing of hidden sins.

The fields in which information may be imparted are without limit, for the work is in God's hands. This experience is uniquely that of the prophet. Although the Spirit of God may speak to the hearts of all consecrated persons, not all are or can be prophets. God

alone selects the prophet. "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Peter 1:21).

Visions and Bearing Testimony

A prophet may receive visions during the day, accompanied by certain physical phenomena (see Dan. 10), or in the night season, in a prophetic dream (see Dan. 7). After the vision the prophet imparts to others what was intended for them, either orally, in interviews, or in writing.

Thus there are two elements or procedures: "There is the receiving of the information and the bearing of testimony--the presentation by the prophet of the message, the light, the information--he received from the Holy Spirit.

He may not be at liberty to impart at once some of the information he receives. Perhaps it is to be held until certain developments have taken place; or perhaps the light is given fully to orient the prophet, but he is not at liberty to disclose all that is revealed to him.

His mind thus becomes a reservoir or "bank," as it were, from which, when circumstances demand, he is ready to speak forth. Often there is immediate need for the message.

How the Light Came to Ellen White

Note the simplicity of the language used by Ellen White in a description of how light came to her in her first vision: "While I was praying at the family altar, the Holy Ghost fell upon me, and I seemed to be rising higher and higher, far above the dark world. I turned to look for the Advent people in the world, but could not find them, when a voice said to me, 'Look again, and look a little higher. At this I raised my eyes, and saw a straight and narrow path, cast up high above the world. On this path the Advent people were traveling to the city, which was at the farther end of the path.'"--*Early Writings*, p. 14.

Analyzing this statement, we observe that her coming into vision is described by the words "The Holy Ghost fell upon me." Although she remained bodily in the room where she was praying at the family altar, to her it seemed that'

1. She was rising above the world.
2. She turned to look for something.
3. She could not locate that which she sought.
4. She heard a voice speaking to her.

5. She obeyed the command of that voice.
6. Raising her eyes, she observed the Advent people traveling.
7. She viewed their destination.
8. Later, she seemed to be with them as they enjoyed their reward.

Thus it is clear that to her the experiences in vision were real. She was seeing, feeling, hearing, obeying, and acting in faraway places, though bodily she remained in the room. Those in the room with her did not see what she saw or hear what she heard. It was more than a moving picture: she was a participant in the action. Later she related or wrote out in her own words these experiences.

Oftentimes while in vision Ellen White would be conveyed to a home or an institution, and then she would be conducted from room to room or department to department.

She would seem to be in the councils that were held, would witness the actions of council members, hear the words spoken, and observe the surroundings in general.

As Seventh-day Adventists we are uniquely fortunate in a study of inspiration, for we have had a prophet in our midst.

In 1887, from across the Atlantic, she wrote to one of the workers regarding the detrimental policies pursued in one of the institutions. Note how she received her information: "I arose at three o'clock this morning with a burden on my mind. . . . In my dreams I was at ", and I was told by my Guide to mark everything I heard and to observe everything I saw. I was in a retired place, where I could not be seen, but could see all that went on in the room. Persons were settling accounts with you, and I heard them remonstrating with you in regard to the large sum charged for board and room and treatment. I heard you with firm, decided voice refuse to lower the charge. I was astonished to see that the charge was so high."--Letter 30, 1887.

At times she was shown buildings not yet erected but which in the future would constitute a part of institutions. She referred to one such instance in a letter written in 1903: "I have been thinking of how, after we began sanitarium work in Battle Creek, sanitarium buildings all ready for occupation were shown to me in vision. The Lord instructed me as to the way in which the work in these buildings should be conducted in order for it to exert a saving influence on the patients.

"All this seemed very real to me, but when I awoke, I found that the work was yet to be done, that there were no buildings erected.

"Another time I was shown a large building going up on the site on which the Battle Creek Sanitarium was afterward erected. The brethren were in great perplexity as to who should take charge of the work. I wept sorely. One of authority stood up among us, and said, 'Not yet. You are not ready to invest means in that building, or to plan for its future management.'

"At this time the foundation of the Sanitarium had been laid. But we needed to learn the lesson of waiting."--Letter 135, 1903.

Symbolic Representations Given

Two consecutive paragraphs from a personal testimony addressed to a prominent worker of earlier years illustrate how life's experiences were sometimes represented symbolically: "Many other scenes connected with your case have been presented to me. At one time you were represented to me as trying to push a long car up a steep ascent. But this car, instead of going up the hill kept running down. This car represented the food business as a commercial enterprise, which has been carried forward in a way that God does not commend.

"At another time you were represented to me as a general, mounted on a horse, and carrying a banner. One came and took out of your hand the banner bearing the words, 'The commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus,' and it was trampled in the dust. I saw you surrounded by men who were linking you up with the world."--Letter 239, 1903.

At times the events of the past, present, and future were opened up to Ellen White in panoramic view. It seemed to her that she witnessed in rapid succession the vivid enactment of the scenes of history. I quote here a few sentences from her Introduction to [*The Great Controversy*](#), giving us a glimpse of this means of enlightenment of her mind: "As the Spirit of God has opened to my mind the great truths of His word, *and the scenes of the past and the future*, I have been bidden to make known to others that which has thus been revealed to trace the history of the controversy in past ages, and especially so to present it as to shed a light on the fast-approaching struggle of the future."--Page xi. (Italics supplied.)

Toward an Adventist concept of inspiration---2

The Prophet Bears Testimony

The Holy Spirit is operative not only when the prophet receives the divine message but also when he delivers the message in writing.

There are two features in the prophet's experience--the vision itself and the bearing of testimony of what has been revealed in vision. Having been received, the message must be imparted by the prophet through the most accurate language at the prophet's command.

The prophet may have at ready command words that would convey the message satisfactorily, or he may find it necessary to study diligently to find words adequate to convey the message correctly and impressively. At one time he may use certain words and at another time other words in conveying the same message. While writing [*The Desire of Ages*](#), Mrs. White declared: "I tremble for fear lest I shall belittle the great plan of salvation by cheap words."-- *Messenger to the Remnant*, p. 59. The transmission of the message might suffer some impairment because of the inadequacy of human language. Note this comment by Ellen G. White:

"The Bible . . . was written by human hands; and in the varied style of its different books it presents the characteristics of the several writers. The truths revealed are all 'given by inspiration of God' (2 Tim. 3:16); yet they are expressed in the words of men.



Ellen White said that she was just as dependent upon the Spirit of the Lord in relating or writing out her visions as she was in having them.

The Infinite One by His Holy Spirit has shed light into the minds and hearts of His servants. He has given dreams and visions, symbols and figures; and those to whom the truth was thus revealed have themselves embodied the thought in human language. . . "Written in different ages, by men who differed widely in rank and occupation, and in mental and spiritual endowments, the books of the Bible present a wide contrast in style, as well as a diversity in the nature of the subjects unfolded. Different forms of expression are employed by different writers; often the same truth is more strikingly presented by one

than by another. . . .

"As presented through different individuals, the truth is brought out in its varied aspects. One writer is more strongly impressed with one phase of the subject; he grasps those points that harmonize with his experience or with his power of perception and appreciation; another seizes upon a different phase; and each, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, presents what is most forcibly impressed upon his own mind -a different aspect of the truth in each, but a perfect harmony through all. And the truths thus

revealed unite to form a perfect whole, adapted to meet the wants of men in all the circumstances and experiences of life. "-- [*The Great Controversy*](#), pp. v, vi.

"Although I am as dependent upon the Spirit of the Lord in writing my views as I am in receiving them, yet the words I employ in describing what I have seen are my own, unless they be those spoken to me by an angel, which I always enclose in marks of quotation."

Note the expression "Each, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, presents what is most forcibly impressed upon his own mind." Although the prophet must draw upon his facilities of expression in presenting his message, the Holy Spirit is at work. This is a vital point. Ellen White put it this way: "Although I am as dependent upon the Spirit of the Lord in writing my views as I am in receiving them, yet the words I employ in describing what I have seen are my own, unless they be those spoken to me by an angel, which I always enclose in marks of quotation. "--*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 37.

Guidance of the Holy Spirit

In answering certain questions in 1860, she also touched on this point: "Sometimes the things which I have seen are hid from me after I come out of vision, and I cannot call them to mind until I am brought before a company where that vision applies, then the things which I have seen come to my mind with force. I am just as dependent upon the Spirit of the Lord in relating or writing a vision, as in having the vision. It is impossible for me to call up things which have been shown me unless the Lord brings them before me at the time that He is pleased to have me relate or write them."--*Ibid.*, pp. 36, 37.

The thought is again emphasized: "Through the inspiration of His Spirit the Lord gave His apostles truth, to be expressed according to the development of their minds by the Holy Spirit. But the mind is not cramped, as if forced into a certain mold."--*Ibid.*, p. 22.

The prophet, then, receives his message through the visions while totally under the influence of the Spirit of God. He bears his testimony under the influence of the Spirit of God, but not to the point of being mechanically controlled, or of being forced into a mold. Rather, he communicates the message in the best manner and from the point of view of his background and style, thus appealing particularly to people with backgrounds similar to his.

On certain occasions the very words to be used are impressed upon his mind by the Spirit of God. Note this from Ellen White in a letter of admonition in which after dealing with certain situations she stated: "I am trying to catch the very words and expressions that were made in reference to this matter, and as my pen hesitates a moment, the appropriate words come to my mind. "Quoted in *Ellen G. White Writings*, p. 22.

Another statement reads: "While I am writing out important matter, He [the Holy Spirit] is beside me, helping me and when I am puzzled for a fit word with which to express my thought, He brings it clearly and distinctly to my mind. "--Letter 127, 1902.

Writing History

History was presented to Ellen White as a background on which the great controversy story was traced. In her introduction to *The Great Controversy* she tells how the controversy was presented to her: "Through the illumination of the Holy Spirit, the scenes of the long-continued conflict between good and evil have been opened to the writer of these pages.

From time to time I have been permitted to behold the working, in different ages, of the great controversy between Christ, the Prince of life, and the Author of our salvation, and Satan, the prince of evil, the author of sin, the first transgressor of God's holy law. "--Page x.

It appears that her experience was similar to that of Moses on Mount Nebo when the Promised Land was shown him. Ellen White describes Moses' experience vividly in *Patriarchs and Prophets*: "And now a panoramic view of the Land of Promise was presented to him. Every part of the country was spread out before him, not faint and uncertain in the dim distance, but standing out clear, distinct, and beautiful to his delighted vision. In this scene it was presented, not as it then appeared, but as it would become, with God's blessing upon it, in the possession of Israel.

"He seemed to be looking upon a second Eden. There were mountains clothed with cedars of Lebanon, hills gray with olives and fragrant with the odor of the vine, wide green plains bright with flowers and rich in fruitfulness, here the palm trees of the tropics, there waving fields of wheat and barley, sunny valleys musical with the ripple of brooks and the song of birds, goodly cities and fair gardens, lakes rich in 'the abundance of the seas,' grazing flocks upon the hillsides, and even amid the rocks the wild bee's hoarded treasures. . . .

"Moses saw the chosen people established in Canaan, each of the tribes in its own possession. He had a view of their history after the settlement of the Promised Land: The long, sad story of their apostasy and its punishment was spread out before him. He saw them, because of their sins, dispersed among the heathen, the glory departed from Israel, her beautiful city in ruins, and her people captives in strange lands. He saw them restored to the land of their fathers, and at last brought under the dominion of Rome.

"He was permitted to look down the stream of time and behold the first advent of our Saviour. . . . He followed the Saviour to Gethsemane, and beheld the agony in the garden, the betrayal, the mockery and scourging--the crucifixion. . . . He looked again,

and beheld Him coming forth a conqueror, and ascending to heaven escorted by adoring angels and leading a multitude of captives."---Pages 472--476.

The dramatic picture continues, but we need go no further. Enthralled, Moses watched the events take place, seeing, hearing, and participating, and in receiving the message even the sense of smell came into play.

In this vivid manner the history of the future was opened up to the prophet. It is very unlikely that dates were revealed to him. It is not likely that all the cities he saw were named. Those were inconsequential details, not of primary importance to the unfolding theme.

Was Ellen White shown in each instance in minute detail all of the names of the places and the dates of the events which she beheld? The evidence is that she was not.

She saw events occur--events significant as a part of the controversy story. Minor details and incidental references not basic to the account were of less importance.

Some of this information could be ascertained from the sacred writings, some from common sources of knowledge, such as reliable historians. Apparently in His providence God did not consider it essential to impart these minutiae through vision.

Observations of W. C. White

Ellen White's son, W. C. White, describes her experience as follows: "Mother has never claimed to be authority on history. The things which she has written out are descriptions of flashlight pictures and other representations given her regarding the actions of men, and the influence of these actions upon the work of God for the salvation of men, with views of the past, present, and future history in its relation to this work. In connection with the writing out of these views, she has made use of good and clear historical statements to help make plain to the reader the things which she is endeavoring to present.

"When I was a mere boy, I heard her read D'Aubigne's *History of the Reformation* to my father. She read to him a large part, if not the whole, of the five volumes. She has read other histories of the Reformation. This has helped her to locate and describe many of the events and the movements presented to her in vision. This is somewhat similar to the way in which the study of the Bible helps her to locate and describe the many figurative representations given to her regarding the development of the great controversy in our day between truth and error."--W. C. White in a statement in the General Conference Council, Oct. 30, 1911, quoted in *Ellen G. White Writings*, p. 33.

A few months later W. C. White stated the following: "Regarding Mother's writings and their use as authority on points of history and chronology, Mother has never wished our

brethren to treat them as authority regarding the details of history or historical dates. The great truths revealed to Mother regarding the controversy between good and evil, light and darkness, have been given to her in various ways, but chiefly as flashlight views of great events in the lives of individuals and in the experiences of churches, of bands of reformers, and of nations. . . .

"When writing out the experiences of reformers in the time of the Reformation and in the great Advent Movement of 1844, Mother often gave at first a partial description of some scene presented to her. Later on she would write it out more fully, and again still more fully. I have known her to write upon one subject four or five times, and then mourn because she could not command language to describe the matter more perfectly.

Sometimes Gave Partial Descriptions

"When writing out the chapters for *Great Controversy*, she sometimes gave a partial description of an important historical event, and when her copyist who was preparing the manuscripts for the printer, made inquiry regarding the time and place, Mother would say that those things are recorded by conscientious historians. Let the dates used by those historians be inserted.

"When *Controversy* was written, Mother never thought that the readers would take it as authority on historical dates or use it to settle controversy regarding details of history, and she does not now feel that it should be used in that way. Mother regards with great respect the work of those faithful historians who devoted years of time to the study of God's great plan as presented in the prophecy, and the outworking of that plan as recorded in history."--W. C. White, Letter to W. W. Eastman, Nov. 4, 1912.

With regard to the history of the Reformation the following statement by Ellen White is significant: "Events in the history of the reformers have been presented before me. "--Letter 48, 1894.

Related to this is W. C. White's declaration that: "Mother's contact with European people brought to her mind scores of things that had been presented to her during past years, some of them two or three times, and other scenes many times."--*Quoted in The Ellen G. White Writings*, p. 124.

Toward an Adventist concept of inspiration--3

The Question of Infallibility

The autograph copies of the Biblical writers have long since disappeared. But Ellen White's autograph manuscripts are extant and throw light on the method of inspiration.

Ellen White declares of the Bible: "The Holy Scriptures are to be accepted as an authoritative, infallible revelation of His will. . . . 'Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof.' "--*The Great Controversy*, p. vii.

She does not deny that the wording of the Scriptures may lead some to draw fallible conclusions. But she affirms that the Scriptures themselves provide an infallible revelation. The revelation of God's will is authoritative and infallible, but the language used in imparting it to mankind is human and hence is imperfect.

Declares Ellen White: "God and heaven alone are infallible."--*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 37. And again, in speaking of her work she says, "In regard to infallibility, I never claimed it; God alone is infallible."--*Ibid.* She illuminates this point, saying: "The Lord speaks to human beings in imperfect speech, in order that the degenerate senses, the dull, earthly perception, of earthly beings may comprehend His words. Thus is shown God's condescension. He meets fallen human beings where they are.

The Bible, perfect as it is in its simplicity, does not answer to the great ideas of God; for infinite ideas cannot be perfectly embodied in finite vehicles of thought. Instead of the expressions of the Bible being exaggerated, as many people suppose, the strong expressions break down before the magnificence of the thought, though the penman selected the most expressive language through which to convey the truths of higher education."--*Ibid.*, p. 22.

The Prophet's Manuscripts

We do not know, of course, the steps taken by the prophets of old in preparing their manuscripts. Did they cross out a word or a phrase and replace it with one that expressed the concept more clearly? Was the grammar in the first draft faultless? Did the initial draft furnish copy ready for publication? No copies of the original Bible manuscripts are extant for our examination.

But when it comes to Ellen White, we have in our possession her own original autographs. These give us clues. The fact that the Holy Spirit rested upon her did not at once put her in possession of a knowledge of the correct spelling of each word employed or of impeccable grammar. She was a careful worker and, aided by God's Spirit, she possessed the ability to convey truth clearly and impressively; but with her it required constant effort to do so as accurately and effectively as possible. An examination of her published writings and of her manuscripts reveals a progressive development in vocabulary and skill in the use of words.

The recognition by her contemporaries of the fact that grammatical imperfections could appear in inspired writings in no way lessened their confidence in, or acceptance of, these writings.

Ellen White freely discussed the help she received from literary assistants: "While my husband lived, he acted as a helper and counselor in the sending out of the messages that were given to me. We traveled extensively. Sometimes light would be given to me in the night season, sometimes in the daytime before large congregations. The instruction I received in vision was faithfully written out by me, as I had time and strength for the work. Afterward we examined the matter together, my husband correcting grammatical errors and eliminating needless repetition. Then it was carefully copied for the persons addressed, or for the printer.

"As the work grew, others assisted me in the preparation of matter for publication. After my husband's death, faithful helpers joined me, who labored untiringly in the work of copying the testimonies and preparing articles for publication.

"But the reports that are circulated, that any of my helpers are permitted to add matter or change the meaning of the messages I write out, are not true."--*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 50.

These helpers were not baffled to find disagreement in tenses in a sentence in a manuscript or an early pamphlet. Her ministry bore the divine credentials. They knew the content of the messages to be God's message to them.

When in 1883 it became necessary to republish the early testimony pamphlets, Mrs. White and her associates recognized that certain imperfections in expression should be corrected so as to present the message in the best literary form.

Because of its importance, the matter was carried to the General Conference session of 1883. At that meeting, important decisions were reached that not only gave guidelines for the reprinting of these "Testimonies" but also placed the denomination on record as to its understanding of certain fundamental principles having to do with the utterances of the Spirit of Prophecy. We quote from the minutes of the meeting:

"32. WHEREAS, Some of the bound volumes of the 'Testimonies to the Church,' are out of print, so that full sets cannot be obtained at the Office; and

"WHEREAS, There is a constant and urgent call for the reprinting of these volumes; therefore

"RESOLVED, That we recommend their republication in such a form as to make four volumes of seven or eight hundred pages each.

"33. WHEREAS, Many of these testimonies were written under the most unfavorable circumstances, the writer being too heavily pressed with anxiety and labor to devote critical thought to the grammatical perfection of the writings, and they were printed in such haste as to allow these imperfections to pass uncorrected; and

"WHEREAS, We believe the light given by God to His servants is by the enlightenment of the mind, thus imparting the thoughts, and not (except in rare cases) the very words in which the ideas should be expressed; therefore

"RESOLVED, That in the republication of these volumes such verbal changes be made as to remove the above-named imperfections, as far as possible, without in any measure changing the thought; and, further

"34. RESOLVED, That this body appoint a committee of five to take charge of the republication of these volumes according to the above preambles and resolutions."--
Review and Herald, Nov. 27, 1883.

An Editorial Explains

Five years later in an editorial in the *Review and Herald*, Uriah Smith discussed the question: "Which are inspired, Words or ideas?"

"The questioner says, 'Is not a word a sign of an idea? And how then can an idea be inspired, and the signs that transfer the idea from one mind to another be uninspired?'

"Ans.--If there was but one word by which an idea could be expressed, this would be so; but when there are perhaps a hundred ways of expressing the same idea, the case becomes very different. Of course, if the Holy Spirit should give a person words to write, he would be obliged to use those very words, without change; but when simply a scene or view is presented before a person, and no language is given, he would be at liberty to describe it in his own words, as might seem to him best to express the truth in the case.

"And if, having written it out once, a better way of expressing it should occur to him, it would be perfectly legitimate for him to scratch out all he had written and write it over again, keeping strictly to the ideas and facts which had been shown him; and in the second writing there would be the divinely communicated idea just as much as in the first, while in neither case could it be said that the words employed were dictated by the Holy Spirit, but were left to the judgment of the individual himself.

"Much of what the prophets have written in the Scriptures are words spoken directly by the Lord, and are not their own words. In these cases, of course, the words are inspired. In Sister White's writings she often records words spoken by angels. Such words, of course, she gives as she hears them, and has no discretionary power in regard to the terms to be used, or the construction to be followed. These are not her words, and are not to be changed.

"But much of what the penmen of the Bible have said they might have written in different phraseology, and the truths uttered have been inspired truths to the same extent that they are now."--*Review and Herald*, March 13, 1888.

In a statement approved by Ellen White herself, W. C. White said:

"Mother has never laid claim to verbal inspiration, and I do not find that my father, or Elders Bates, Andrews, Smith, or Waggoner put forth this claim. If there was verbal inspiration in writing her manuscripts why should there be on her part the work of addition or adaptation? It is a fact that Mother often takes one of her manuscripts and goes over it thoughtfully, making additions that develop the thought still further."--*The Ellen G. White Writings*, p. 189.

"We believe the light given by God to His servants is by enlightenment of the mind, thus imparting thoughts, and not . . . the very words in which the ideas should be expressed."

This position is reaffirmed by words penned by Ellen White while residing in Europe: "The Bible is written by inspired men, but it is not God's mode of thought and expression. It is that of humanity. God, as a writer, is not represented.

Men will often say such an expression is not like God. But God has not put Himself in words, in logic, in rhetoric, on trial in the Bible. The writers of the Bible were God's penmen, not His pen. Look at the different writers.

"It is not the words of the Bible that are inspired, but the men that were inspired. Inspiration acts not on the man's words or his expressions but on the man himself, who, under the influence of the Holy Ghost, is imbued with thoughts. But the words receive the impress of the individual mind. The divine mind is diffused. The divine mind and will is combined with the human mind and will; thus the utterances of the man are the word of God."--*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 21.

Thus, because of the presence of a prophet of God in their midst, Seventh-day Adventists have had a firsthand demonstration of how inspiration operates. Those who work with the Biblical documents alone must deal with materials written some two to three and a half millennia ago, of which only copies reproduced many times exist today.

Toward an Adventist concept of inspiration--4

The Importance of Understanding Inspiration

Certain crisis situations that loom ahead may be better weathered if sound concepts of inspiration are held.

Faulty concepts concerning inspiration-revelation, be they liberal or extreme, can lead to disaster. There is good reason to believe that the great adversary will take advantage of unsound concepts in this area, for we are told that "the very last deception of Satan will be to make of none effect the testimony of the Spirit of God. 'Where there is no vision, the people perish.' Satan will work ingeniously, in different ways and through different agencies, to unsettle the confidence of God's remnant people in the true testimony."--*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 48.

One such effort was made some 60 years ago by a man who had been a successful Seventh-day Adventist evangelist and an esteemed administrator.¹ As he turned critic and foe of the church, he projected as a basis for his break with the church the allegation that Ellen White and Adventists held that every line she wrote, whether in articles, letters, testimonies or books, she claimed was dictated to her by the Holy Spirit, and hence must be infallible.

Some years later a Bible teacher of my acquaintance who was working in a Seventh-day Adventist college gave up his work and to a large extent lost his confidence in the message. His problem? He could no longer accept Ellen White as the Lord's messenger, and wrote a statement explaining why. His father had served many years in the ministry of the church and held the Spirit of Prophecy writings in high regard. In fact, he held what some might characterize as a somewhat extreme position on inspiration, maintaining a mechanical dictational concept. This concept he passed on to his son, who too became a minister, and finally a college Bible teacher. In his work as a teacher, he discovered some problems that he could not solve because of his rigid views of inspiration. As a result, he left the work. Some years later, on the invitation of the White Estate, he spent a few hours with me discussing the points that had perplexed him and tripped him up. As we studied together, he and I could see that the problems that loomed so large in his mind had their foundation in rigid and distorted concepts of inspiration. Before the interview closed, he said sadly,

"What a difference it would have made if I had only understood these things differently, but it is too late." He died a sad man.

This incident illustrates the vital importance of a sound understanding of inspiration. Many higher critics maintain that the Bible is no more inspired than the writings of famous authors. This greatly undermines its authority. Some scholars hold that the prophet merely experiences an "encounter" with God in which no information is imparted, no instruction given; in their writings the prophets simply express their reaction to the encounter experience. I see in these higher critical definitions of inspiration the work of the enemy who is seeking to nullify the message from God to His people.

The Bible suggests the following tests as to the genuineness of a prophet:

1. "By their fruits ye shall know them" (Matt. 7:20).
2. Fidelity to the fundamentals of the Christian faith (1 John 4:2).
3. Fulfillment of predictions (Jer. 28:9; Deut. 18:22).
4. "To the law and to the testimony" (Isa. 8:20).

Limitations of space preclude an elaboration at this point, but these are matters with which readers of the REVIEW are conversant.

But above and beyond the major tests to which our attention is called in the Scripture is the primary evidence of the operation of inspiration in Ellen White's work--the manner in which these writings speak to the readers' hearts. This every thoughtful and sincere student of her writings has personally experienced.

But questions will arise, problems will confront us. It has been so through the years, it is so today, and if we credit the words of prophecy, such will increase and intensify as we near the end. For this reason our concepts of inspiration must be sound and well supported by the witness of the prophets. Important clues are seen in God's Word, usually in incidental references found in connection with the messages. Every Seventh-day Adventist should watch for these. How did the light come to the prophet? How did the message come through him to the people?

Then what is Ellen White's testimony in these lines? In the preceding articles we have examined some of these. She has written at considerable length on the inspiration of the Bible and has made many references to inspiration in her work. What she wrote is highly informative. As is true in most cases, what she wrote in these lines came in a natural and practical setting. Much of this came in the 1880's. This was the decade when a major new translation of the Bible was being made--a translation that came to be known as the Revised Version, with the New Testament released in 1881 and the Old in 1885.

In the minds of not a few Seventh-day Adventists, such a new translation posed serious questions. Was it admissible and proper to produce a revision of the Scriptures? From time to time in that decade the *Review and Herald* took note of this, and during that same decade Ellen White penned four important statements on inspiration:

1886--"Objections to the Bible" (*Selected Messages*, book 1, pp. 19-21).

1888--Introduction to [*The Great Controversy*](#) (*The Great Controversy*, pp. v-xii).

1888--"The Inspiration of the Word of God" (*Selected Messages*, book 1, pp. 15-18).

1889--"The Mysteries of the Bible a Proof of Its Inspiration" (*Testimonies*, vol. 5, pp. 698-711).

The careful study of these four Ellen G. White statements on the inspiration of the Bible will prove to be most helpful.

To these we would add *Selected Messages*, book 1, pp. 21-76, the balance of Section I, entitled "The Light on Our Pathway"; and the compiled chapter in *Testimonies*, vol. 5, "The Nature and Influence of the "Testimonies," pp. 654-691.

Every Seventh-day Adventist should be familiar with these basic statements that bear so heavily on our concept of inspiration. I urge all to master them.

The operation of inspiration has been a point of special interest to the trustees appointed by Ellen White to care for her writings. A. G. Daniells, president of the General Conference from 1901 to 1922, approached the question from the standpoint of its outworkings, in his book *Abiding Gift of Prophecy*. Another of the trustees, F. M. Wilcox, for 33 years editor of the *Review and Herald*, in 1933 discussed various facets of the question in a series of articles titled "The Testimony of Jesus," and these were reprinted in a book of the same title.

How God Got His Message Through

When I entered the employ of the White Estate in 1929, I worked as secretary to W. C. White in the Elmshaven office in California. As I began working with the Ellen G. White manuscripts and letters and published works, I became deeply interested in how God got His messages through to the people. I soon concluded that as God in Bible times spoke through the prophets "at sundry times and in divers manners," so had He spoken to Ellen White. From that time on, this subject has been of great interest to me.

As my work has had to do in part with answering questions regarding Ellen White and her writings, I have often found that the answers to such questions were bound up with an understanding of the operation of inspiration as revealed in the many rich sources in

the White Estate vault that supplement published materials as referred to earlier. I find she gives no endorsement to a mechanical dictational inspiration, as some have envisioned--our forefathers termed it verbal inspiration, although theologians now use the term differently. And how many times the problems that were perplexing to our inquirers melted in the light of information as to how inspiration actually functions.

The information I found in my work with the documents in our vault, often in incidental references, I assembled for the benefit of ministers and others in articles that from time to time have been published. These have been republished in permanent form for wide distribution under the title of *Ellen G. White--Messenger to the Remnant* and may be secured in an inexpensive paper binding at Adventist Book Centers. In this the mechanics of inspiration as seen in Ellen White's experience are delineated largely in the form of practical illustrations.

From time to time I have been called upon to address our Bible teachers, history teachers, and other groups on various aspects of Ellen White's work. One of these dealt with "The Authority of the Ellen G. White Writings," another with the question "Who Told Sister White?" I presented a paper also on "Ellen G. White as a Historian" and still another on "Hermeneutical Principles in the E. G. White Writings." For years these, together with the paper titled "Toward a Factual Concept of Inspiration," were available only in mimeographed form.

The nature of the important information they bear, based not on highly refined, theological concepts and definitions, but on the simple exhibits provided by the E.G. White documents themselves, led the Review and Herald Publishing Association to publish these in a paperbound book entitled *The Ellen G. White Writings*. The volume also carries the following enlightening appendix items:

1. "Our Use of the Visions of Sister White," by J. N. Andrews.
2. "The Inspiration of the Evangelists and Other New Testament Writers," by Henry Alford, D.D., an Anglican theologian and commentator who worked in 1863. This offers what the White Estate for many years has considered a most helpful document, for it deals with many situations and principles not often thought of touching inspiration.
3. "The 1911 Edition of [*The Great Controversy*](#)," being an explanation by William C. White, Ellen White's son and helper, of the involvements in the revision of an inspired book.

The 192-page paperback is available at your Adventist Book Center.

It is painful to see earnest Seventh-day Adventists thrown into perplexity or have their confidence in the Spirit of Prophecy weakened because of faulty concepts. Not having given special study to the matter, they hold rigid views of inspiration that call for the prophet to serve as an automaton, speaking or penning only those words dictated to him by the Holy Spirit. It is equally painful to see many fail to perceive, because of unwarranted liberal views, the hand of God as He communicates to His people through His prophet, and lose the great blessing of the certainty that Seventh-day Adventists are a people led and taught of God.

It is my opinion that the presentation of these articles and the careful reading of the sources of information referred to may prove most helpful as we enter the peril-fraught days ahead.

1) See Carrie Johnson, *I Was Canright's Secretary*.

The Ellen G. White Historical Writings--1

Ellen G. White's Sources for the Conflict Series Books

There has been an increasing interest in Ellen White's "sources" for the Conflict of the Ages books in general, and [*The Great Controversy*](#) and [*The Desire of Ages*](#) in particular.

Probably at no time since Ellen White's death in 1915 has there been among Seventh-day Adventists as intense and widespread an interest in the question of inspiration in general and the inspiration of Ellen White in particular as there is today. Because the Spirit of Prophecy writings strongly affect every believer, interest in these topics is understandable.

Seventh-day Adventists who accept the Spirit of Prophecy counsels as coming from the Lord, and, consequently, as binding, are entitled to assurances that these messages are trustworthy. Readers of the widely distributed books of the Conflict of the Ages Series, bearing Ellen G. White's name, should be able to rest in confidence that her assertions that she was not "the originator of these books" and that they contain "the instruction that during her lifework God has been giving her" can be substantiated (Ellen G. White, in *Review and Herald*, Jan. 20, 1903; *Colporteur Ministry*, p. 125).

How the light came to Ellen White through her long life of special ministry and how this light was translated into human language is the subject of legitimate and profitable study. Attention to the way in which she, an inspired person, related to the times in which she lived, to the events taking place around her, and to the lines of information that came to her in her reading and in her contacts with others' and to the pressures of

those who sought to influence her' is important in forming a basis for a proper understanding of her work.

In recent months there has been an increasing interest in what have been termed Ellen White's "sources" for the Conflict of the Ages books in general, and *The Great Controversy* and *The Desire of Ages* in particular.

There is no need for conjecture as to what these sources were, for the extensive records preserved in the White Estate provide in the words of Ellen White herself, and in the statements of those who worked with her, full and satisfying information.

On the basis of my long connection with these sources, I have been asked to discuss the matter with the readers of the REVIEW. What I here present is based on 50 years with the White Estate and on a more recent intensified study of the records relating to the matter in question.

The articles will lead us some distance from the narrow concepts held by some of a mechanical, verbal inspiration according to which Ellen White wrote only what was revealed to her in vision or dictated to her by the Holy Spirit. They also will, I believe, provide fresh and broader insights into the intriguing subject of how inspiration works.

First of all, Ellen White herself deals with the matter of her sources for the Conflict story in the 1888 introduction to *The Great Controversy*. Appearing as it does in the first of the large Conflict books prepared for reading by the general public, it may well be considered a preface to all five of the books--*Patriarchs and Prophets*, *Prophets and Kings*, [*The Desire of Ages*](#), *The Acts of the Apostles*, and [*The Great Controversy*](#)--as well as of the earlier works dealing with the Conflict story. It also is one of the most informative statements on inspiration to be found anywhere.

The writing of the Conflict story varied somewhat in nature from the writing of personal testimonies, or of the articles for the published Testimonies and other books and articles of counsel and instruction for the church. In the Conflict Series she was largely paralleling Biblical history with secular history. Then, when Biblical history ended, she carried the story to the Second Coming and beyond.

Writing on the Conflict theme was a work that engaged much of Mrs. White's attention throughout her long years of ministry.

To give a perspective to the discussion of the sources of the information in Ellen G. White's portrayal published progressively in three stages, we should examine her objectives. These books were written not to present a world history, nor as a history to correct other historical accounts.

Rather, as stated in her introduction, they were to "trace the history of the controversy in past ages," and to present it in a manner "to shed a light on the fast-approaching struggle of the future" ([*The Great Controversy*](#), p. xi). "It is not so much . . . to present new truths concerning the struggles of former times, as to bring out facts and principles which have a bearing on coming events."--*Ibid.*, p. xii. The "records of the past" were to be seen as having "a new significance," for through them "a light is cast upon the future" (*ibid.*). The writer, with eyes on the climactic struggle between the forces of Christ and Satan, was more interested in the large, overall historical picture than in minor details. She portrayed in a marked way God's intervention in human affairs.

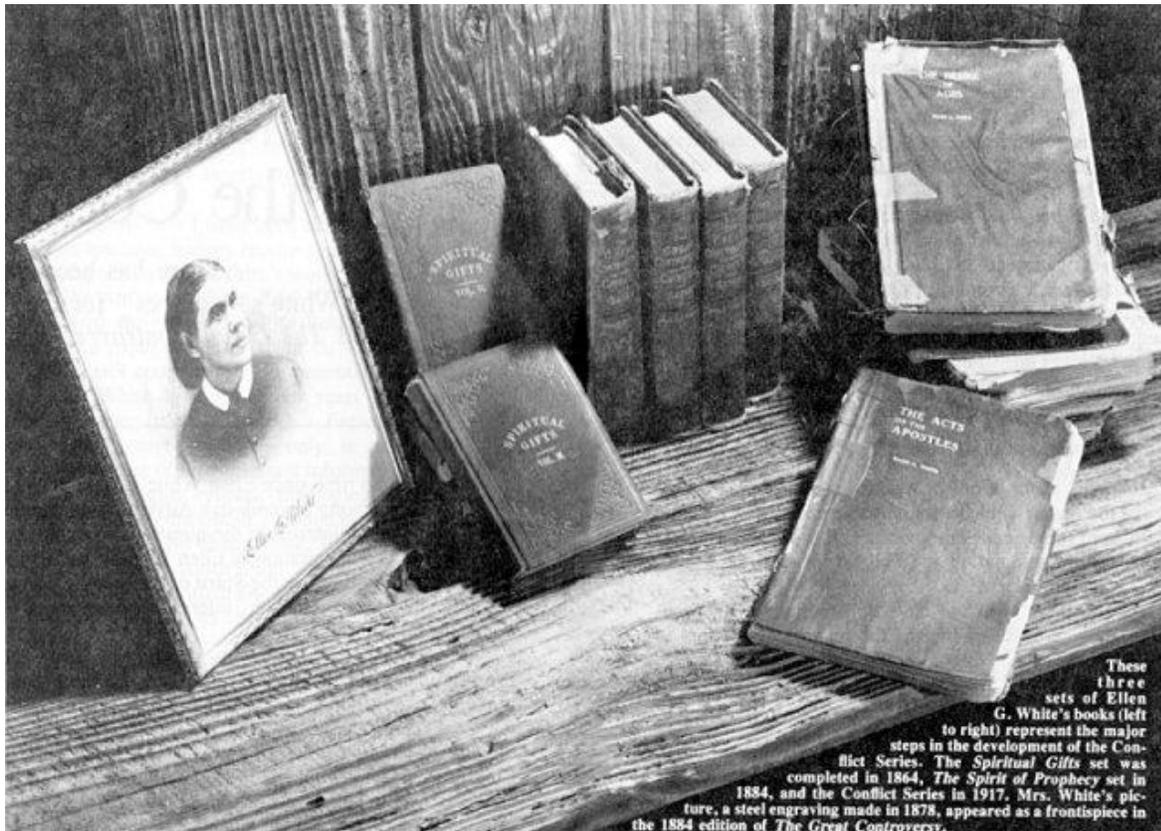
The Influence of the Holy Spirit

As noted, Ellen White was instructed "to trace the history of the controversy" (*ibid.*, p. xi). But where would a woman, somewhat infirm and with only three years of formal education, a busy mother and housewife, traveling extensively in the interests of the church, filling many speaking appointments, involved in interviews and in writing testimonies and articles, gain the knowledge of the history she was charged to present to the people? She answers in her introduction that it was (1) through the illumination of the Holy Spirit, and (2) with the help of historical records. In this article we note especially the influence of the Holy Spirit on her writing:

"Through the illumination of the Holy Spirit, the scenes of the long-continued conflict between good and evil had been opened to the writer of these pages. From time to time I have been permitted to behold the working, in different ages, of the great controversy between Christ, the Prince of life, the Author of our salvation, and Satan, the prince of evil, the author of sin, the first transgressor of God's holy law."--*Ibid.*, p. x.

It is difficult to draw precise lines in the experience of a person who is fully under the influence of the Holy Spirit. No formula can be specific, no precise definition can be spelled out.

The term "illumination of the Holy Spirit" would refer to impressions made upon her heart by "the Spirit of God" (see *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 691), as well as to light coming to her through the visions of the day and the visions of the night, often spoken of as dreams' prophetic dreams. At times, while she was speaking to a congregation, the Spirit of the Lord would reveal to her the life and character of various persons (see *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 678). "Most precious things of the gospel," she declared, were often presented to her, "for I have new representations every time I open my lips to speak to the people."—



These three sets of Ellen G. White's books (left to right) represent the major steps in the development of the Great Conflict Series. The *Spiritual Gifts* set was completed in 1864. The *Spirit of Prophecy* set in 1884, and the *Conflict Series* in 1917. Mrs. White's picture, a steel engraving made in 1878, appeared as a front piece in the 1884 edition of *The Great Controversy*.

Manuscript 174, 1903. She reported also that while praying or writing in the quiet of her workroom, and fully conscious of her surroundings, important scenes passed before her mind (see Manuscript 12c, 1896).

It is difficult to draw precise lines in the experience of a person who is fully under the influence of the Holy Spirit. No formula can be specific, no precise definition can be spelled out.

In 1860 Ellen White wrote of the visions: "At times I am carried far ahead into the future and shown what is to take place. Then again I am shown things as they have occurred in the past."-- *Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 2, p. 292.

She further indicated her total dependence on the Spirit of God in presenting the vision: "I am just as dependent upon the Spirit of the Lord in relating or writing a vision, as in having the vision. It is impossible for me to call up things which have been shown me unless the Lord brings them before me at the time that He is pleased to have me relate or write them."--*Ibid.*, p. 293.

These visions were an important method in the revelatory process. Whether in vision she saw a city being destroyed as the angel of God stood by her side explaining the significance of the scene (*Testimonies*, vol. 9, pp. 92, 93), or was taken from room to room in an institution and observed what was taking place (*Counsels on Health*, pp. 412, 413), or was shown buildings not yet erected and given instruction as to how the work should be done when the buildings were ready (Letter 135, 1903, in *Messenger to the Remnant*, p. 11), or in symbolic views was shown the experience of a leading worker (Letter 239, 1903, in *Messenger*, p. 11), or witnessed the scenes presented to her of the great controversy (*The Great Controversy*, pp. xi, xii), all were a part of the process by which God imparted light to His chosen servant.

When Ellen White said, "From time to time *I have been permitted to behold*² the working, in different ages, of the great controversy," she implied scenic visions. The phrase "in different ages" suggests not only many visions but widely varied historical events in the saga of, and throughout the long period of, the great controversy.

In her autobiography written in 1860, Ellen White mentioned two early comprehensive visions opening up the great controversy story, but she built her account primarily on the scenic vision given to her on March 14, 1858. Of this two-hour vision she wrote: "In this vision at Lovett's Grove [(Ohio)], most of the matter of the Great Controversy which I had seen ten years before, was repeated, and I was shown that I must write it out."--*Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 2, p. 270.

This she did in the spring and summer of 1858, giving the church her first bound book in September, the little 219-page *Spiritual Gifts*, volume 1, titled *The Great Controversy Between Christ and His Angels, and Satan and His Angels*.

How the Information Came to Her

While, as already noted, God employed different methods of imparting light and information to her throughout her life, the evidence is that visual scenic representations was the method most frequently employed in opening the controversy story to her. The reader is urged to turn to *Spiritual Gifts*, volume 1^{2.1}, and spend a few hours reading the book through. It opens with three short chapters introducing the controversy theme, tracing briefly the "Fall of Satan," "The Fall of Man," and "The Plan of Salvation." Then, omitting Old Testament history, it picks up the story with the birth and ministry of Christ and carries through to the destruction of sin and sinners and to the new earth. Old Testament history is left for *Spiritual Gifts*, volumes 3 and 4. I reproduce here a few sentences from the first volume, which make clear a primary source of the information the author presents and how the information came to her.

Page 20--"*I saw that the holy angels often visited the garden, and gave instruction to Adam and Eve.*"

The evidence is that visual scenic representations were the method most frequently employed in opening the controversy story to her.

Page 21--"*I saw a sadness came over Adam's countenance.*"

Page 46--"*I then viewed Jesus in the garden with His disciples.*"

Page 68--"*I saw the Roman guard . . . raise themselves to see if it were safe for them to look around.*"

Page 79--"*Next I was shown the disciples as they sorrowfully gazed towards heaven to catch the last glimpse of their ascending Lord.*"

Page 114--"*I was pointed to Adam and Eve in Eden.*

. . . I heard an angel ask, "Who of the family of Adam have passed that flaming sword, and have partaken of the tree of life?" I heard another angel answer, Not one of the family of Adam have passed that flaming sword, and partaken of the tree."

Pages 152, 153--"*I saw the disappointment of the trusting ones. . . . Then I saw the disappointed ones again look cheerful, and raise their eyes to heaven, looking with faith and hope for their Lord's appearing. . . . I could see the trace of deep sorrow upon their countenances.*"

"The Lord has made me His humble instrument in shedding some rays of precious light upon the past."

Reinforcing the concept of scenic visions are expressions indicating that as she viewed developments she was "carried" forward or back to view particular events: "*I was carried down to the time when Jesus was to take upon Himself man's nature, humble Himself as a man, and suffer the temptations of Satan.*"--*Ibid.*, p. 28.

After writing of the Transfiguration, she declared: "*I was then carried down to the time when Jesus ate the passover supper with His disciples.*"--*Ibid.*, p. 44.

After writing of the work of the apostles, she stated: "*I was carried forward to the time when the heathen idolators cruelly persecuted the Christians, and killed them. Blood flowed in torrents.*"--*Ibid.*, p. 103.

"I was carried back to the days of the disciples, and was shown the beloved John, that God had a special work for him to accomplish." *Ibid.*, p. 130.

Ellen White employed a similar expression in writing on "The Reformation," in which Luther and Melanchthon are particularly mentioned: "I was shown the wisdom of God in choosing these two men, of different characters to carry on the work of reformation. I was then carried back to the days of the apostles, and saw that God chose as companions an ardent and zealous Peter, and a mild, patient, meek John."--*Ibid.*, pp. 122, 123.

While in the immediate context she does not specifically declare that in a visual representation in 1858 she saw Luther and Melanchthon, the expression "I was then carried back to the days of the apostles" seems to imply that from a point of viewing certain Reformation scenes, she was removed by the space of 1,500 years to view other scenes. At another time she plainly declared: "Events in the history of the reformers have been presented before me. "Letter 48, 1894, published in *The Ellen G. White Writings*, p. 123.

After preparing an autobiographical work, *Spiritual Gifts*, volume 2, published in 1860, she turned to the writing of Old Testament history, reviewing the experiences of men of old that illustrated the struggle between the forces of good and evil. In her preface to *Spiritual Gifts*, volume 3, she stated: "In presenting this, my third little volume, to the public, I am comforted with the conviction that the Lord has made me His humble instrument in shedding some rays of precious light upon the past."--Page v.

She mentioned that "the great facts of faith, connected with the history of holy men of old," had been opened to her in vision (*ibid.*).

She then narrated in *Spiritual Gifts*, volume 3 and the first half of 4, published in 1864, the high points of the controversy story from Creation to the time of Solomon and closed with a sketchy bridge to the captivity of Israel and the Messiah. Volume 3 carried the subtitle "Important Facts of Faith in Connection With the History of Holy Men of Old." Fewer statements of "I saw" and "I was shown" appear in volumes 3 and 4. Yet on some key or vital points they *were* used.

Scenes Witnessed in Vision

Frequent descriptions of events on almost every page leave the reader with the inescapable conviction that she witnessed these scenes in vision. This is especially so in regard to the temptation and Fall of man and the Flood, its causes and aftermath.

As she dealt with the days of Creation, the Fall of man, the age of the earth, and the relation of geology to the Bible, she made direct reference to the vision source, declaring "I saw" (p. 42), "I was shown" (p. 92), and "I have been shown" (p. 93).

Five years earlier, Charles Darwin had published *The Origin of Species*, countering fiat creation and advocating the evolutionary process. His theories were fast gaining ground and making notable inroads in the Christian world. The *Spiritual Gifts* "Facts of Faith" chapter "Disguised Infidelity" (pp. 90-96) seems to be a direct response to the theory of theistic evolution.

To summarize: It seems evident that Ellen White's main source of the thrilling portrayal of the great controversy story in her first little bound books in 1858 and 1864 was visions. Beyond these, of course, were other ways in which God illuminated her mind under the influence of the Holy Spirit. And we should remember that although such terms as "I saw," "I was shown," et cetera, were not later used, this does not necessarily mean that what she portrayed was not seen in vision.

As she dealt with the days of Creation, the Fall of man, the age of the earth, and the relation of geology to the Bible, she made direct reference to the vision source, declaring "I saw," "I was shown."

2) All italics used in quotations are supplied, unless otherwise noted.

2.1) Available in facsimile reprint from Adventist Book Centers.

The Ellen G. White Historical Writings--2

Rewriting and Amplifying the Controversy Story

It is informative to observe the manner in which Ellen White's earlier books on the great controversy were rewritten and enlarged.

In her portrayal of the great controversy story, Ellen White used three principal sources: (1) The Bible, an inspired source, in which she had unquestioned confidence, (2) God-given visions, which, while not touching in detail every phase of the story, served as an overall basic source, and (3) various historical works, which, in addition to broadening her vocabulary and aiding her in expressing truth, provided dates of events, geographic descriptions, and some details and sequences of church history. It is not unlikely that these works suggested such things as a narrative link, a logical assumption, or an appropriate conclusion. But, of the three sources, the oft-repeated visions of the controversy provided the basic materials.

In 1888, 30 years after her second great-controversy vision, she wrote, "From time to time I have been permitted to behold the working, in different ages, of the great controversy."-- *The Great Controversy*, p. x.

In 1911 she declared, "While writing the manuscript of *Great Controversy* I was often conscious of the presence of the angels of God. And many times the scenes about which I was writing were presented to me anew in visions of the night, so that they were fresh and vivid in my mind." Letter 56, 1911, quoted in *The Ellen G. White Writings*, p. 117.

In 1889, while working on the manuscript for *Patriarchs and Prophets*, she touched on certain other matters: "I had been, during the forty-five years of experience, *shown the lives, the character and history of the patriarchs, and prophets*. . . . I could but have a vivid picture in my mind from day to day of the way *reformers were treated*, how slight difference of opinion seemed to create a frenzy of feeling. Thus it was in the betrayal, trial, and crucifixion of Jesus' all this had passed before me *point by point*."--Letter 14, 1889.³

Her terminology here is of interest. She says she saw the way reformers were treated, and in scenic visions sacred history passed before her "point by point." While preparing the manuscript for *The Desire of Ages* in the early 1890's, she confessed: "I know not how to present subjects in the living power in which they stand before me."--Letter 40, 1892, quoted in *Ellen G. White, Messenger to the Remnant*, p. 59.

Three years later, while still at work on *The Desire of Ages*, she referred to the clarity in which the scenes stood before her: "My mind has been deeply stirred over many things. It seems to me that *light from heaven flashes upon me*, and the Holy Spirit brings many things to my remembrance. Important *views* are clear to my mind's eye, *as though I was looking upon the scene as I wrote*."--Letter 27, 1895. (Italics in original.)

As to events yet future, she at one time described how the second coming of Christ was opened up to her: "Scenes of such thrilling, solemn interest passed before me as no language is adequate to describe. It was all a living reality to me."--*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 76.

In 1889, writing in a more general way of how, at times, light was imparted in vision and also how matters forgotten were called to her mind, she declared: "The question is asked, How does Sister White know in regard to the matters of which she speaks so decidedly, as if she had authority to say these things? I speak thus because they flash upon my mind when in perplexity like lightning out of a dark cloud in the fury of a storm. Some scenes presented before me years ago have not been retained in my memory, but when the instruction then given is needed, sometimes even when I am standing before the people, the remembrance comes sharp and clear, like a flash of lightning, bringing to mind distinctly that particular instruction. At such times I cannot refrain from saying the things that flash into my mind, not because I have had a new vision, but because that which was presented to me perhaps years in the past, has been recalled to my mind forcibly."--Manuscript 33, 1911 (March 18, 1889).

In an interview in 1907 she told of how the light often came to her: "Now I have light, mostly in the night season, just as if the whole thing was transacting, and I viewing it, and . . . I am listening to the conversation." "Manuscript 105, 1907.

And it was not alone in the visions of the night that scenic views passed before her. A few months earlier she had written, "When I am using my pen, wonderful representations are given me of *past*, *present*, and *future*."--Letter 86, 1906.

The Testimony of W. C. White

William C. White, son of James and Ellen White, gives us additional interesting insights. After the death of his father, he assisted his mother for 35 years in her travels and in the preparation and publication of her writings. Discussing the book [*The Great Controversy*](#) and the manner in which light came to her concerning historical events, he declared in a statement fully approved by Ellen White as correctly representing the matter: "The things which she has written out, are descriptions of flashlight pictures"^{3.1} and other representations given her regarding the actions of men, and the influence of these actions upon the work of God for the salvation of men, with views of past, present, and future history in its relation to this work. "--*The Great Controversy*, 1911 ed., p. 4, White Estate Document File #85, quoted in *The Ellen G. White Writings*, p. 33.

Another statement from the pen of W. C. White throws light on scenic visions depicting historical events: "The things revealed to Sister White were not given to her like the repeating of a story that she must repeat. In vision she seemed to be looking down through a great opening in the sky and she saw multitudes of people in action, and the angels of God ministering to them. She was not given the language. Many times she remembered what the angel said, but many times she had to describe what she had seen the very best she could. As the work advanced, and she prepared it over and over again, her description was more complete."--W. C. White, in White Estate Document File 107-g.

Nor were the revelations to Ellen White uniform in coverage. Concerning this, W. C. White wrote: "The framework of the great temple of truth sustained by her writings was presented to her clearly in vision. In some features of this work, information was given in detail. Regarding some features of the revelation, such as the features of prophetic chronology, as regards the ministration in the sanctuary and the changes that took place in 1844, the matter was presented to her many times and in detail many times, and this enabled her to speak very clearly and very positively regarding the foundation pillars of our faith.

"In some of the historical matters such as are brought out in *Patriarchs and Prophets*, and in [*The*] *Acts of the Apostles*, and in [*The*] *Great Controversy*, the main outlines were made very clear and plain to her, and when she came to write up these topics, she was left to study the Bible and history to get dates, and geographical relations and to perfect her description."--Letter to L. E. Froom, December 13, 1934, quoted in *The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 4, 1884 ed. facsimile, Supplement, p. 539.

The point made above by W. C. White concerning differences in details and concerning frequency of presentation becomes clear when one compares what Ellen White wrote based on the 1858 vision with her later writings. While the early writings touched points of vital importance, they omitted many others of lesser consequence. She recounted in 12 pages what she was shown of the Fall of Satan, the Fall of man, and the plan of salvation. Then she was "carried down to the time when Jesus was to take upon Himself man's nature" (*Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 1, p. 28). After describing His birth, baptism, temptation, conflicts in His ministry, and the Transfiguration, in 28 pages, she declared that she was "carried down" to the Passover. The events vital to the controversy story, the Passover, Christ's betrayal, trial, crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension, apparently were revealed in a certain degree of detail, for 37 pages were devoted to the description. Subsequent visions filled in the overall narrative.

In reconstructing certain less important features of Old Testament history, she traced the narrative very briefly and employed extensive Scripture quotations to fill out the account. (See *Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 3, pp. 252, 253; 261-266; also vol. 4, pp. 16-18, 20, 21.) This procedure was at times followed in some of her later books.



William C. White assisted his mother, Ellen White, for 35 years after the death of his father. He travelled with her and helped her prepare her writings for publication.

The Old Testament portion of the controversy story presented in the 372 small pages of *Spiritual Gifts*, volumes 3 and 4, in 1864, mentioned last week, became the basis for *The Spirit of Prophecy*, volume 1, six years later. It was a 414-page book, and was eventually expanded into [*Patriarchs and Prophets*](#) in 1890.

The materials on the life of Christ and the history of the early church were in time greatly amplified from 87 small pages in the 1858 book to 810 pages of *The Spirit of Prophecy*, volumes 2 and 3, published in 1877 and 1878. The post-Biblical history filling 117 pages in the 1858 book grew to 486 pages in *The Spirit of Prophecy*, volume 4, in 1884. When the little 1858 book was published there were fewer than 2,000 Sabbathkeeping Adventists. As the church grew and the stocks of earlier printed books were exhausted, there was a demand for more. Not only could larger books be handled but Ellen White was eager to give much fuller presentations. So eventually the 572 pages of the first printings of the full span of the controversy story published in the three little books appearing in 1858 and 1864 grew to 1,710 pages in the four *Spirit of Prophecy* volumes of 1870 to 1884. This constituted the second presentation of the controversy story.

Books for Door-to-Door Sales

During this period the church's colporteur ministry began, and it was seen that books presenting this story could well form a part of Seventh-day Adventist literature to be distributed widely by door-to-door selling. Ellen White felt that considerable enlargement and some adaptation of wording to make them more appropriate for the general public was called for. Also, in further amplified form, the church would be well served. So the books grew in size and number to our present Conflict of the Ages Series. [*The Great Controversy*](#) in 1888, with its 678 pages; [*Patriarchs and Prophets*](#) in 1890, with 755 pages of text; the 835-page *The Desire of Ages* in 1898; *The Acts of the Apostles* in 1911, carrying 602 pages; and finally *Prophets and Kings* at the close of Ellen White's life, with 733 pages. In addition to these, [*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*](#) and *Christ's Object Lessons* were published.

In the rewritings and amplifications no direct reference was made to the fact that the material was based upon visions. With non-Adventist readers in mind, Ellen White purposely refrained from using phrases such as "I saw" and "I was shown," considering it best not to draw the attention of readers away from the truths presented. So, while the little 1858 book was replete with reminders of the vision source, only a few such expressions were included in *The Spirit of Prophecy*, volumes 1 to 4 (1870-1884), and none in the five Conflict books that followed.

The book *The Great Controversy Between Christ and Satan* was published in the spring of 1888 and revised in 1911 ^{3.2} under the direction of Ellen White, with slight changes in wording in some places. This book traces the post-Biblical history of the conflict from the destruction of Jerusalem to the new earth and embodies as an important part the great apostasy of the early Christian church, followed by the Reformation of the sixteenth century. As noted last week, in the 1858 book, one five-page chapter is devoted to the Reformation. In the 1884 book there were 128 pages on the subject, and in the enlarged 1888 book the same ground is covered in 228 considerably larger pages, more than doubling the previous text.

Interest in Reformation History

Whatever may have been shown to Ellen White in 1858 of the Reformation of the sixteenth century as a part of the great-controversy theme created an immediate interest in the hearts of both James and Ellen White in Reformation history. In his 1911 statement regarding the writing of *The Great Controversy*, W. C. White informs us, "When I was a mere boy, I heard her read D'Aubigne's *History of the Reformation* to my father. . . . She has read other histories of the Reformation." Then he explains: "This has helped her to locate and describe many of the events and the movements presented to her in vision. This is somewhat similar to the way in which the study of the Bible helps her to locate and describe the many figurative representations given to her regarding the development of the great controversy in our day between truth and error." "White Estate Document File #85, quoted in *The Ellen G. White Writings*, p. 33.

When in the early 1880's she undertook the first amplification of her writing on the post-Biblical part of the controversy story, she dealt at length with the Reformation and in particular with the experience of Martin Luther as the primary exhibit of the issues of the conflict in the sixteenth century. Experiences of the Reformers, both before and after Luther, completed that segment of history. But the account of the work of Luther and Melancthon filled 76 of the 128 pages on the Reformation. Even this was basically a condensation of 18 of her articles that had appeared in the *Signs of the Times* a year earlier, in 1883.

It was not uncommon, when Ellen White had a book in mind, for her to write at length on a given phase of the topic in a series of articles that were published at once in one of the journals of the church. Later they would be condensed for book publication, giving attention to a proper proportion of space that could be devoted to the particular topic as it would appear in the finished volume. This procedure showed up particularly in the preparation of *Prophets and Kings*, in which extended series of articles on Ezra, Nehemiah, Daniel, et cetera, were published in the church's journals years in advance of the book.

³⁾ All italics used in quotations are supplied unless otherwise noted.

3.1) "Flashlight pictures" and similar expressions are borrowed from photographic terminology. *Webster's Third New International Dictionary* (Unabridged) says, in part, concerning "flashlight": "a sudden bright artificial light used in taking photographic pictures . . . a photograph taken by such a light."

3.2) See *The Ellen G. White Writings*, pp. 79-106, "Ellen G. White as a Historian," and Appendix C, "The 1911 Edition of *The Great Controversy*," and Supplement to Reprint" of *The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 4, pp. 507-549.

Ellen G. White Historical Writings--3

Historical Sources and the Conflict Series

Preserved portions of Ellen White's original drafts of *The Great Controversy* demonstrate her use of historical works in the Conflict Series.

Some may feel that in her work of tracing the "history of the controversy in past ages" Ellen White should have ignored all historical records and put down only what she could reconstruct from what she had seen in vision. Such a viewpoint implies a mechanical, dictational concept of inspiration, according to which the very words Ellen White should use would have been imparted to her. However, neither she nor her associates held such a view, nor does the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

At its 1883 General Conference session, the denomination recorded the following declaration: "We believe the light given by God to His servants is by the enlightenment of the mind, thus imparting the thoughts and not (except in rare cases) the very words in which the ideas should be expressed."--*Review and Herald*, Nov. 27, 1883, quoted in *Messenger to the Remnant*, p. 65.

There is strong evidence, internal, as well as external, that the scenes of the controversy story, as they had passed before Ellen White in vision, provided the basic framework of the narrative, and probably many of the details, as well. However, evidence is lacking that all the details, or even all phases of the history, were thus revealed to her, especially in matters of lesser importance or of purely secular significance. Thus, as she traced a connected history, she made use of the "records" of the past.

And, since, as she stated, "I am just as dependent upon the Spirit of the Lord in relating or writing a vision, as in having the vision" (*Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 2, p. 293), it seems logical to assume that the filling in of some of the narrative details from accepted sources was in full harmony with the biddings of the Holy Spirit to trace the history of the great controversy.

Indeed, in her introduction to *The Great Controversy*, she pointed out that: "The great events which have marked the progress of reform in past ages are matters of history, well known and universally acknowledged by the Protestant world; they are facts⁴ which none can gainsay."--*The Great Controversy*, p. xi. Then she explains: "*This history I have presented briefly*, in accordance with the scope of the book, and the

brevity which must necessarily be observed, *the facts having been condensed* into as little space as seemed consistent with a proper understanding of their application."--*Ibid.*, pp. xi, xii.

She went a step further in her explanations by noting: "Where a historian has so grouped together events as to afford, in brief, a comprehensive view of the subject, or has summarized details in a convenient manner, his words have been quoted . . . because his statement affords a ready and forcible presentation of the subject."--*Ibid.*, p. xii.

W. C. White recalls that, as Ellen White was writing on the history of the Reformation, she came home one day from the Review and Herald library, where she often worked, and told her husband of being especially impressed by the Spirit of God to look into a certain volume, where her eyes readily fell on a passage that was particularly helpful to her (W. C. White to L. E. Froom, Dec. 13, 1934).

In the main, the working papers involved in the preparation of the Ellen G. White Conflict of the Ages books have not been preserved. Through the years, Mrs. White traveled widely and from time to time moved her place of residence from one point to another in the United States and to Europe and Australia, and then back to America. It was apparently assumed that after the manuscript for a volume had received her final approval and the printed book had been accepted by her, there was no purpose in keeping the masses of papers that could render no further service.

However, we do have a small portion of her original handwritten draft on the experience of Martin Luther, and this enables us to trace the steps in preparation of one of the chapters of *The Great Controversy*.

It is a manuscript of 51 pages, written on a tablet of paper approximately 5½ by 8½ inches. One side of each sheet is filled with handwriting, and the other side bears a portion of a hat catalogue printed by the Pacific Press.



Working in her writing room to the right on the second floor of her Healdsburg, California, home, Ellen G. White completed her work on *The Great Controversy* in 1888 and *Patriarchs and Prophets* in 1889.

This handwritten manuscript begins just as Luther is leaving the Diet of Worms and proceeds with an account of his kidnapping and seclusion at the castle of Wartburg. The latter part of the manuscript is devoted to an extended discussion of his efforts to save the Reformation from the excesses of various enthusiasts, with comparisons made to the experiences through which early Adventists passed in their encounters with fanatics.

The early pages of this manuscript were published in the *Signs of the Times*, October 11, 1883, in an article titled "Luther in the Wartburg." The relationship between the handwritten draft and this article is very close. In somewhat condensed form the material appeared in the 1884 *Spirit of Prophecy*, volume 4, as a part of the chapter "Luther Before the Diet," and was carried through to the chapter by the same title in the 1888 enlargement.

It is obvious that as Mrs. White undertook to pen the chapters on Luther's experiences, she consulted books at hand and chose to follow the outline of the historian, sometimes employing his words to describe historical events. At the same time she interspersed these quotations and paraphrases with insights on the significance of certain events, and with spiritual lessons. In recounting the historical narrative, it appears that she often followed rather closely the Reformation history of D'Aubigne, the author she and her husband had read a decade or two before. She was pleased when she found a condensation of this work in Charles Adams' book *Words That Shook the World*, published in New York in 1858. Of this she secured a copy for her personal library. It is a volume of 333 pages said to be "pictures of the great reformer sketched mainly from his own sayings," presented in "a style and brevity suited to youthful readers." Adams states that his principal source was D'Aubigne.

Mrs. White's handwritten manuscript shows that she made use of the works of the historian, and this material, plus her unique materials represented in special insights and spiritual lessons, are, by and large, carried through into the chapter as published in her 1884 and 1888 books.

Another significant handwritten manuscript that is related to *The Great Controversy* is one of 75 pages written by Ellen White while she was in Europe.

Soon after arriving there in the fall of 1885, she was requested to prepare for distribution in Europe *Spirit of Prophecy*, volume 4, presenting the postbiblical controversy history. This request led her to see the need for presenting a fuller treatment of the more prominent European Reformers than had been represented in the 1884 book. As she was able, with the help of her literary assistants, she undertook this amplification. Residing in Basel, Switzerland, she drew on the histories available to her in Elder J. N. Andrews' library.

One area that called for expansion was the treatment of Huss and Jerome. In preparing a book that would be read by Europeans, the five paragraphs, filling three pages, seemed much too brief. This led her to prepare manuscripts to expand the account. She condensed materials from Wylie and others and interspersed with spiritual lessons and comments the portions she used. In so doing she produced a manuscript of such length that at one point it was thought it might make two chapters on Huss.

The Huss Manuscript

The handwritten Huss manuscript in general is similar to the Luther manuscript written four or five years earlier, except that it gives evidence of having been prepared in great haste to meet the pressing demand for expanding the book--a work sandwiched in

between her travels and ministry in Europe. Spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and penmanship come far short of measuring up to the standard of which she was capable, which she often demonstrated. The manuscript was copious, for, as noted earlier, it was not unusual for Ellen White, in an initial draft, to write much more than was needed in the final plan for a book or chapter.

In the end it was felt that only one chapter could be devoted to Huss and Jerome if the proper balance of the book was to be maintained. So the presentation was substantially reduced.

Pressed hard with commitments for travel, Ellen White entrusted this task to Marian Davis, her dedicated and talented literary assistant who was still working in Basel. Such a procedure was not unusual in her book preparation. After the editorial work prepared in this manner was completed, it was carefully examined by Ellen White to determine that it properly represented her intent. If changes were called for, she penned them in. Unfortunately, for space reasons, most of the spiritual lessons that she had set forth in the Huss manuscript could not be included. This left the bare historical record as a part of the overall great-controversy narrative.

In addition to her explanation in her introduction to *The Great Controversy* as to why she copied from historians, we have the explanation of her son W. C. White who, in 1904, at a time when she was actively engaged in producing her books, wrote: "Mother writes very rapidly. She writes early in the morning, endeavoring to place upon paper a word-picture of the things that are flashed into her mind as a panoramic view of the movements of nations, of communities, of churches, and of individuals. . . .

"In the writing of her books, she has sometimes found it very difficult and laborious to put into language the scenes presented to her; and when she has found in the language of another a correct representation of the thought presented to her, she has sometimes copied sentences and paragraphs-- feeling that she had a perfect right to do this; that it was her privilege to utilize the correct statements of other writers, of the scenes that have been presented to her."--W. C. White Letter to J. J. Gorrell, May 13, 1904.

The records of the White Estate indicate that this procedure was followed to some extent in the production of all the Conflict of the Ages books, but particularly *The Great Controversy*.

Sketches From the Life of Paul

In 1883 Ellen White was urged to provide a little volume on the life of Paul as a Sabbath school lesson help for the 1883 and 1884 lessons. In preparing this book--*Sketches From the Life of Paul*--she had before her the well-known volume *The Life and Epistles of St. Paul*, produced by two British clergymen, W. J. Conybeare and

J. S. Howson. This book helped her especially in giving geographical and historical descriptions, and she drew from it some words and phrases but no complete sentences. Some of the same spiritual lessons are emphasized in the E. G. White book as are found in the British book.

The Conybeare and Howson book was well known and widely circulated among Seventh-day Adventists, and Mrs. White, in connection with an advertisement for it in the *Signs of the Times*, highly recommended its reading.

It is also clear that at the time she wrote *Sketches From the Life of Paul*,^{4.1} she had before her F. W. Farrar's *The Life and Work of St. Paul*, for she drew some phraseology from this work^{4.2}--a work which itself drew from Conybeare and Howson without giving credit. This was not an uncommon practice among Bible commentators.

Do the rules we might wish to impose as appropriate governing the work of an inspired person preclude his or her making use of some words or expressions from another as he or she frames a literary structure effectively to portray a geographical description, an account of events, or to project important truth as brought to his mind by the Holy Spirit? If so, not a few of the writers of the Bible fall short of the rules we might impose. And in the case of Ellen White, is there some particular virtue in insisting that all words and terms she employed be strictly original with her?

Highly esteemed commentators of her time, and since, hold that truth is common property, and there was no violation of principle in borrowing one from another. Of this, Ingram Cobbin, in the preface to his "Condensed Commentary" declared: "All the commentators have drawn largely from the fathers, especially from St. Augustine; and most of them have made general property of Patrick, Lowth, and Whitby. Poole has exhausted the old continental writers; Henry has made very free with Bishop Hall and others; Scott and Benson have enriched their pages abundantly from Henry; Gill has translated the spirit of Poole's 'Synopsis,' but he most generally gives his authorities; Adam Clarke and Davidson have been much indebted to all the best critics, though the former does not always mention his obligations, and the latter never."--*The Condensed Commentary and Family Exposition of the Holy Bible* (London: William Tegg, 1863), Preface, p. iv.

interest and that of the reformers. The
 elector saw what was for a while the
 fire had kindled a still darker ^{light} ~~light~~ than
 had been gathering over the reformers and
 that neither would feel of satisfaction ⁱⁿ ~~in~~ the
 word of Luther he saw that his fair name
 and a most decided and yet secret effort must
 be made to rescue him from the jaws of the
 lion. As soon as Luther left ~~Prague~~ ^{Prague} ~~Prague~~
 conflict was procured against him to which
 was affixed the superior ⁱⁿ ~~in~~ ^{and} ~~and~~ the
 word of the empire ⁱⁿ ~~in~~ ^{that} ~~that~~ ^{was} ~~was~~
 ... (116 notes) ... the superior himself
 and the field ^{of} ~~of~~ ^{the} ~~the
 the decree ^{of} ~~of~~ ^{the} ~~the ^{of} ~~of~~ ^{the} ~~the
~~the~~ also had no wish for ^{it} ~~it~~
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 of iniquity rather than God's word which
 enjoyed purity and his uses of character
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^{of} ~~of~~ ^{the} ~~the ^{of} ~~of~~ ^{the} ~~the~~

Building Material in the Prophet's Hands

Someone might ask whether Mrs. White's use of the writings of others imparts an aura of inspiration to those writings thus used. The answer is that it does not. Truth is truth, and in such use made by an inspired writer they are but building materials in the prophet's hands.

The next question that might be asked is: Would it have been possible for some inaccuracy to have crept into Ellen White's descriptions of historical events or that the

historians from whom she quoted may have been mistaken in some points of detail and thus, Ellen White, not being especially informed, allowed these mistakes to slip through into her narrative? Unless we are to claim more for her than we do for the Bible writers, the answer would have to be in the affirmative, yet this does not invalidate the inspiration of the prophetic writings. In times of old the sacred writers, working under the general superintendence of the Holy Spirit, may have included in their manuscripts as they wrote them what may (by modern definition) have been discrepancies. But I would emphasize that, while a few such discrepancies may exist, they in no wise invalidate the inspiration of God's Word or its overall accuracy and dependability.^{4.3}

Similarly, in the case of Ellen White we can point to some seeming discrepancies in matters of little consequence.

interest and that of the reformation. The elector saw what the future foreshadowed. A still darker tempest was gathering over the reformation and that nothing would satisfy Worms but the blood of Luther. He saw that his fate was sealed and a most decided and yet secret effort must be made to rescue him from the jaws of the lion. As soon as Luther left Worms an edict was procured against him to which was affixed the emperor's signature and the seal of the empire. See ("Words that shook the world" 240 pages). The emperor himself had spoken and the Diet had ratified the decree. The whole body of Romanist who had no desire for light, who loved darkness and the practise of iniquity rather than God's word which enjoined purity and holiness of character, rejoiced greatly at this excommunication. The tragedy they thought was over. The reformation stood in great peril and the superstitious heard the name of Luther spoken with horror, associating him with Satan incarnate whom the emperor had pointed out as Luther clothed with a monk's habit. Now was the time for the elector to act.

Most of the original drafts of Ellen White's books are no longer in existence. But a manuscript of 51 pages dealing with Luther's kidnaping and seclusion at the castle of Wartburg has been preserved. A page of this manuscript is reproduced at the left, with a line-for-line transcription. On the reverse side of the manuscript sheets appear portions of a hat catalog printed by the Pacific Press, a sample of which has also been reproduced. Below is a letter Ellen White wrote to her children, here shown so that the contrast in penmanship between it and the manuscript can be seen. The Luther manuscript was written as fast as Mrs. Ellen White's pen could cross the page. The letter demonstrates greater care in format. Manuscript pages such as the one shown here would be turned over to a literary assistant, who was instructed to correct spelling, punctuation, et cetera.

Worms, Mass., July 25 1875
 Dear children Willie and Henry,
 Sister Sarah and I left D.C. Tuesday last
 just two O'clock we arrived in a lovely
 just eight O'clock this evening night this
 part of the journey was more trying and wearisome
 to us than the long journey from Cal. It
 was very dusty and the cars much crowded
 and it was very warm. But I felt a good
 courage I had no fret in me I felt thankful
 for peace of mind and calmness with
 my Saviour the entire journey under his
 guardianship I know I was safe and had
 no reason for complaint therefore I did not
 feel half as much weary as I otherwise
 would have done. I spoke six times in
 Battle Creek it will do good I know it will
 for the Lord helped me I had a long talk
 with Bro. Bell I told him many things I need
 to speak before him what every one of our
 leading men had made a mistake and hindered



Most of the original drafts of Ellen White's books are no longer in existence. But a manuscript of 51 pages dealing with Luther's kidnaping and the seclusion at the castle of Wartburg has been preserved. A page of this manuscript is reproduced at the left (above), with a line-for-line transcripts. On the reverse side of the

used in that way."--W. C. White to W. W. Eastman, Nov. 4, 1912. Quoted in *The Ellen G. White Writings*, p. 34.

Up to this point we have been considering Ellen White's sources for the Conflict books and particularly *The Great Controversy*. We have seen how God repeatedly opened up to her in vision the great controversy story and how she labored to trace the picture on the background of the history of the past. But the real message of these books is what they mean to the future--the final outworking of God's plans and purposes.

In the last half of [*The Great Controversy*](#), the volume climaxing the series, we find God's chosen servants proclaiming the return of our Lord, and we follow the history of God's remnant church from its inception in the dark hours of disappointment to its glorious triumph, finally witnessing the coming of the Lord and the rewarding of all who are faithful. It is a moving story, filled with vital information and divine guidance for the people living in earth's last days.

Contain Instruction God has Given

"The Holy Spirit traced these truths upon my heart and mind," she wrote of *The Great Controversy*, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, and [*The Desire of Ages*](#), "as indelibly as the law was traced by the finger of God, upon the tables of stone."--*Colporteur Ministry*, p. 126.

She also said: "Sister White is not the originator of these books. They contain the instruction that during her lifework God has been giving her. They contain the precious, comforting light that God has graciously given His servant to be given to the world. From their pages this light is to shine into the hearts of men and women, leading them to the Saviour."--*Ibid.*, p. 125.

[4\)](#) All italics used in quotations are supplied unless otherwise noted.

[4.1\)](#) Available at your Adventist Book Center in facsimile reprint.

[4.2\)](#) Occasionally it has been asked whether such literary borrowings by Ellen White should not be considered plagiarism. The accepted practice of historians, and particularly religious writers of the nineteenth century, indicates that procedures she followed were common. See *Ellen G. White and Her Critics* on "Mrs. White's Literary Borrowings" (pp. 403-467) for a document-supported discussion.

[4.3\)](#) The British theologian Dr. Henry Alford, Dean of Canterbury, in his book *The New Testament for English Readers* (1865), discusses in a most way "The Inspiration of the Evangelists and Other New Testament Writers." See Appendix B in *The Ellen G. White Writings*.

Writing on the Life of Christ

Overwhelmed by the magnitude of the task of writing on the life of Christ, Ellen White felt keenly her lack of skills. She said, "I will try, if the Lord will help me, at forty-five years old to become a scholar in the science [of writing]."

After the publication of *The Spirit of Prophecy*, volume 1, in 1870, James and Ellen White turned their attention to a second, 400-page book. This one would deal with New Testament history, the life of Christ, and the work of the apostles. A third volume, also of 400 pages, would deal with post-Biblical history, continuing down to the end of time.

January 1, 1873, found James and Ellen White on the West Coast, where Ellen White began her writing on the life of Christ. In meetings over the next weekend, held in the Baptist church in Petaluma, she spoke Sunday morning on the temptation of Christ in the wilderness and felt the "force of the subject."

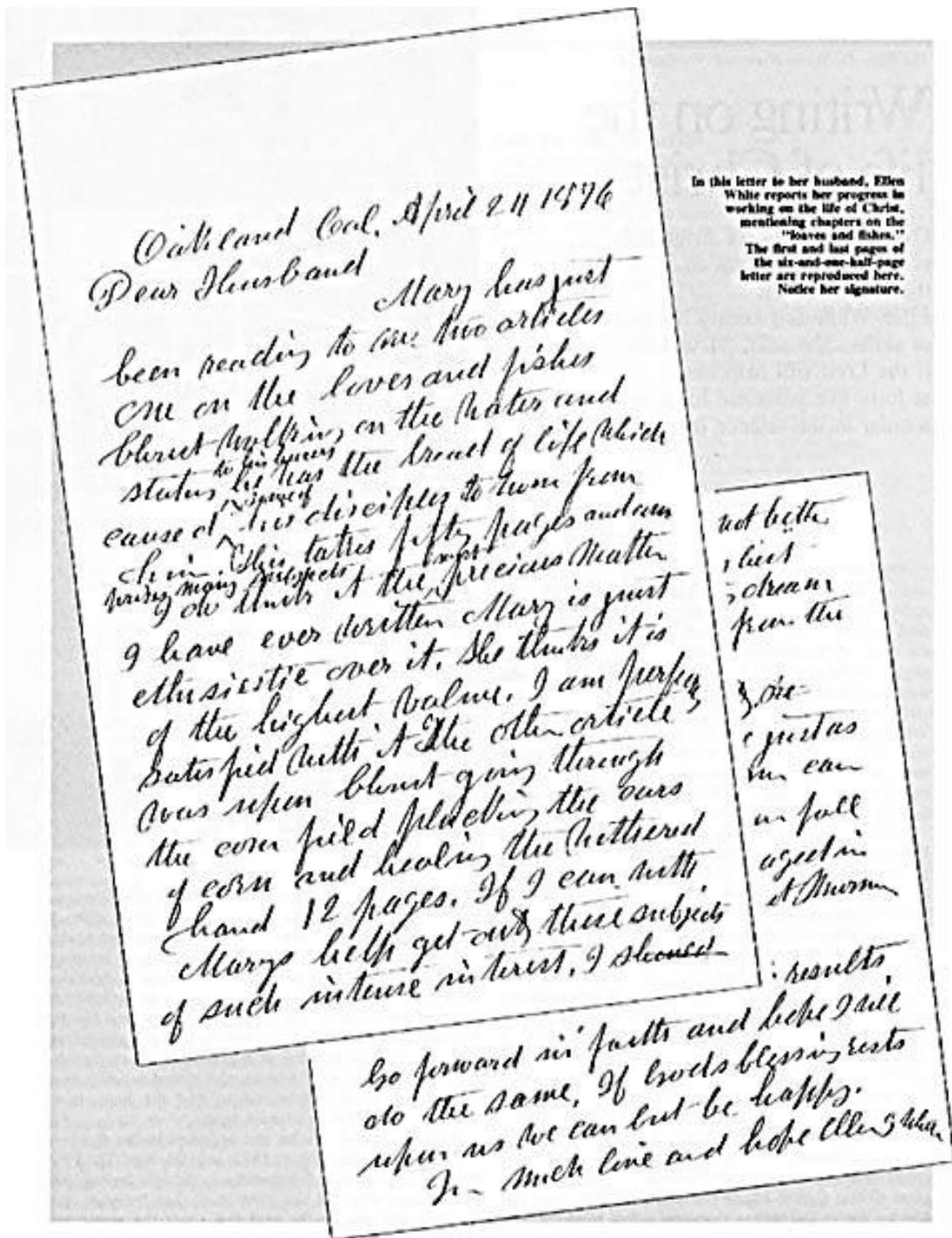
However, because at this time her husband, who had encouraged her in her writing and who often assisted her in preparing materials for the press, was ill from protracted periods of overwork, she decided a week later to face the situation candidly. Until she acquired the skills she felt she needed, she would discontinue her writing on the life of Christ. At the present time how could she deal with such great and sublime themes? "I am thinking," she wrote in her diary, "I must lay aside my writing I have taken so much pleasure in, and see if I cannot become a scholar. I am not a grammarian. I will try, if the Lord will help me, at forty-five years old to become a scholar in the science [of writing]. God will help me," she declared. "I believe He will."--Manuscript 3, 1873, p. 5.

With formal schooling of only three years, she ever felt her inadequacy in writing. Not long before this she urged upon her children the importance of learning to be good writers (Letter 28, 1871). Her books, her articles, and her letters and manuscripts reveal that from the very beginning of her literary work, her writing was clear and forceful, and her messages carried a distinctive style.



A reading of *Early Writings*, written in the earlier years, reveals a modest vocabulary and a simple sentence structure. Later books and articles disclose a development in literary skills. This came about as she helped her husband correct proof sheets for the *Review and Herald* and the other publications, as she read, and as she mixed with people day by day at home and in her travels. Constantly, as do most writers, she turned subjects over in her mind and endeavored to find the best, most convincing manner to express truth.

Already several articles had appeared in the *Review*, beginning with December, 1872, introducing "The First Advent of Christ." Fortunately, although feeling her inadequacy, she did not give in to her feelings, but intermittently during the next few years she wrote and published articles on the life and teachings of Jesus. These closed in April, 1875, with a series on "The Temptation of Christ."



In this letter to her husband, Ellen White reports her progress in working on the life of Christ, mentioning chapters on the "loaves and fishes." The first and last pages of the six-and-one-half-page letter are reproduced here. Notice her signature.

Oakland Cal., April 24 1876
 Dear Husband
 Mary has just been sending to me two articles one on the loaves and fishes Christ teaching on the water and status ^{to his disciples} the bread of life (which cause of his disciples to turn from him). This talks of the precious matter ^{and many prospects} of the precious matter I have ever written. Mary is just enthusiastic over it. She thinks it is of the highest value. I am perfectly satisfied with it. The other article was upon Christ going through the corn field plowing the ears of corn and healing the withered hand 12 pages. If I can with Mary's help get out these subjects of such intense interest, I should

not better
 select
 & clean
 from the
 voice
 & just as
 you can
 in full
 object in
 at Mount
 results
 go forward in faith and hope I will
 do the same. If God's blessing rests
 upon us we can but be happy.
 In much love and hope Ellen White

In this letter to her husband, Ellen White reports her progress in working on the life of Christ, mentioning chapters on the "loaves and fishes." The first and last pages of the six-and-one-half-page letter are reproduced here. Notice her signature.

A year later, circumstances were more favorable for writing. Ellen White was again on the Pacific Coast in her new home in Oakland, California. She had good literary help in her niece, Mary Clough, a talented young woman, the daughter of her sister Caroline. Mary was an earnest Christian, but had not accepted the seventh-day Sabbath.

James White was in the East, attending the General Conference session and caring for other duties as General Conference president. Seeing an opportunity to get on with her writing on the life of Christ, Ellen White determined that unless the Lord directed her otherwise, she would concentrate on this project.

Late in March, she wrote her husband: "Mary Clough and I will do all we can to forward the work of my writings. I cannot see any light shining to Michigan for me. This year I feel that my work is writing."--Letter 63, 1876.

"I enjoy the presence of God," she assured James. "I am writing and having freedom in my writing. Precious subjects I am handling. The last I completed. . . [was the story of] Jesus healing the impotent man at the pool of Bethesda."--Letter 1, 1876.

The first drafts of her materials were in Ellen White's own handwriting. Mary would edit the pages carefully, and put them into the form of a chapter. Of course, the finished work was also in handwritten form, for it was six or seven years before typewriters came into use in Mrs. White's work. Every morning she would write diligently in her upstairs room. After dinner, she would go to Mary Clough's room, lie on a sofa, and listen as Mary read the material prepared from her handwritten manuscript. She would rest or ride out in the carriage in the afternoon, perhaps pen a few letters, and then again in the evening go to Mary's room to hear more. Because the two women worked so closely together, Mrs. White even spoke of the writing "we" are doing, meaning the work she and Mary were doing together. Some years later she explained the use of the term "we": "My helpers and I are co-workers in sending out the light given me to be a blessing to the world."--Letter 170, 1906.

Confident in Both Human and Divine Help

Mrs. White felt perfectly confident in both her human and her divine help: "The precious subjects open to my mind well," she wrote in early April (Letter 4, 1876).

As the two women worked together with dedicated purpose, it seems they had at hand for reference several standard works by other authors, such as William Hanna's *Life of Christ*, the *Life and Work of Christ*, by Cunningham Geikie, and possibly others. The finished product as published gives evidence that they made some use of Hanna's *Life of Christ*.

One day Ellen White reported to her husband: "Mary has just been reading to me two articles--one on the loaves and fishes, [another on] Christ walking on the water. . . . This takes fifty pages and comprises many subjects. I do think it the most precious matter I have ever written. Mary is just as enthusiastic over it. She thinks it is of the highest value. . . ."

"Interesting subjects are continually opening to my mind. These subjects I speak upon which fastens them in Mary's mind."--Letter 13, 1876. (See illustration on opposite page.)

And, indeed, Mrs. White's public speaking during this period was also a part of the revelatory process. While working on the chapter on the feeding of the 5,000, she spoke to a large local congregation, taking up, she said, "the subject of the loaves and fishes. . . They all listened with wide open eyes," she reported, "and some [with] open mouths."--Letter 9, 1876.

Writing to Lucinda Hall, she declared: "I have a special work at this time to write out the things which *the Lord has shown* me. . . . I have a work to do which has been a great burden to my soul. How great, no one but the Lord knows.

"Again, I want time to have my mind calm and composed. I want to have time to meditate and pray while engaged in this work. . . . This is a great work, and I feel like crying to God every day for His Spirit to help me to do this work all right."--Letter 59, 1876. (Italics supplied.)

Bible study, visions, prayer, meditation, discussion with her literary assistant, even "hard thinking," all under the general superintendence of the Holy Spirit, were involved in the writing. "I feel great peace and calmness of mind," she noted. "There seems to be nothing to confuse and distract my mind, and with so much hard thinking my mind could not be perplexed with anything without being overtaxed."--Letter 13, 1876.

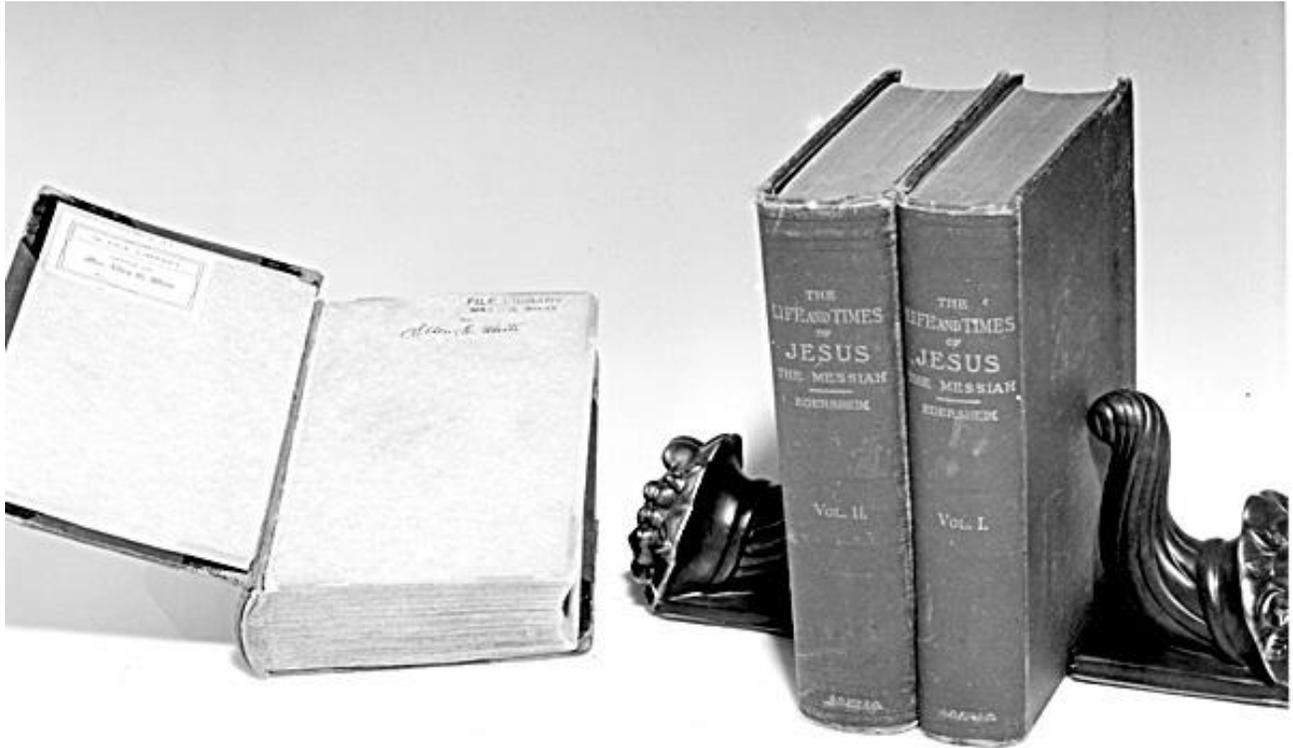
"I cannot rush business," she wrote. "This work must be done carefully, slowly, and accurately. The subjects we have prepared are well gotten up. They please me."--Letter 14, 1876.

When, by the end of May, 1876, Mrs. White's work on volume 2 of *The Spirit of Prophecy*,⁵ carrying the account to the triumphal entry into Jerusalem, was largely finished, she left California for camp meetings in the East. By the end of November the book was published, but for some reason it carried a publication date of 1877.

By way of demonstration, let us look at the chapter on the loaves and the fishes as published in *The Spirit of Prophecy*, volume 2, pp. 258-267, comparing the account with the Gospel writers and with Hanna's *Life of Christ*. To Ellen White the Bible was a basic source book.

All four of the Gospels report the experience of feeding the five thousand (Matt. 14:13-23; Mark 6:32-46; Luke 9:10-17; John 6:1-13). These inspired accounts Ellen White had before her, as have all who have written on Christ's life. She began her narrative with the place of retirement where the event took place--a suitable place "for such

retirement beyond the sea from Capernaum" (*The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 2, p. 258). Hanna's description may have enriched the Ellen White account, for, as does Matthew, he writes of "a desert place" and adds that it was "over against Capernaum, across the lake, in the district running up northward to Bethsaida" (*The Life of Christ*, p. 277).



As Ellen White wrote on the life of Christ, she made use of such works as the *Life of Christ*, by William Hanna, and *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, by Alfred Ederheim. Her personal copies, pictured above, include her signature on the flyleaf, as shown on the Hanna volume.

Both Hanna and Ellen White point out two reasons for Christ's command to the disciples recorded by Luke--"Make them sit down by fifties in a company" (Luke 9:14). Mark says, "They sat down in ranks, by hundreds, and by fifties" (chap. 6:40). Hanna says the order was "indicative of our Lord's design that there might [be] no confusion and that the attention of all might be directed to what he was about to do." --*Ibid.*, p. 279.

More important than the similarities are the points of differences in the two manuscripts. These clearly demonstrate nondependence.

Ellen White mentions the same point: "to preserve order, that all might witness the miracle He was about to do" (*The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 2, p. 262).

Both Hanna and Ellen White write of the threat of "violence" which might follow attempts to make Christ king:

Hanna wrote of the apparent intention of the people to "take him at once, and force him to be their king. Jesus sees the incipient action of that leaven which, if allowed to work, would lead on to some act of violence."--*The Life of Christ*, p. 280.

Ellen White said, "He knows that violence and insurrection would be the result of His exaltation as Israel's king."--*The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 2, p. 264.

What is reported could possibly be inferred from John 6:15, but there may be a connection with the account in Hanna's book.

Hanna says, "He calls the twelve to him, and directs them to embark immediately, . . . to row back to Capernaum, where, in the course of the night or the next morning, he might join them ."--*The Life of Christ*, p. 280.

Ellen White reports: "He calls His disciples to Him and directs them to immediately take the boat and return to Capernaum, leaving Him to dismiss the people. He promises to meet them that night or on the following morning. The disciples are loth to submit to this arrangement."--*The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 2, p. 264.

Similarities in the written accounts of minor points not mentioned, but possibly implied, by the Gospel writers, occur here and there in the two works. In the case of a promise to meet the disciples, either that night or the next morning, we might observe that Hanna made this as a logical assumption, possibly based on Mark 6:45. Ellen White may have based her statement on Scripture implication, on information given her in vision, or on Hanna's assumption. The evidence available precludes any dogmatic conclusion.

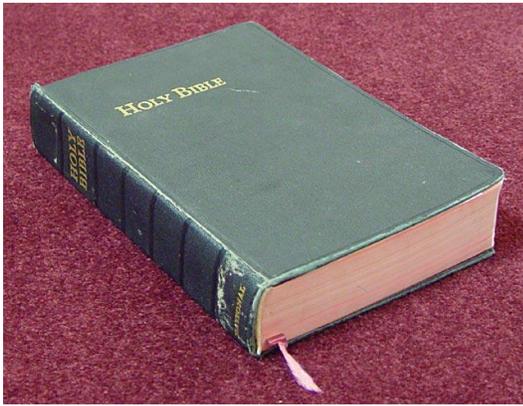
Points Unique to Ellen White

More important than the similarities are the points of differences in the two manuscripts. These clearly demonstrate nondependence.

On the trip across the lake to the "desert place," Ellen White informs us that "others followed Him over the water in boats."--*The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 2, p. 259. Neither the Gospel writers nor Hanna mentions this point.

In *The Spirit of Prophecy*, volume 2, on pages 259 and 260, Ellen White describes some of the work of the day: "Hundreds of the sick and maimed had been brought for Jesus to relieve, and were disposed upon the ground in positions favorable to arrest His attention. . . . All maladies were represented among the sick who claimed His notice. Some were burning with fever and unconscious of the anxious friends that ministered to them. There were the deaf, the blind, the palsied, the lame, and lunatic. . . .

"His discourse was often interrupted by the delirious ravings of some fever-stricken sufferer, or the piercing shriek of the insane, whose friends were trying to press through the crowd and bear the afflicted to the Healer. The voice of wisdom was also often lost in shouts of triumph as the victims of hopeless disease were instantly restored to health and strength." Hanna here merely mentions the healing of the sick.



One of Ellen White's special sources was the Bible, with its inspired accounts of the life and teachings of Christ and the glimpses it gives of the controversy from its beginning.

But there is a significant detail mentioned by Ellen White that neither Hanna nor other writers on the life of Christ mention. This is the description in *The Spirit of Prophecy*, volume 2, of the attempt of the disciples to save Christ from exhaustion: "The Master had labored through all that time without food or repose, and the

disciples, seeing Him pale with weariness and hunger, besought Him to rest from His toil and take some refreshment.

Their entreaties being of no avail, they consulted together as to the propriety of forcibly removing Him from the eager multitude, fearing that He would die of fatigue.

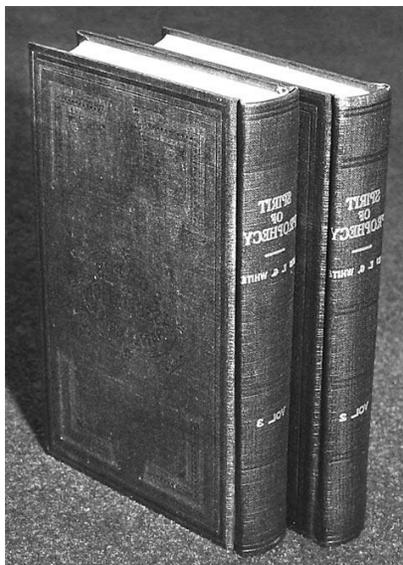
"Peter and John each took an arm of their blessed Master and kindly endeavored to draw Him away. But He refused to be removed from the place. His work was imperative; every applicant for His mercy felt his own case to be the most urgent. The crowd press about the Saviour; they sway Him hither and thither. In their efforts to more nearly approach Him, they trample upon each other."--Pages 260, 261.

Here is specific, detailed information not mentioned by either the Gospel writers or Hanna. It illustrates the point, that whether Ellen White gained factual and descriptive information of one kind or another from Hanna, Geikie, and others, her vision source gave her information of which other writers on the life of Christ were unaware. Such descriptions have a ring of authenticity that could be given only by an eyewitness. Her writing is rich with fresh new items and deals with the lessons and spiritual matters as no others do.

Both volume 2 of *The Spirit of Prophecy* series we have been dealing with, and volume 3, published in 1878, which fills out the life of Christ, were issued under the general title *The Great Controversy Between Christ and Satan*.

One carried a subtitle of "Life, Teachings and Miracles of Our Lord Jesus Christ," and the other "The Death, Resurrection and Ascension of Our Lord Jesus Christ." Shortly thereafter the major part of the materials was divided and issued as six pamphlets. It

was also published as a single volume in some of the European languages such as German, French, Danish, and Swedish under the title of *The Life of Christ*.



These volumes carrying the title of "Great Controversy" presented Ellen G. White account of Christ's life and ministry.

[5](#) Available in facsimile reprint from Adventist Book Centers.

The Ellen G. White Historical Writings--5

Preparing "THE DESIRE OF AGES"

Literary assistants played an important role in preparing the Conflict Series, but the books remained the product of Ellen White's mind guided by the Holy Spirit.

The Desire of Ages is acclaimed by many as the crowning literary production of Ellen White's pen, because of its style, language, and spiritual power. She herself disclosed the principal reasons for this when she declared in 1895: "You know that my whole theme both in the pulpit and in private, by voice and pen, is the life of Christ."--Letter 41, 1895.

Ever striving for excellence in speaking and writing on the sublime themes of the life and ministry of our Saviour was bound to result in paramount work.

Diligent work on the manuscript for *The Desire of Ages* stretched over a period of six years, 1892-1897. The book followed naturally the publication of [*The Great Controversy*](#) in 1888 and [*Patriarchs and Prophets*](#) in 1890. But not until Ellen White moved to Australia was she able to find time for more than the barest attempt on this large literary project, a project that would yield not only [*The Desire of Ages*](#) but [*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing and Christ's Object Lessons*](#) and *Christ's Object Lessons*, as well.

Work on this book did not call for writing of completely new manuscripts, beginning with chapter one and running through to the end, but a work of bringing together, enlarging, and amplifying that which had gone before in *The Spirit of Prophecy*, periodical articles, manuscripts, and letters. It would have been an unpardonable misuse of resources to have ignored the extensive writing done by Ellen White up to this time on the life and ministry of Jesus.

But, with her many responsibilities, including travel, speaking appointments, counseling, and the constant writing of testimonies, Ellen White had little time to bring together and arrange existing materials to form the basic pattern of the enlarged work on the life of Christ. This was largely a clerical task another could perform. This responsibility she placed upon Marian Davis, who since 1879 had been one of her literary assistants. Miss Davis was an efficient, dedicated worker. In 1900 Mrs. White wrote of Marian: "She is my book-maker. . . ."



The Granville home near Sydney, Australia, where Ellen White and her staff worked from June, 1894, through 1895 preparing the *Desire of Ages* manuscript.

"How are my books made? ... She [Marian] does her work in this way. She takes my articles which are published in the papers, and pastes them in blank books. She also has a copy of all the letters I write. In preparing a chapter for a book, Marian remembers that I have written something on that special point, which may make the matter more forcible. She begins to search for this, and if when she finds it, she sees that it will make the chapter more clear, she adds it.

"The books are not Marian's productions, but my own, gathered from all my writings. Marian has a large field from which to draw, and her ability to arrange the matter is of great value to me. It saves my poring over a mass of matter, which I have no time to do."--Letter 61a, 1900.

In the preparation of *[The Desire of Ages](#)*, after selections from the published materials relating to a particular phase of the Saviour's ministry were assembled, and selections from unpublished manuscripts were added, both Ellen White and Miss Davis gave diligent study as to how well what had been written covered the subject and how much Ellen White still wished to add.

Then as the work progressed, each doing her part, Miss Davis would search the writings for additional material, and Ellen White would fill in the gaps. In this way the chapters were rounded out. But Ellen White alone performed the task of filling in to complete the text. She made mention of this at the death of Marian Davis in 1904, when her mind turned back to their labors together. "We have stood side by side in the work, and in perfect harmony in that work. And when she would be gathering up the precious jots and tittles that had come in papers and books and present it to me, 'Now,' she would say, 'there is something wanted [lacking]. I cannot supply it. "'I would look it over, and in one moment I could trace the line right out. We worked together, just worked together in perfect harmony all the time. "--Manuscript 95, 1904.

Miss Davis gives us a glimpse of her task early in the work as she pleaded that relevant materials be copied out from various sources, so they would be more readily available: "Perhaps you can imagine the difficulties of trying to bring together points relating to any subject, when these must be gleaned from thirty scrapbooks, a half dozen bound [E. G. White] volumes, and fifty manuscripts, all covering thousands of pages."--Marian Davis to W. C. White, March 29, 1893.

Some time earlier in their work together Ellen White had felt that Marian needed to be a little less dependent in certain phases of her work. It seems that she wanted Ellen White and her son, W. C. White, to see "every little change of a word" that she made. "Her mind," Ellen White declared, "is on every point and the connections," so she had a little talk with Marian, and explained that "she must settle many things herself," that "she must carry some of these things that belong to her part of the work" (Letter 64a, 1889).

A Course on the Life of Christ

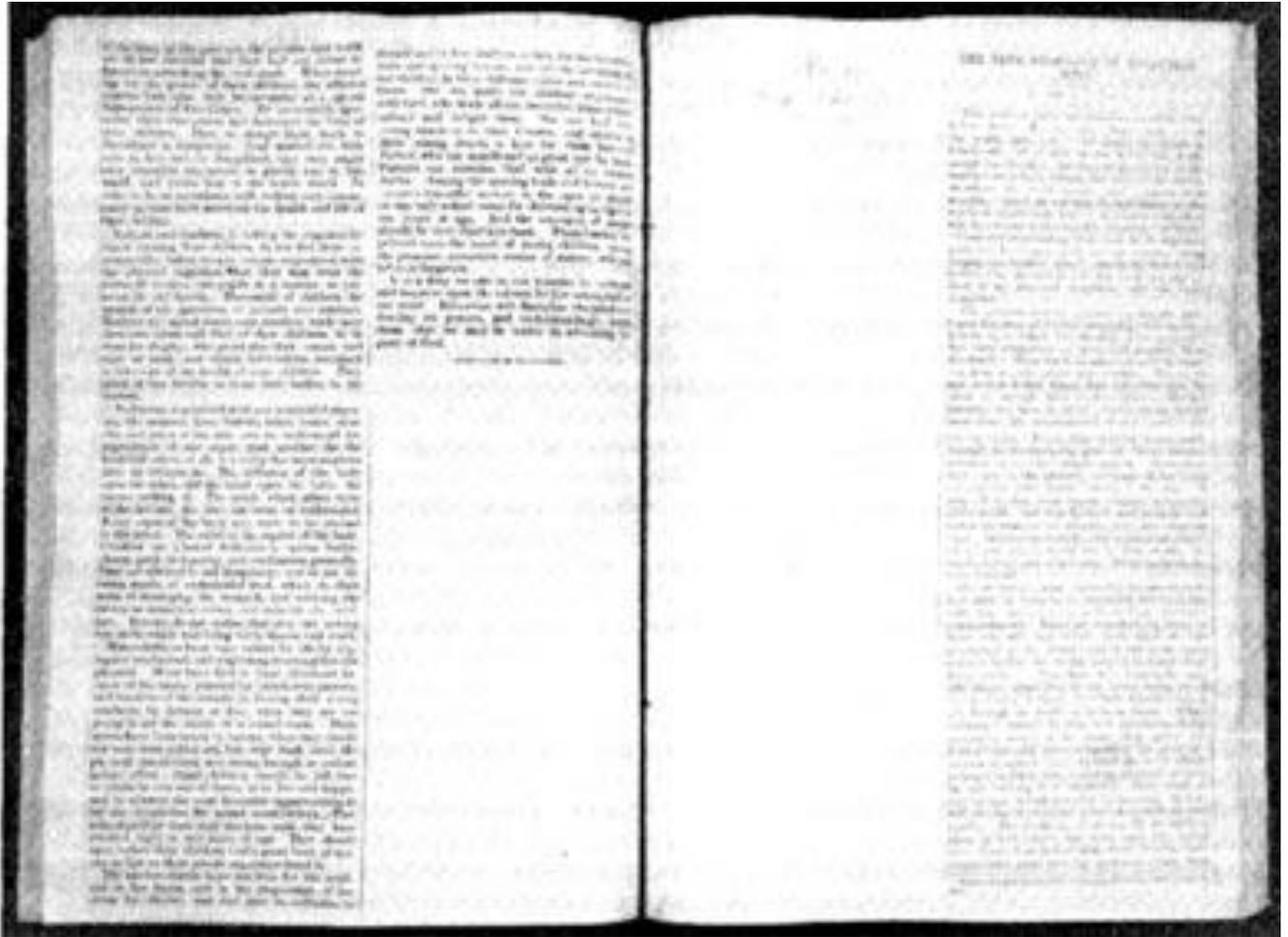
In 1893 the newly opened Bible training school, not far from the Belden home in Melbourne, Australia, where Miss Davis was rooming, offered a course in the life of Christ. Eager to get all the background help she could for her task on the E. G. White manuscript on Christ's life, she enrolled in early 1893.

She wrote to Ellen White, who was spending most of the year in New Zealand, "The Bible class coming in the middle of the forenoon is rather inconvenient, but while the life of Christ is studied, I can't afford to lose it." And she added, "It is the only thing I have bearing on my work, and it wakes one's mind up, to hear the matter talked over."--Marian Davis to Ellen G. White, October 18, 1893.

The interchange of correspondence during this year showed the concern of each of the two women as they made progress in the preparation of the manuscript. In July Ellen White reported, "I write some every day on the life of Christ."--Letter 132, 1893.

Addressing Mrs. White in early August, Marian Davis wrote, "Now about the book. I am so glad you are writing on the two journeys to Galilee. I was so afraid you would not bring that out. . . . I shall watch with great interest for the arrival of the promised manuscript. . . . There is such a rich field in the teachings of Christ after He left Jerusalem."--Marian Davis to Ellen G. White, Aug. 2, 1893.

Sometime earlier, prompted possibly by her attending the class, Marian Davis suggested some topics she thought she would like to see represented in the book.



In preparing her books Ellen White would also draw from her articles that had already appeared in journals. One of her helpers, Marian Davis, kept scrapbooks similar to the one pictured here, containing Ellen White's 1885 *Review* articles that dealt with the life of Christ.

Ellen White did not see the real need, and declared, "These I shall not enter upon without the Lord's Spirit seems to lead me." She continued: "The building a tower, the war of kings, these things do not burden my mind, but the subjects of the life of Christ, His character representing the Father, the parables essential for us all to understand and practice the lessons contained in them, I shall dwell upon."--Letter 131, 1893.

When Ellen White returned from New Zealand to her Melbourne home she referred to the book in preparation in a letter to the president of the General Conference in 1894, bemoaning:

"If I could only feel to give my whole attention to the work. . . . And now I think, as I have thought a few hundred times, I shall be able after this [American] mail closes to take the life of Christ and go ahead with it, if the Lord will. "--Letter 55, 1894.

But perhaps of greater concern to her was the importance of an adequate portrayal of Christ's life and ministry. As she undertook work on the manuscript soon after her arrival in Australia, she wrote: "This week I have been enabled to commence writing on the life of Christ. Oh how inefficient, how incapable I am of expressing the things which burn my soul in reference to the mission of Christ! I have hardly dared to enter upon the work. There is so much to it all. And what shall I say, and what shall I leave unsaid? I lay awake nights pleading with the Lord for the Holy Spirit to come upon me, to abide upon me. "--Letter 40, 1892.

Disclosing her heart feelings she continued: "I walk with trembling before God. I know not how to speak or trace with pen the large subjects of the atoning sacrifice. I know not how to present subjects in the living power in which they stand before me. I tremble for fear lest I shall belittle the great plan of salvation by cheap words. I bow my soul in awe and reverence before God and say, Who is sufficient for these things?"--*Ibid.*, quoted in *Ellen G. White, Messenger to the Remnant*, p. 59.

Some months later, in a letter written to the president of Battle Creek College, she made a statement others would not agree with, but which expressed her feelings: "Now I must leave this subject so imperfectly presented, that I fear you will misinterpret that which I feel so anxious to make plain. Oh that God would quicken the understanding, for I am but a poor writer, and cannot with pen or voice express the great and deep mysteries of God."--Letter 67, 1894.

As the materials were assembled and arranged into chapters, careful attention had to be given to the sequence of the events in the Saviour's life. To what extent and in what detail visions provided the sequence in ministry and miracles in Christ's life and work is not known to us. We do know that a decade earlier she made a significant request: "Tell Mary to find me some histories of the Bible that would give me the order of events. "--Letter 38, 1885. The reason for this is that she could find nothing in the publishing house library in Basel, Switzerland.

Marian had a mass of material before her on one phase or another of Christ's life, and in the main it was her task to put the materials into proper sequence. The Gospel writers in their accounts did not help her much. In the absence of direct instruction from Ellen

White, or clues in the materials themselves, Miss Davis consulted carefully prepared harmonies of the Gospels.

As the work was nearing completion, Marian, working on the three introductory chapters, "God With Us," "The Chosen People," and "The Fullness of the Time," sought the counsel of Elder Herbert Camden Lacey, Bible teacher at the Avondale School, concerning the arrangement of the paragraphs. He made some helpful suggestions on this line, which, when it became known, gave birth to rumors that Lacey had a prominent role in authoring the book. In oral and written statements Elder Lacey flatly denied this rumor. One such statement explaining his involvement in the preparation of *The Desire of Ages* reads: "Miss Marian Davis, who was entrusted with the preparation of 'Desire of Ages,' frequently came to me in 1895 and 1896 asking help in the arrangement of the material which she gathered from Sister White's various manuscripts. Sister Davis was a warm personal friend of mine, and I did the best I knew how to aid her, especially in the first chapter. As I recall it, this help was only in the arrangement of the sentences, or paragraphs, or the choice of a more suitable word. Never at any time, was there any alteration of the thought, or the insertion of an idea that was not already expressed in the original text. The resultant 'copy' was always submitted to Sister White herself for final approval.

"The entire 'Desire of Ages' as it is now printed is, therefore, I hold, the product of Sister White's mind and heart, guided by the good Spirit of God. And the 'editing' was merely technical.

"I gladly and with all my heart accept the 'Desire of Ages' as an inspired book; indeed I regard it as the most spiritual Life of Christ, outside the Gospels, ever given to His Church."--H. C. Lacey to S. Kaplan, July 24, 1936, White Estate Document File 508.

Titles for Books and Chapters

Ellen White did not choose the titles for her books, except possibly those for *The Great Controversy* and the *Testimonies*. This usually was a matter of collaboration between Ellen White, her literary assistants, and her publishers. In this case, the publishers suggested two possible titles, "The Desire of All Nations," and "The Desire of Ages," both based on Haggai 2:7, "The desire of all nations shall come." "The Desire of Ages" was favored.

As to chapter titles, these came rather naturally as the material was prepared, being representative of the subject matter. The Bible narrative naturally suggests some, but there is some paralleling with chapter titles used by others in writing on Christ's life. Selection would be based on appropriateness and reader appeal.

As she pushed ahead in preparing [*The Desire of Ages*](#), Ellen White was not ignorant of the help certain narratives on the life of Christ and works depicting Bible geography and customs could be to her in the descriptive part of her writing. William Hanna's *Life of Christ*, to which reference had been made in 1876, and Cunningham Geikie's *Life and Work of Christ* were in her library, and no doubt others. At various times she and her son, W. C. White, demonstrated their acquaintance with such works. Thus, for instance, just as she left Oakland for Battle Creek in 1876, apparently anticipating that she would be finishing *The Spirit of Prophecy*, volume 2, and would be continuing on volume 3, she selected books to be sent to her. On the train she wrote a note home: "You need not send [Daniel March's] *Walks and Homes of Jesus* when you send the books I laid out."--Letter 27a, 1876.

While in Europe in 1887, W. C. White recommended to the publishing house there that they purchase William Hanna's *Life of Christ*, Geikie's *Hours With the Bible*, S. J. Andrews' *Life of Our Lord*, and Edersheim's works on the Temple and its services and Jewish social life. He also advised them to secure a good harmony of the Gospels.

All of these books on the life of Christ were quite well known in Adventist circles.

The Ellen G. White Historical Writings--6

Completing the Work on "The Desire of Ages"-1

Because the works of Hanna and certain others dealt with the scenes that had passed before her in vision, Ellen White found these sources helpful. But these materials did not constitute the basic sources for her information on Christ's life and teaching.

To Ellen White the preparation of [*The Desire of Ages*](#) was an awesome challenge. The scenes were so sublime, the sacrifice was so great, that depicting the story took hold of every fiber of her being. Of this she wrote: "In writing upon the Life of Christ I am deeply wrought upon. I forget to breathe as I should. I cannot endure the intensity of feeling that comes over me as I think of what Christ has suffered in our world."--Manuscript 70, 1897.

Day and night, as she labored on this task, she sensed the tremendous responsibility of capturing and presenting in an effective way and in adequate language the vivid scenes and important lessons of Christ's life and ministry.

Some years earlier she had written of how "the betrayal, trial, and crucifixion of Jesus" had passed before her "point by point" (Letter 14, 1889). Taking up work on *The Desire of Ages* in 1892, she mentioned that, as she wrote, the subjects stood before her in "living power" (Letter 40, 1892).

Most likely what she wrote in 1911 of her work on the preparation of the manuscript for *The Great Controversy* was also true of *The Desire of Ages*: "I was often conscious of the presence of the angels of God. And many times the scenes about which I was writing were presented to me anew in visions of the night, so that they were fresh and vivid in my mind."--Letter 56, 1911.

It seems clear that the visions given down through the years in which the life of Christ was portrayed and the visions repeated while she was working on the manuscript for [*The Desire of Ages*](#) and visions opening up fresh concepts all came into play as basic sources of her writing on the life of Christ.

Was Ellen White Dependent Upon Other Authors?

As she was preparing *The Desire of Ages* in the 1890's, apparently at times she consulted the standard works on the life of Christ, some of which were in her library. However, it is obvious that these materials did not constitute the basic source of her information on Christ's life and teaching, or of the deeper insights, or of many of the deeply spiritual lessons she drew from the teachings of Christ.

Nevertheless she found the works of Hanna, Edersheim, Farrar, Geikie, and certain others that dealt with the scenes that had passed before her in vision helpful. In them she may have found a graphic way of presenting truth, but this does not mean that such was her basic source. Her insights and spiritual lessons frequently go far beyond the presentations in these writings.

In last week's article I showed the similarities and differences between certain expressions employed by Hanna and by Ellen White as she wrote in 1876 on the feeding of the five thousand. It is quite clear that 20 years later, as she worked on the same subject for *The Desire of Ages* presentation, she again found in Hanna and Geikie descriptions that were useful in setting forth the inspired picture.

Next page: One of the edited pages of *The Desire of Ages* manuscript is shown in the form in which it was sent to the publisher, The Pacific Press, in Oakland, California. The editorial marks, made in Ellen White's office in Australia, carried Mrs. White's full approval.

Passover - 7.
~~Childhood 12~~

was with confusion as they left the city. ~~On~~ ^{On} the way the pleasure of ~~journeying~~ ^{traveling} with friends and acquaintances ~~absorbed~~ ^{absorbed} their attention, ~~that~~ ^{and} they ~~parents of Jesus~~ did not notice his absence till night came on. Then as they halted for rest, they missed the helpful hand of their child. Supposing him to be with their company, they had felt no anxiety. Young as he was, they had trusted him implicitly, expecting ~~as a matter of course~~, that when ~~they~~ needed, he would be ready to assist them, anticipating their wants as he had ~~done~~ ^{always} done. But now their fears were roused. They searched for him throughout their company, but in vain. Shuddering they remembered how Herod had tried to destroy him in his infancy. ~~was enemies again plotting to take his life.~~ Dark forebodings filled their hearts. ~~They~~ ^{They} bitterly reproached themselves.

Returning to Jerusalem, they pursued their search. The next day as they mingled with the worshippers in the temple, their attention ~~was~~ ^{was} arrested ~~by~~ ^{by} a familiar voice. They could not mistake it; no other voice was like his, so serious and earnest, yet so full of melody.

In the school of the rabbis they found Jesus, ~~in the midst of~~ the priests and doctors of the law. Rejoiced as they were, they could not forget their grief and anxiety. ~~and~~ ^{and} when he was alone with them, the mother said, in words that implied a rebuke, "Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? Behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing."

"How is it that ye sought me?" answered Jesus, ~~gently pointing~~ ^{gently pointing} to the cause of their suffering. "Wist ye not that I must be about

See p. 7 1/2



At the home she called "Sunnyside," near the Avondale school in Australia, Ellen G. White completed her work on the *Desire of Ages* in early 1898.

Thus, for instance, Ellen White in [*The Desire of Ages*](#) states that when Christ charged the disciples to take the ship and return to Capernaum, they "had not put off immediately from the land, as Jesus directed them. They waited for a time, hoping that He would come to them. But as they saw that darkness was fast gathering, they 'entered into a ship, and went over the sea toward Capernaum.'" --Pages 379, 380.

As Geikie reconstructs the story, he says, "At the first signs of tumult among the people, He had sent off the Twelve to cross the Lake again at once, to the Bethsaida near Capernaum, while He dismissed the multitudes. They had waited for Him till night

fell, but, at last, as He did not come, they set off without Him. "--*The Life and Words of Christ*, vol. 2, p. 188.

In connection with what followed, what does Ellen White say that the Gospel writers and narrators do not say? Let us first note what Hanna says about the evening hours Jesus spent on the mountain: "Alone He goes up into a mountain--alone He prays there. . . . Till after dawn Jesus holds secret and close fellowship with heaven. Into the privacies of those secluded hours of His devotion we presume not to intrude."--*Life of Christ*, p. 128.

Matthew says simply, "He went up into a mountain apart to pray" (Matt. 14:23). Mark, Luke, and John add nothing.

In *The Desire of Ages*, page 379, Ellen White tells us what Hanna intimates he did not know--the burden of Christ's prayer: "When left alone, Jesus 'went up into a mountain apart to pray.' For hours He continued pleading with God. Not for Himself but for men were those prayers. He prayed for power to reveal to men the divine character of His mission, that Satan might not blind their understanding and pervert their judgment. . . . In travail and conflict of soul He prayed for His disciples. They were to be grievously tried. Their long-cherished hopes, based on a popular delusion, were to be disappointed in a most painful and humiliating manner. . . . For them the burden was heavy upon His heart, and He poured out His supplications with bitter agony and tears."

Consider another illustration. Of the Gospel writers only Mark introduces the proposition that Jesus and His disciples should retire to some quiet place to gain some rest. He writes, "He [Jesus] said unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while" (Mark 6:31).

Quoting Mark, Hanna tells of how "Jesus desired now a little quiet and seclusion. For Himself--that He might ponder over a death [of John the Baptist] prophetic of His own. . . . For them [the disciples] that they might have some respite from accumulated fatigue and toil. His own purpose fixed, He invited them to join Him in its execution, saying to them, 'Come ye yourselves and rest awhile.'"--*Life of Christ*, p. 277.

While Ellen White in her 1876 writing merely mentions the invitation, in [*The Desire of Ages*](#) account she devotes a five-page chapter, titled "Come Rest Awhile," to the experience, and explains the purpose of the rest anticipated and of its meaning to us (pages 359-363).

Each of the Gospel writers devotes a few verses to the invitation, the events of the day, the feeding of the five thousand, and the dismissal of the people. Hanna devotes four and a half pages, Geikie four. In *The Desire of Ages*, Ellen White uses 16 pages in narrating the events and the lessons (pp. 359-379). Hers is replete with practical

instruction, spiritual lessons, and counsel for the present, a great deal of which goes beyond the Bible presentation.

Another example: It has been observed that Ellen White's description of how inanimate nature, the sea, the sun, the rocks, the graves, bore witness to Christ's divinity, while the priests and rulers knew Him not as the Son of God, parallels quite closely a quotation Hanna uses from St. Gregory. But the parallel ends there. Hanna is at a loss to explain what happened to the dead who rose from the graves opened at Christ's death. He is uncertain whether they were raised when the graves were opened or later.

Not so Ellen White, who in positive terms declares: "As Christ arose, He brought from the grave a multitude of captives. The earthquake at His death had rent open their graves, and when He arose, they came forth with Him. They were those who had been colaborers with God, and who at the cost of their lives had borne testimony to the truth.

...

"Those who came forth from the grave at Christ's resurrection were raised to everlasting life. They ascended with Him as trophies of His victory over death and the grave."--*The Desire of Ages*, p. 786.

Thief On The Cross Story Detailed

In dealing with the thief on the cross Hanna refers to the thief's overhearing the conversation of those about the cross as providing evidence that Jesus is the Lord, and conjectures that it would be unreasonable to suppose that the thief had not met Jesus before the crucifixion day (*Life of Christ*, p. 717).

Ellen White in *The Desire of Ages* unequivocally declares that "he had seen and heard Jesus, and had been convicted by His teaching, but he had been turned away from Him by the priests and rulers. Seeking to stifle conviction, he had plunged deeper and deeper into sin, until he was arrested, tried as a criminal, and condemned to die on the cross."--Page 749.

It may also be observed that Hanna experiences considerable difficulty in explaining just what the "paradise" is to which Christ refers when He declared, "To day shalt thou be with me in paradise" (pp. 721, 722) . He concludes that Paradise is wherever Jesus is.



"Elmshaven," Mrs. White's home located below the St Helena Sanitarium in northern California, 1900-1915. Mrs. White is seen in the wheelchair on the second-floor porch.

While the preparation of *The Desire of Ages*, [*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*](#) and [*Christ's Object Lessons*](#) completed her work on the life of Christ, her work on the controversy story was not complete. As she was able after returning to the United States, she prepared [*The Acts of the Apostles*](#) and [*Prophets and Kings*](#), working in this home.

The Ellen G. White Historical Writings--7

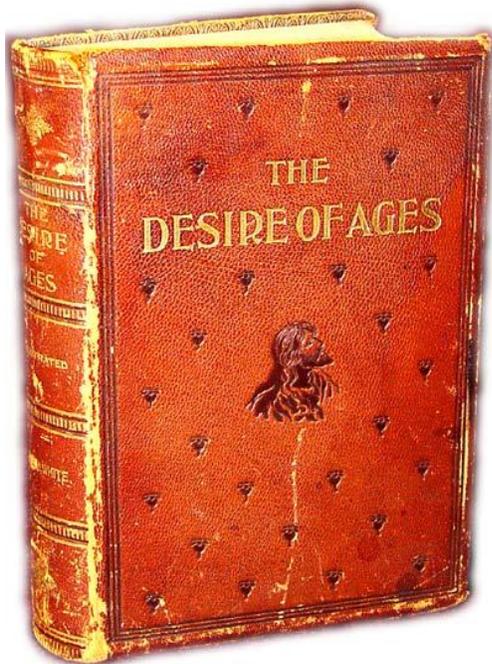
Completing "The Desire of Ages"--2

Regarding [*The Desire of Ages*](#) and the other Conflict books extant in 1906, Ellen White said, "The Holy Spirit traced these truths upon my heart and mind as indelibly as the law was

traced by the finger of God, upon the tables of stone."

One significant feature in books Ellen White designed for the general public is that in them, at times, she withheld interesting information that Seventh-day Adventists, with their understanding of Ellen White's work, could grasp and accept, but which non-Adventists might have difficulty accepting. Such information had often appeared in her early books and periodical articles. For example, in the 1876 book, *Spirit of Prophecy*, volume 2, on page 260, appears the account of Peter and John each taking an arm of the Saviour to lead Him away from the multitude (see page 29). No mention of this is found in *The Desire of Ages*.

Marian Davis explains the reason for leaving out this type of information: "Since these books are sent out without explanation as to the authority by which the author speaks,



Anticipating a large sale to the general public, Pacific Press first published *The Desire of Ages* in a large, well-illustrated volume of 835 pages in 1898.

it was thought best to avoid, as far as we could, statements for which the Bible seems to furnish no proof, or which to the ordinary reader appear to contradict the Bible. Better to give the reader what they will accept and profit by than to excite criticism and questioning that will lead them to discredit the whole. . . .

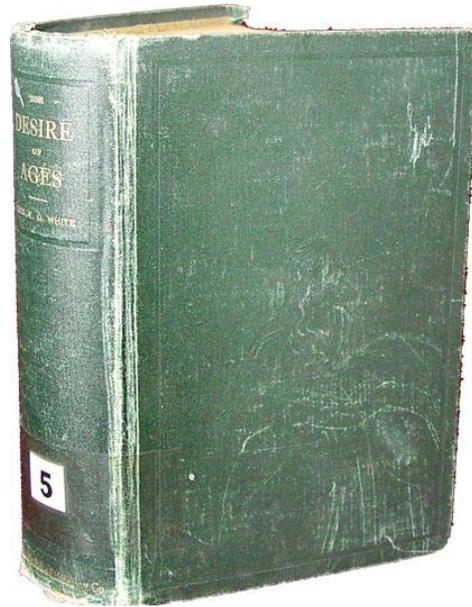
"Sister White says that Christ was twice crowned with thorns, but as the Bible mentions only the second crowning, it was thought best to omit the first, or rather to give the second instead of the first."--Marian Davis to J. E. White, Dec. 22, 1895.

Nonetheless, *The Desire of Ages* is replete with extra-Biblical information, generally of a nature that would not prejudice the uninformed reader.

Neither Hanna nor Edersheim includes in his narrative the story of the woman taken in adultery, recorded in John 8:1-11. They apparently accepted the opinion of some scholars, who, finding the account missing in certain manuscripts, assumed that it was spurious. However, in his narrative Geikie speaks of the "trembling prisoner" (*Life and Words of Christ*, p. 297). Ellen White speaks of "the trembling victim" (*The Desire of*

Ages, p. 461). Geikie recounts the story, unfolding and emphasizing the legal aspects, and declares, "It was not their business, but that of her husband, to accuse her," and he conjectures at length what Christ may have written with His finger in the sand--"most likely the very words He was presently to utter"--and shortly closes the account with the words "This incident past, . . ." (*Life and Words of Christ*, pp. 296-298).

In [*The Desire of Ages*](#), Ellen White also mentions that "it was the husband's duty to take action against her," but dwells at some length on just what Christ wrote with His finger in the dust: "There, traced before them, were the guilty secrets of their own lives.



**To provide an inexpensive version for Adventist consumptions,
The Desire of Ages was published in this small single volume
containing 1,042 smaller pages, in 1898.**

The people, looking on, saw the sudden change of expression, and pressed forward to discover what it was that they were regarding with such astonishment and shame."-- Page 461. The accusers then departed "speechless and confounded" (*ibid.*, p. 462).

While Geikie dismisses the story at this point, Ellen White informs us that for the woman "this was to her the beginning of a new life, a life of purity and peace, devoted to the service of God. . . . This penitent woman became one of His most steadfast followers. With self-sacrificing love and devotion she repaid His forgiving mercy."-- *Ibid.*

This is followed by two paragraphs of spiritual lessons. The 1876 *Spirit of Prophecy*, volume 2, account on page 352 dwells at length on her later life and states that "she stood sorrow-stricken at the foot of the cross."

In dealing with the resurrection of our Lord, Hanna barely touches the event itself, linking it with a long discussion on the women coming to the tomb to anoint the Lord and finding it empty. He writes, "It is as they are communing with one another by the way, that the earth quakes, and the angel descends from heaven, and rolls the stone back from the door of the sepulcher, and, having done this service for the embalmers, sits down upon it, waiting their approach."-- *Life of Christ*, p. 780. And then he asks, "Was it then that the great event of the morning took place?... It is not said so. . . . The angel himself may not have witnessed the resurrection. He did not say he had."--*Ibid.*, pp. 780, 781.

Hanna then affirms, "Altogether secret, the exact time and manner of the event unnoticed and unknown was the great rising from the dead Some time between sunset of the last and sunrise of the first day of the week, the resurrection had taken place."--*Ibid.*, p. 781.

Geikie says even less, doing little more than quoting from Matthew 28:1-3.

While commenting briefly on the events, as noted in Scripture, Edersheim assumes that the stone was rolled away "after the resurrection of Christ" (*Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, vol. 2, p. 632).

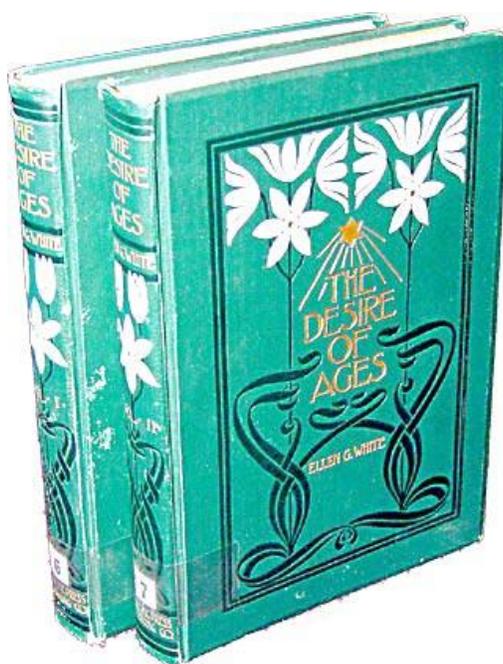
In his *Life of Christ* Farrar makes an allusion to the events of that morning in a singular and indirect way: "It became known then, or afterwards, that some dazzling angelic vision in white robes had terrified the keepers of the tomb, and had rolled away the stone from the tomb amid the shocks of earthquake. " --Page 670.

Different and Dramatic

How different is Ellen White's dramatic description of the resurrection in *The Desire of Ages* (pp. 779-787). In contrast to the tentative and inconclusive treatment of the well-accepted writers on the life of Christ, we have her vivid descriptions of the bands of good and evil angels watching over the tomb through the night; the angel descending "with the panoply of God," joining the angel at the tomb; the earthquake; the terror of the Roman soldiers; the stone removed by the angel as if it were a pebble; the command of the angel, "Son of God, come forth; Thy Father calls Thee"; Jesus coming forth in majesty and glory, the Roman soldiers who had fainted at sight of the angels and the risen Saviour, staggering as drunken men, hurrying to the city, telling the great news to everyone they met; the soldiers with blood-drained faces testifying before Caiaphas and Pilate; Caiaphas stunned, attempting to speak, moving his lips, "but they uttered no sound." It is all there in *The Desire of Ages*, as Ellen White had witnessed it in vision, point by point. How strikingly different from the "sources" she may have consulted!

Space forbids introducing other illustrations indicating that whatever use Ellen White made of Hanna or Geikie, et cetera, these did not take the place of her earliest and continued vision sources.

And as to sources, it might be well to examine the records left by the Gospel writers. As he introduces his book, Luke declares that he is a compiler of information set forth by many, and since he "had perfect understanding of all things from the very first," he felt qualified to do this (Luke 1:1-3). Ellen White informs us that "Nicodemus related to John the story of" the interview he had by night with Jesus, "and by his pen it was recorded for the instruction of millions" (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 177).



In 1900, *The Desire of Ages* was published in two large, beautifully illustrated volumes with an aggregate of 835 pages of text for distribution to the general public.

Ellen White writes with clarity, smoothness, authority, and, most of all, very feelingly, ever elevating the love, character, and triumph of Christ as a contender in the great-controversy story. She writes as one who was an onlooker, as indeed she was, as in vision the scenes passed before her. If she gained knowledge of some details of the customs of the people, and of the geographical features of the scenes she portrayed, from careful students of these matters, does this make her message less inspired? By no means. Those who hold to a dictatorial inspiration might feel that such incidental use of what another has written could not be accepted. But a more factual concept of

inspiration allows for such usage without detracting from the convincing evidences of divine origin.

By mid-July, 1896, Ellen White felt that the work on the book was about completed. "The manuscript for the 'Life of Christ,'" she wrote, "is just about to be sent to America. This will be handled by the Pacific Press" (Letter 114, 1896). But it seems she was overly optimistic, as authors often are. In the case of [*The Desire of Ages*](#), there were good reasons, for when she thought certain chapters were finished, in the night season further light would be given that led her to write more on the subject. This work of writing new material continued into 1898.

The manuscript for the book was sent piecemeal to the Pacific Press, and even after some chapters had been dispatched, her continued writing led to amplifications, and these were sent posthaste across the Pacific to the publishers.

A year before *The Desire of Ages* came from the press, *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing* was published, and her work on the parables--*Christ's Object Lessons*--continued for a year or two after *The Desire of Ages* was published. Those being parts of her presentation on the life and teachings of Jesus, the same procedures were followed in preparing the manuscript as were employed in [*The Desire of Ages*](#).

Two more books were needed to complete the narrative of the great-controversy story--[*Prophets and Kings*](#) and [*The Acts of the Apostles*](#). These in time were ready, the work in preparation of the manuscripts being done somewhat as it had been on the large volumes prepared for the world and the church.

In this series of articles, going into the very heart of Ellen White's work in narrating the great-controversy struggle, we have told the simple story, supporting it with documentation. The series has been an interesting study of inspiration and how God's messenger did her work in depicting the conflict theme in book form. In so doing we may have raised questions in some minds. If we find our faith tested a bit by discovering new aspects of how inspired writers work, perhaps we should ask ourselves: Do we demand more of Ellen White than we demand of the Bible prophets? Or more than we are justified of demanding of any prophet?

Let us remember that "God does not propose to remove all occasion for unbelief. He gives evidence, which must be carefully investigated with a humble mind and a teachable spirit, and all should decide from the weight of evidence." "God gives sufficient evidence for the candid mind to believe; but he who turns from the weight of evidence because there are a few things which he cannot make plain to his finite understanding will be left in the cold, chilling atmosphere of unbelief and questioning doubts, and will make shipwreck of faith."--*Testimonies*, vol. 5, pp. 675, 676.

What is the weight of evidence as we read Ellen White's books? We urge all to look at the content, the message, the light and counsel they contain, the encouragement and the timely warnings and their harmony with Scripture. What have these writings meant to the church down through the years?

Looking back in 1906, Ellen White freely attributed the truths set forth in the books tracing the great-controversy story, to the workings of the Holy Spirit.

She asked: "How many have read carefully *Patriarchs and Prophets*, *The Great Controversy*, and *The Desire of Ages* ? I wish all to understand that my confidence in the light that God has given stands firm, because I know that the Holy Spirit's power magnified the truth and made it honorable, saying: 'This is the way, walk ye in it.' In my books, the truth is stated, barricaded by a 'Thus saith the Lord.'

"The Holy Spirit traced these truths upon my heart and mind as indelibly as the law was traced by the finger of God, upon the tables of stone, which are now in the ark, to be brought forth in that great day when sentence will be pronounced against every evil, seducing science produced by the father of lies."--Letter 90, 1906; *Colporteur Ministry*, p. 126.

Although the writing of the books on the age long conflict was a vital and important part of Ellen White's work, occupying her attention through most of her active life, it was by no means the principal part of her writing. Whereas the Conflict Series is embodied in 3,500 pages of text, nearly 5,000 pages are given to the nine volumes of the *Testimonies* written during the same period. Added to this are the many books of counsel, several thousand periodical articles, and hundreds of personal testimonies. We cannot here review this major part of her work as the messenger of God presenting His messages to men and women of the remnant church, laity, and institutional and church leaders.

In this broader field of writing, from which there seemed to be no respite, she was impelled to bear testimony to what was revealed to her in scores and hundreds of visions through 70 years of her ministry. In writing these messages of instruction, counsel, encouragement, and correction, she sought no human source of information and was not influenced by those about her. In all of her work we see her moving under the bidding and guidance of the Spirit of God.

A Personal Testimony

In writing these articles I have been candid, sincere, and open in describing how Ellen White did her work in presenting the great-controversy story to the church and the world. I have written from personal knowledge. My confidence in the heavenly source

of the messages the Ellen G. White books portray has grown throughout my 50 years of intimate acquaintance with the Ellen G. White records and my work with them.

This confidence was also nurtured by the years of close association with my father, W. C. White, under whom I served in the office for nine years before his death in 1937. He in turn had assisted his mother, Ellen White, in an active way from the death of his father, James White, in 1881, until the end of Ellen White's life in 1915. No one had a better opportunity than he to observe, examine, and understand the manner in which Ellen White wrote her books, and I have implicit confidence in the reliability of his testimony. Accordingly I have quoted him in a number of instances.

With the abundance of positive evidence with which I am acquainted, and the mounting evidence that I from day to day encounter as I write a definitive biography of Ellen G. White, there is no room for anything but the strongest confidence that she was indeed the chosen messenger of the Lord, and that her messages were the counsel, instruction, and information God wanted her to impart to His remnant church. Knowing as I do the importance of a clear-cut, factual concept of the operation of inspiration, it has been a privilege to convey to readers of the REVIEW this information. I believe that these articles, intimately portraying how Ellen White wrote the Conflict of the Ages books, furnish a dimension for confidence in God's special gift to His church at a time when the great adversary is seeking to undermine such confidence.

Inspiration/Revelation: What It Is and How It Works

By Roger W. Coon

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**Inspiration/Revelation
What It Is and How It Works**

Part I: The Prophetic Gift in Operation

Introduction

Before the entrance of sin, God communicated with human beings directly through face-to-face contact and personal fellowship. With the advent of sin this relationship was ruptured and man was alienated from his Maker. To bridge this separating gulf, God employed as many as seven modalities of communication--the "divers manners" of Hebrews 1:1--as He sought to bring mankind back into a personal relationship with Him.

Prophetic night dreams and "open visions" during the day were the methods God most frequently employed in communicating with men and women of His special choosing who came to be known as "seers," "prophets," or special "messengers."

The lot of the prophet was seldom an easy one, as Jesus intimated by His oft-cited observation that "a prophet is not without honour, save in his own country, and in his own house."^[1]

Seventh-day Adventists believe, upon the basis of biblical evidence^[2] as well as empirical data, that one "masterbuilder" (1 Corinthians 3:10) of their denomination, Ellen G. White, was the recipient of the gift of prophecy. Solomon averred that "there is no new thing under the sun" (Ecclesiastes 1:9), and criticism of the prophets continues to this day.

Misunderstanding also continues concerning the manner in which the prophetic gift operates. Satan has a vested interest in creating confusion as well as rejection of the prophetic gift by the people it was intended to benefit, "for this reason: Satan cannot have so clear a track to bring in

his deceptions and bind up souls in his delusions if the warnings and reproofs and counsels of the Spirit of God are heeded."[\[3\]](#) The "very last deception of Satan" in the Seventh-day Adventist church just before Jesus returns will be the twofold work of (1) destroying the credibility of Ellen White as an authentic, reliable prophet of the Lord, and (2) creating a "satanic" "hatred" against her ministry and writings--satanic in its intensity as well as in its origin.[\[4\]](#)

Satan's "special object" in these last days is to "prevent this light from coming to the people of God" who so desperately need it to walk safely through the minefield that the enemy of all souls has so artfully booby trapped.[\[5\]](#)

And what is Satan's methodology for securing this objective? He will work "ingeniously, in different ways and through different agencies."[\[6\]](#) For example, in addition to the two methods mentioned above, satanic agencies seek to keep souls under a cloud of doubt,[\[7\]](#) in a hurried state, and in a state of disappointment.

This is Satan's plan--his goal and his strategy. This minicourse is dedicated to the proposition that he shall not succeed!

I. Definitions

Three terms in particular need adequate working definitions as we seek to understand biblical and modern prophetism. The following definitions may be helpful:

1. Inspiration. Biblical, prophetic inspiration may be said to be a *process* by which God enables a man or woman of His special choosing both to receive and to communicate accurately, adequately, and reliably God's messages for His people.[\[8\]](#)

One sometimes tends to say of a particular painter, author, musical composer, or performing artist, "He was inspired!" Indeed, he may have been. But it was a *different kind* of inspiration from that which was possessed by the prophets of God. When Paul wrote to the young ministerial intern Timothy, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God" (2 Timothy 3:16), he chose to employ the Greek term *theopneustos*, which is a contraction of two other Greek words *Theos* (God) and *pneuma* (breath). What he was saying, literally, was "All Scripture is *God-breathed*."[\[9\]](#)

While some take this to be simply a delightful literary metaphor, yet it is also true--and significant--that while the prophet experienced the physical phenomena of the trancelike vision state, God breathed, *literally*; the prophet did not breathe while in this condition.[\[10\]](#)

The prophet's inspiration is different *in kind*, rather than different *in degree*, from any other form of inspiration.

The apostle Peter adds to our limited biblical store of information on inspiration by stating that the prophets--these "holy men of God"--spoke as they were "moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Peter 1:21). The Greek term Peter employs is *pheromenoi*, from *phero*: "to carry a load, to move." Luke employed the expression twice[\[11\]](#) in describing the action of a tempestuous wind in "driving" a sailing vessel upon which he and Paul were traveling. The implication is clear: The prophets were "moved by the Divine initiative and borne by the irresistible power of the Spirit of God along ways of His choosing to ends of His appointment."[\[12\]](#)

2. *Revelation*. Biblical, special revelation, we would hold, further, to be the *content* of the message communicated by God to His prophet in the process of inspiration. Adventists hold this content--the prophetic message--to be infallible (inerrant), trustworthy (all sufficient, reliable), and authoritative (binding upon the Christian).

This concept is predicted on three corollaries: (a) Man is unable, through his own resources or by his own observation, to perceive certain kinds of information; (b) God is pleased to speak; and (c) this act takes place and unfolds within human history.[\[13\]](#)

God has revealed Himself, in a limited way, in nature, which gives us glimpses of His power, His wisdom, and His glory. But nature is unable to reveal clearly God's person, His holiness, His redeeming love, and His everlasting purposes for mankind. Thus, supernatural revelation transcends the "natural" revelation of God in nature, and consists chiefly in God's manifesting of Himself and His will through direct intercourse with humanity.[\[14\]](#)

God speaks! In the Old Testament Jeremiah speaks for all of the prophets when he testifies that "the Lord . . . touched my mouth, And . . . said unto me, Behold I have put my words in thy mouth" (chap. 1:9). In the New Testament Paul assures us that the Holy Spirit "speaketh expressly" (1 Tim 4:1). Paul continues, elsewhere, to assure us that God reveals His mysteries to the prophets by revelation, which is a progressive work;[\[15\]](#) Paul contrasts natural knowledge with information that is revealed by the Holy Spirit. This knowledge is attainable in no other way and from no other source.[\[16\]](#)

3. *Illumination*. Since the implied answer to Paul's rhetorical question, "Are all prophets?"[\[17\]](#) is negative, there remains one further task of the Holy Spirit, if those *not* possessed of the prophetic gift are to grasp the will of God for them.

Illumination may be defined as the work of that same Holy Spirit who indicated God's message to the prophet by which He now enables the hearer or reader of the prophet's words to comprehend the spiritual truths and discern God's message to himself.

This work of the Holy Spirit is comprehended in the words of Jesus to His disciples concerning the coming of the Comforter: He will teach you all things,[\[18\]](#) He will remind you of Jesus' words (the only current source of which is the writings of the prophets!),[\[19\]](#) and in doing this work He will guide you into all the truth the human mind is capable of comprehending.[\[20\]](#)

Concerning the work of this illumination, Ellen White once spoke of the three ways by which "the Lord reveals His will to us, to guide us, and to fit us to guide others": (a) through an understanding of what inspired writers through the ages have written for our admonition, (b) through providential circumstances (signs), and (c) through the direct impression of the Holy Spirit on the individual Christian's mind and heart.[\[21\]](#)

II. An Operational Gift

The Divine Initiative

It all started with God. He made the first move.

The very first words of the English Bible are these: "In the beginning God . . ." (Genesis 1:1). Three times in the last book of the Bible Jesus identifies Himself as "Alpha and Omega."[\[22\]](#) Those are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet--the language in which John wrote the book of Revelation. What did that cryptic expression mean? Among other things, Jesus perhaps was saying, "I was here when everything began; and I will be here when all is fulfilled."

Paul highlights the uniqueness of the Christian religion by showing that while we were still in the state and act of sin Christ died for us (Romans 5:8). All of the non-Christian religions of the world are alike in one respect: They all show man in search of God. In Christianity alone do we find God in search of man. The central message of Christianity was embodied in the three parables of the "lost" of Luke 15: the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the lost boy. In each of these parables we are shown a God who cared deeply, and who acted on the basis of this concern.

God's concern for man prompted Him to bring into existence the office of prophet. While the liturgical priesthood spoke to God on behalf of man, the prophet spoke to man on behalf of God. God had a message to communicate, and He chose special human messengers to be His agency.

While every Christian is the recipient of at least one of the gifts of the Holy Spirit ("spiritual gifts"),[\[23\]](#) it is still God the Holy Spirit who decides which man or woman receives which gift.[\[24\]](#) And the gift of prophecy was given to "some,"[\[25\]](#) but not to "all."[\[26\]](#) Prophecy is the preeminent gift;[\[27\]](#) and the most a human being may scripturally do is to "covet earnestly the best gifts."[\[28\]](#) God alone chooses who will be His prophets.

And, having made that choice, God speaks! Twice in the stately, measured cadences of Hebrews 1:1, 2, we are told that God had already spoken, first through the prophets and then more recently through His Son. Revelation 1:1 suggests what might well be called "God's chain of command" (to borrow a phrase from Bill Gothard).

God's Chain of Command

Just as all three members of the Godhead participated in the creation of this world,[\[29\]](#) just so do all three participate in the process of inspiration: The Father gives the message to the Son,[\[30\]](#) and the Son gives it to the Holy Spirit,[\[31\]](#) and the Holy Spirit moves upon the prophets.[\[32\]](#)

The Godhead delivers the message to "his angel," Gabriel; and Gabriel delivers it to God's servants, the prophets.[\[33\]](#) And thus the prophets could authoritatively declare to their fellow beings, "Hear, therefore, the word of the Lord."[\[34\]](#)

Two points of significance immediately suggest themselves from these facts:

1. Of all the billions of angels created by God,[\[35\]](#) we today know the names of only two--Lucifer ("light bearer"), who was number one, and who fell; and Gabriel, originally number two, who later became number one. And it was the angel Gabriel, heaven's highest, who communicated God's messages to "his servants, the prophets." Only heaven's highest was good enough for this special task.

2. The prophets are called "his servants," that is, God's servants. Now, a servant is, by definition, "one who is sent"--sent by a superior, of course. Jesus made it abundantly clear that the servant was "not greater than his lord."[\[36\]](#) If, then, the message-bearing servant (prophet) is ignored, slighted, or--worse yet--rejected outright, the One who is *really* rejected is the One who gave the message to the prophet.

Seven Modalities of God's Communication

What were some of these "divers manners" by which God communicated with mankind? There seem to have been at least seven methods:

1. *Theophanies* (visible manifestations of God; face-to-face communication). Abraham met the preincarnate Christ and two angels near his tent on the plain of Mamre (Genesis 18); Jacob wrestled with an "angel" at Peniel, only to discover "I have seen God face to face" (Genesis 32:30); and Moses spoke to the Lord in the mount "face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend" (Exodus 33:11).

2. *Angels*. Those "ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation" (Hebrews 1:14) have often come to mankind, to bring messages of hope and comfort (Daniel 10:11, 12; Genesis 32:1), to direct the servants of the Lord to those whose hearts were receptive to God's truth (Acts 8:26), or to warn of imminent disaster if God's word was not heeded (Genesis 3:24).

3. *Audible voice of God*. Sometimes God spoke on His own! At Sinai the Ten Commandments were spoken audibly, jointly, by the Father and the Son in a transcendent "duet"[\[37\]](#) that literally caused the earth (as well as the hearts of the human hearers) to tremble.

Upon occasion the audible voice of God addressed the high priest from the Shekinah--that exceeding bright glory that rested between the cherubim in the center of the ark of the covenant.[\[38\]](#) The Shekinah was the visible manifestation of God's presence in the desert tabernacle.

And, of course, God's voice was heard three times during the earthly ministry of our Lord--at Christ's baptism, upon the mount of transfiguration, and when the Greek philosophers called upon Him in the temple during the week that preceded the crucifixion. At these times God was heard commanding men to heed the message of His beloved Son.[\[39\]](#)

4. *Optics*. During the wilderness wanderings of the children of Israel, the high priest's breastplate had two large stones imbedded at the top--the Urim and the Thummim. The high priest could ask questions, and Jehovah would respond. If the answer were "yes," one stone would glow with a halo of light and glory; if the answer were "no," the opposite stone would be partially obscured by a shadow or a vapor.[\[40\]](#)

The high priest had another means of receiving answers from God. In the most holy place the angel on the right side of the ark would glow in a halo of light if the answer were affirmative, or a shadow would be cast over the angel on the left if the answer were negative.[\[41\]](#)

5. *Casting of lots*. In Old Testament times God also communicated with His people by means of casting lots. A modern counterpart is "drawing straws"--a number of straws of different lengths are held in the hand, with all the ends appearing to be even, the difference of length being hidden

by the hand. After the straws are drawn, and are compared, it is easy to determine who drew the longest or the shortest.

Lots were cast upon goats, upon cities, and upon men. The most celebrated instance of the latter was the discovery of Achan and his theft of the "goodly Babylonish garment" as the cause of Israel's humiliating defeat of Ai.[\[42\]](#)

Interestingly, there is only one instance in the New Testament of determining God's will by the casting of lots--the selection of Matthias to take the place vacated by Judas among the 12 apostles.[\[43\]](#) When and why this method fell into disuse is not revealed; but we do know that when the practice of casting lots was resorted to by the Austin, Pennsylvania, Seventh-day Adventist Church for the purpose of selecting church officers, Ellen White wrote from Australia, "I have no faith in casting lots. . . . To cast lots for the officers of the church is not in God's order. Let men of responsibility be called upon to select the officers of the church."[\[44\]](#)

6. *"Open" visions of the day.* The trancelike state into which a prophet entered when going into vision has already been referred to, and will be dealt with more fully below. Both the Old and the New Testaments are replete with references to prophets and apostles receiving visions from the Lord.[\[45\]](#)

7. *Prophetic dreams of the night.* Often the prophets would receive messages from the Lord in the "night seasons" as well as during the day. There is no evidence that physical phenomena accompanied the prophetic night dreams, nor is there evidence that the kind of messages given at night were in any way different from those transmitted in the visions of the day.

Ellen White was once asked if she, a prophet, experienced ordinary dreams at night as noninspired people did. She smiled and said that she did. The next question was inevitable: How are you able to differentiate between ordinary dreams and inspired dreams? Her response was right to the point: "The same angel messenger stands by my side instructing me in the visions of the night, as stands beside me instructing me in the visions of the day."[\[46\]](#)

Physical Phenomena

When in vision state, the prophets experienced supernatural physical phenomena. The tenth chapter of Daniel best illustrates the nature and scope of such singular phenomena. Daniel tells us that in this condition he saw things that others about him did not see (vs. 7); he sustained a loss of natural strength (vs. 8) and then was endowed with supernatural strength (vss. 10, 11, 16, 18, 19). He was totally unconscious of his immediate surroundings (vs. 9), and he did not breathe during this time (vs. 17).

Ellen White experienced all these phenomena in the vision state. However, it should be noted that although her lungs did not function at such times, the heart did continue to circulate blood through the body; her face did not lose color.

Perhaps, as already noted above, there may be a startlingly literal interpretation to *theopneustos*--"God-breathed"--as it related to the physical phenomena associated with a prophet in vision.

In Ellen White's experience, the physical phenomena of "open visions" were more characteristic of her earlier years; from the 1880s onward all of her inspired messages apparently came from the Lord in prophetic dreams. This leads us to consider the purpose of physical phenomena.

First, physical phenomena were not prerequisites for receiving messages from God. The prophetic dreams of the night seem to make this clear. But God, who has a purpose for everything He does, obviously had a purpose in providing these dramatic supernatural exhibitions.

Perhaps the dramatic nature of these exhibitions gives us a clue to Heaven's intention. In the case of Ellen White, we have a 17-year-old girl claiming, "I have a vision from the Lord!" "Well," one might wonder, "how do we know?"

In the early days of a prophet's ministry, when he has made few written or spoken pronouncements, it is difficult to apply the test of consistency with previously inspired testimony (Isaiah 8:20). The test of fruitage (Matthew 7:16, 20) is equally difficult to apply until a few years pass and results are seen in the life of the prophet and in the lives of those who have followed the prophet's counsels. The test of fulfilled prediction (Jeremiah 28:9, Deuteronomy 18:22) cannot be applied until enough time has elapsed to allow a judgment about whether any prophecies made have come to pass.

Obviously, God needed to do something to arrest attention, to suddenly cause people to sit up and take notice. Physical phenomena serve this purpose. God had used such methods before (probably for the same reason) at Pentecost when tongues of fire were seen above the heads of the 120, and these men and women spoke contemporary languages they had never previously studied.[\[47\]](#)

Perhaps God used physical phenomena to validate the fact that something supernatural was here at work. Of course, witnesses would still need to validate, to authenticate the messages by means of the conventional Bible tests.

However, the fact that Satan can and does counterfeit many natural and supernatural phenomena should lead us to make a crucial distinction: Physical phenomena are an *evidence* of supernatural activity, but they are never to be a *test* of the authenticity or legitimacy of a prophet.

Today it has become fashionable among the critics of Ellen White to call for a "demythologizing" of Adventists' historic prophet. One critic in particular recently called for the burying of legendary tales involving "magic."

Concerning stories of Mrs. White holding a large Bible for an extended period of time on her outstretched, upraised hand while in vision, this critic alleges that at the 1919 Bible Conference it was declared emphatically that the event never really happened, that no one had ever seen it; indeed, no one was even there to witness it![\[48\]](#)

If, however, we go to the transcript of the 1919 Bible Conference,[\[49\]](#) we notice, first of all, that the record has been substantially misquoted by the critic. We find General Conference President Arthur G. Daniells discussing the use of physical phenomena as "proof or evidence of the genuineness of the gift." And he opposes such use as proof of legitimacy--a position the White Estate continues to hold today!

Instead, said Daniells, "I believe that the strongest proof is found in the fruits of this gift to the church, not in physical and outward demonstrations."

Then, addressing more directly the question of the stories about Ellen White holding a large, heavy Bible on an outstretched hand while in vision, looking away from the pages, and yet quoting the texts to which a finger of the opposite hand pointed, Elder Daniells declared: "I do not know whether that was ever done or not. I am not sure. I did not see it, and I do not know that I ever talked with anybody that did see it."[\[50\]](#)

One does not need to look far to discover why Daniells had not witnessed such an event. This writer has uncovered four instances thus far where Ellen White held a Bible in vision: three times in 1845 and once in 1847.[\[51\]](#) Arthur Daniells was not born until 1858, at least 11 years after the latest recorded Bible-holding incident took place.

Research shows that physical phenomena was more characteristic of the earlier days of Mrs. White's experience. Indeed, the last "open vision" of record took place at a camp meeting in Portland, Oregon, in 1884, only six years after Daniells entered the gospel ministry.[\[52\]](#)

We should not be surprised, then, that Daniells never witnessed Mrs. White holding a large Bible in vision. He probably saw very few other manifestations of physical phenomena, which ceased shortly after he entered the ministry. Nor is it surprising that he had not met any contemporaries who had observed such phenomena--they were probably too young, too!

Some critics hold that the evidence behind at least two of the Bible-holding stories is not reliable because the stories were not recorded until 45 years after the events took place; and because they were written down by one denominational writer who was not a trained historian. While there may be some validity to this concern, the fact remains that the White Estate still holds in its vault an eyewitness account of the event, known to have been written sometime between 1847 and 1860. The observer was Otis Nichols, and the incident he reported took place during what was probably Ellen White's longest vision, at Randolph, Massachusetts, in the winter of 1845.

During this vision, which lasted approximately four hours, Ellen Harmon (who was unmarried at the time) picked up "a heavy large quarto family Bible" and lifted it up "as high as she could reach." The Bible was "open in one hand," and she then proceeded "to turn over the leaves with the other hand and place her finger upon certain passages and correctly utter their words"--all this with her head facing in another direction! In this activity "she continued for a long time."[\[53\]](#)

Ellen White believed this account to be an accurate record of a genuine experience, because she quoted three paragraphs from it in an autobiographical account published in 1860.[\[54\]](#)

Arthur G. Daniells never said that the event did not happen, as the critic alleges. Instead, he simply said that he didn't see it and didn't know anyone who had. However, had Elder Daniells (who was a member of the White Estate board of trustees) taken the effort to go to the vault and examine the documentary evidence that still is preserved there, he would have had no doubt about whether Ellen White ever held a Bible in vision, or about whether she breathed while in her open visions of the day.[\[55\]](#)

We must emphasize at this point that the position of the Seventh-day Adventist church today is the same as it has always been. Physical phenomena are an evidence of supernatural activity, but it should never be used as a *proof* because Satan can counterfeit much of the work of the Holy Spirit.

Basic Vehicles of Prophetic Messages

The messages given to the prophets were generally given in two different kinds of packaging:

1. The prophets witnessed events unfolding from past, present, or future historical incidents, such as Moses watching the creation of the world, or the apostle John observing both the second and third comings of Christ. Ellen White witnessed many events of the past, present, and future during her 70-year prophetic ministry.

The prophets also saw symbolic or parablelike events. These representations seemed just as real as the other kind, but of course, the beasts Daniel saw and later wrote about in the seventh chapter of his prophecy never really existed. Ellen White had a number of parablelike visions; perhaps one of the better known was one in which she saw a ship that was on a collision course with an iceberg. The captain instructed the helmsman to hit the iceberg head on rather than to allow the ship to suffer a more severe glancing blow. The incident illustrated the church's meeting the "Alpha" pantheism heresy of John Harvey Kellogg at the beginning of the twentieth century in a bruising (but not fatal) head-on confrontation. During this time the providential intervention of the Lord was witnessed in a remarkable manner.[\[56\]](#)

2. The prophets also heard the voice of a member of the Godhead, or of the angel Gabriel, speaking messages of counsel, instruction, admonition, and sometimes of warning and reproof. These voices apparently were unaccompanied by scenes of events, although Ellen White does tell us that she entered into direct conversation with Jesus Christ on a number of occasions.

The Writing Task: The Prophet's Options

Once the prophet received instruction from the Lord, by whatever method the divine mind selected, his immediate task was that of composition, of writing out the message he had received. In this task the prophet had several options to choose among, as far as the source of the words chosen was concerned:

1. The prophet might choose to follow the role model of a newspaper reporter, simply quoting the words of the heavenly personage who had delivered the message. Ellen White's invariable custom was to place the directly quoted words of the angel within quotation marks, thus making it immediately evident to the reader that these were Gabriel's words, not hers.[\[57\]](#)
2. More often the prophet simply put the message into his or her own words. (More will be said about this aspect in discussing, below, the prophet's unique contribution to such a ministry.)

Ellen White was once asked if the nine-inch-from-the-ground skirt length she advocated came directly from the Lord, or if it was simply her own idea. She responded that the Lord caused three groups of women to pass before her in vision. The first group were dressed in the peculiar fashion of the day, with excessively long skirts that swept the filth of the street. Obviously, from a health standpoint, these skirts were too long. A second group then came into view whose skirts were obviously too short. Then Mrs. White was shown a third group of women wearing skirts short enough to clear the filth of the street, but long enough to be modest and healthful. These skirts appeared in vision to be about nine inches from the ground, and Ellen White described them thus.

The angel had not specified any length in inches; and in response to the question of a reader of the *Review and Herald*, Mrs. White declared:

Although I am as dependent upon the Spirit of the Lord in writing my views as I am in receiving them, yet the words I employ in describing what I have seen are my own, unless they be those spoken to me by an angel, which I always enclose in marks of quotation.[\[58\]](#)

Incidentally, this statement has been used by one contemporary critic to suggest that Ellen White claimed she always used only her own words, or else the words of an angel (appropriately designated by quotation marks). And then the critic charges her with untruthfulness by demonstrating that she often used the literary productions of others!

The context of Mrs. White's statement demonstrates that the critic is misapplying her statement. But study of the passage does lead us to a third option, exercised by prophets in many different periods.

3. The prophet sometimes might opt to use words of another author. This was true both of Bible prophets and of Ellen White. Sometimes the other source might be an inspired prophet of the Lord; but sometimes the person copied was not inspired. And, generally speaking, the prophets did not cite their sources or provide bibliographical data as modern researchers do.

Critics today accuse Ellen White of plagiarism because she quoted a number of noninspired authors without giving appropriate credit. Let us look at this charge--and the practice as used by prophetic writers--in detail.

The "Copying" Charge

As we will study in more detail in the second of this series of three presentations, no charge has been leveled against Ellen White in her professional capacity as a prophet of the Lord that had not already been made against the prophets of the Bible--whether the charge be that of copying, or of having made unfulfilled prophecies, or of having made some errors in what was written or said, or of having to go back and change something that was said by the prophet--even matters of major substance that had to be corrected.

We will deal here only with the charge of copying other writers--inspired or uninspired. Originality is not now, nor has it ever been, a test of an individual's prophetic inspiration, as Robert W. Olson, Director of the Ellen G. White Estate, pointed out to the religion editor of *Newsweek* magazine; and therefore, literary "borrowing does not dilute her [Mrs. White's] claim to inspiration."[\[59\]](#)

The Bible writers copied from one another without attribution of source, and apparently felt no compunctions about such practice:

"Micah (4:1-3) borrowed from Isaiah (2:2-4). The scribe who compiled 2 Kings (18-20) also borrowed from Isaiah (36-39). Matthew and Luke borrowed heavily from Mark as well as from another common source. None of these ever acknowledged their borrowing. (See *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, pp. 178, 179.)"[\[60\]](#)

In fact, many scholars openly acknowledge that some 91 percent of the Gospel of Mark was copied by Matthew and Luke when they wrote their respective Gospels!

Of perhaps greater interest, however, is the fact that the writers of the Bible would from time to time copy (or "borrow") the literary productions of noninspired authors, including pagan writers. For example, about 600 B.C. Epimenides wrote:

"They fashioned a tomb for thee, O holy and high one--The Cretans, always liars, evil beasts, idle bellies! But thou art not dead; thou livest and abidest for ever; For in thee we live and move and have our being."[\[61\]](#)

Sound vaguely familiar? Well, the Apostle Paul twice used some of these words, once in Titus 1:12 ("One of themselves, even a prophet of their own said, The Cretians are always liars, evil beasts, slow bellies") and again in his sermon on Mars Hill in Athens, in Acts 17:28 ("For in him we live, and move, and have our being").

Jesus did not invent the Golden Rule of Matthew 7:12. A generation earlier Rabbi Hillel had already written: "What is hateful to you, do not do to your neighbor; that is the whole Torah, while the rest is the commentary thereof."

The thoughts--and even some of the words--of the Lord's Prayer may be found in earlier ritual prayers known as the *Ha-Kaddish*.[\[62\]](#)

Substantial parts of John's Apocalypse--the Book of Revelation--are lifted bodily from the Book of Enoch, a pseudepigraphical work known to have been circulated some 150 years before John wrote the last book of the Bible; and even Jude borrowed a line ("Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints") from the same source.[\[63\]](#)

Indeed, some 15 apocryphal or pseudepigraphical books are cited in the New Testament--generally without attribution of their source.

Doctor Luke tells us that he did a substantial amount of research and investigation in sources then available to him before he wrote the Gospel that bears his name:

"Inasmuch as many have undertaken to compile an account of the things accomplished among us, . . . it seemed fitting for me as well, having investigated everything carefully from the beginning, to write it out for you in consecutive order, most excellent Theophilus; so that you might know the exact truth about the things you have been taught" (Luke 1:1, 3, 4, NASB).[\[64\]](#)

In commenting on this passage, Robert W. Olson remarks:

"Luke did not acquire his information through visions or dreams but through his own research. Yet while material in the gospel of Luke was not given by direct revelation it was nonetheless written under divine inspiration. He did not write to tell his readers something new, but to assure them of what was true--'that you might know the exact truth about the things you have been taught.' What Luke wrote was not original, but it was dependable. God led Luke to use the right sources. (See *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol 5, p. 669)."[\[65\]](#)

Because an inspired writer quotes from an uninspired writer, it does not follow that the earlier writer must now be seen somehow as having come under the umbrella of inspiration. *Inspiration is a process, not a content.*

Just as biblical authors used noninspired sources, Ellen White also copied from the writings of authors who were not inspired.[\[66\]](#)

Divine Dreams Alone Do Not a Prophet Make

Just because an individual receives a dream from the Lord, it does not automatically follow that, *ipso facto*, that individual is a prophet of the Lord.

To suit His providential purposes God has often given dreams to pagans as well as to Christians. However, the receipt of such messages does not thereby transform the recipient into an authentic prophet. Perhaps a helpful differentiation might be the following: The nonprophet is generally not called to the task of guiding the church at large. The direction, rather, is primarily intended for the individual himself (or perhaps for someone close to the recipient). Such experiences are often isolated experiences rather than a continuing relationship that is typical of the prophetic order.

In biblical times God gave divine (but non-prophetic) dreams to many: Abimelech (Genesis 20:3-7); Pharaoh's chief butler and chief baker (Genesis 40:8-19); and to one of the Pharaohs (Genesis 41:1-7); to the Midianite soldier (Judges 7:13, 14); to Nebuchadnezzar (Daniel 2 and 4); to Joseph of Nazareth (Matthew 2:13, 14); to Claudia, Pilate's wife (Matthew 27:19), and to the Roman centurion, Cornelius (Acts 10:1-8), to mention only a few.

In the history of the early Seventh-day Adventist church certain believers received divine, but nonprophetic, dreams. J. N. Loughborough had as many as 20 such dreams, which Ellen White apparently accepted as being of divine origin.^[67] William Miller, who started the Millerite movement, but who never accepted the seventh-day Sabbath, had a most remarkable parablelike dream.^[68] Annie Smith, sister of Uriah Smith, and Captain Joseph Bates both had a remarkable "double dream" the same night, which had an even more remarkable fulfillment the following night.^[69] And James White had several unusual dreams that J. N. Loughborough shared with posterity.^[70]

The pages of the *Adventist Review* and other regional Seventh-day Adventist periodicals have occasionally carried contemporary stories of Christians and pagans alike who have been led by a divine dream. But these persons were not prophets, nor were they considered to be such by their peers.

III. Three Theories of Inspiration/Revelation

There are at least three theories regarding the definition of inspiration and the way it operates in the Seventh-day Adventist church and in other Christian bodies today. Two are false and dangerous, for reasons that will shortly be made clear. Let us examine these theories in some detail:

Theory of Verbal Inspiration

Over the years a number of Seventh-day Adventists, including some of our ministers and Bible teachers, have held the verbal view of inspiration, despite counsels of Ellen White to the contrary.

This view is a rather mechanical one, since it perceives the prophet's role as simply that of a stenographer who takes down the boss's dictation word for word. In this model the stenographer is not at liberty to change anything that has been given by the dictator: no synonyms may ever be employed; no failing to dot an *i* or to cross a *t* is permitted.

This view seems to suggest that God, or the angel, puts a heavenly hand over the hand of the prophet and guides it--literally--so that every word, every syllable comes directly from God. The prophet, in this view, is not at liberty to change anything or to state the message in his own words. This mechanical view is strictly, stringently literalistic, with infallibility residing at the point of the written word.

This limited view of inspiration provides no opportunity for translation into other languages, and has other even more serious limitations and dangers.[\[71\]](#)

The strict verbalist has a problem with Matthew 27:9, 10. Here Matthew does something that every teacher and preacher has done innumerable times. Matthew is probably thinking of one name, but out of his pen mistakenly comes another name. As he applies a Messianic prophecy to Christ--the prediction that He would be betrayed for 30 pieces of silver--he attributes the prophecy to Jeremiah. However, in all the book of Jeremiah, there is not one reference to this prophecy. The alert reader will recognize that Matthew actually meant to attribute this prophecy to *Zechariah* (chap. 11:12, 13).

The person who believes in plenary (thought) inspiration has no problem with this slip of the pen. But the verbalist finds a serious problem here. Did God make this mistake in dictating Matthew's gospel?

This is not the only problem for the verbalist. God the Father spoke audibly three times during the earthly ministry of His Son. The first time was immediately following Christ's baptism in the Jordan River. The problem is, exactly what did the heavenly voice say?

According to Matthew (chap. 3:17), the Father spoke in the third person singular: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." But Mark's account (chap. 1:11) has the Father speaking in the second person singular: "Thou art my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased."

Exactly what *did* the Father say? The "plenarist" does not see the discrepancy between the accounts as being a problem; he believes that it is the thought that is inspired, not the exact words. There is no disagreement between Matthew and Mark as to the essence of what God said.

Another problem for the verbalist is Pilate's superscription on the signboard he ordered placed on Christ's cross. What did that signboard say? The four Gospel writers give four slightly different accounts of what the sign stated.

Which one was correct? To the plenarist it makes no difference. But the literal verbalist is in a quandary. And it doesn't help to recall that the signboard was in three languages (Latin, Greek, and Hebrew), because we have four different accounts, not three!

Matthew and Luke illustrate yet another kind of problem for the strict verbalist in the way they handle the Sermon on the Mount.

No one today has read or heard the actual Sermon on the Mount. Probably Ellen White's book *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing* comes closest to a complete account of a sermon that took virtually all day to preach.

Matthew simply gives an outline of the sermon in chapters 5-7 of his Gospel. But Luke doesn't even give that much. If all we had was Luke's Gospel, we'd never even know there was

a *Sermon* on the Mount. For Luke takes the ingredients of the sermon, and plugs in some here and some there as it suits his purpose.

To understand why the material is handled this way, we have to recognize that Matthew was writing to Jews, who liked sermons. So Matthew used a sermon format--indeed, a sermon outline--to display Jesus' ideas from this incomparable discourse, which by some has been called the charter or constitution of the Christian church.

Luke, however, was writing for Greeks, who couldn't have cared less about sermons, as such. They, instead, liked to dwell in the realm of ideas. So Luke took the ideas of the Sermon on the Mount and used them evangelistically, some here and some there, as it served his purpose in dealing with his audience.

The plenarist has no problem with this approach because he sees the *ideas* as being inspired. But the strict verbalist is here in a great deal of trouble. Who is right? Was it a sermon or not? Many questions are raised, but few answers are forthcoming.

Other illustrations could be cited, such as Matthew's listing of the order of Christ's miracles in a somewhat different order than Luke's Gospel. Problems such as these leave the strict verbalist in a real quandary. However, we shall leave him there for now, and proceed to examine the plenary theory of inspiration.

Theory of Plenary Inspiration

In contrast with the view of verbal inspiration, the plenary theory of inspiration suggests that thoughts--rather than words--are inspired. The plenary view is not forced to grapple with the problems of the verbalist. For the Seventh-day Adventist, this view has the added advantage of having been accepted and advocated by Ellen White.[\[72\]](#)

Let us examine in some detail the manner in which Mrs. White explicates her views. These views have been praised by a number of non- Seventh-day Adventist theologians as one of the most comprehensive and concise statements on the subject of plenary inspiration to be found anywhere in print.

1. The purpose of inspiration. Ellen White uses two interesting analogies to illustrate the purpose of inspiration. First she likens inspiration to a map--a guide or chartbook for the human family. The purpose of this map is to show weak, erring, mortal human beings the way to heaven, so that they need never lose their way.[\[73\]](#) Then she also compares inspiration to "hidden treasure"--or precious jewels that may be discovered by arduous digging.[\[74\]](#) And then, in summation, Mrs. White remarks that no one need ever be lost for want of this most crucial information unless he is willfully blind.[\[75\]](#)

2. The human element. Next, Mrs. White recognized the existence of the human element. God committed the preparation of His Word to finite men,[\[76\]](#) thus, in a sense, making problems for Himself. Why? Because "everything that is human is imperfect."[\[77\]](#)

Speaking to the Adventist workers in Battle Creek, Michigan, in a different context, Mrs. White amplified this thought: "No one has so great a mind, or is so skillful, but that the work will be imperfect after he has done his very best."[\[78\]](#)

Since the Bible writers had to express their ideas in human idioms, the concepts could not be given in some grand superhuman language.[79] Infinite ideas can never be perfectly embodied in finite vehicles of thought.[80] The Lord has to speak to human beings in imperfect speech in order that our dull, earthly perception may comprehend His words.[81]

In an apt analogy, John Calvin once suggested that God, through the prophets, talked "baby talk" to us humans, much as a cooing mother lisps to her little child in the universal language of love.

3. *The existence of discrepancies.* Ellen White addressed the question of discrepancies, mistakes, or errors in a forthright manner. She does not just suggest that these are possible; she says that they are "probable." [82] But she goes on, more importantly, to point out that all of these mistakes will not change a single doctrine, or cause anyone to stumble who is not already inclined to do so. These persons will "manufacture difficulties from the plainest revealed truth." [83]

4. *Unique divine-human blending.* Paul incisively pointed out that "We have this treasure in earthen vessels" (2 Corinthians 4:7). Two elements are thus introduced into the analogy: the "treasure," and the "earthen vessels." Mrs. White develops these two elements by first commenting that, indeed, the Ten Commandments are verbally inspired, being of "divine and not human composition." The servant of the Lord then goes on, interestingly:

But the Bible, with its God-given truths expressed in the language of men, presents a union of the divine and the human. Such a union existed in the nature of Christ, who was the Son of God and the Son of man. Thus it is true of the Bible, as it was of Christ, that "the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." [84]

Again, commenting that "In the work of God for man's redemption, divinity and humanity are combined," Mrs. White elaborates along a somewhat similar vein:

The union of the divine and the human, manifest in Christ, exists also in the Bible. The truths revealed are all "given by inspiration of God;" yet they are expressed in the words of men and are adapted to human needs. [85]

Thus the truths conveyed by inspired writers are all inspired treasure. But the human element--the "language of men," is the earthen vessel--that is, the packaging.

One theologian has suggested that the *human* aspect of the inspired writings, ancient and modern, is revealed in five ways:

- a. *The writer expresses himself in his own style.* The Bible has many major stylistic differences in its various books.
- b. *The writer expresses himself at his own level of literary ability.* For example, the sentence structure of the book of Revelation is crude. John strings his ideas along with the connector *and* like a string of box cars in a freight train. Stylistically, this book is elementary, not elevated. Its author was a fisherman who was educated by Jesus for three years. John received his education in truth, rather than in rhetoric. In contrast to the book of Revelation, the book of Hebrews exhibits a most elevated stylistic form. Indeed, because of its use of balanced phrases and clauses, some higher critics don't think that Paul wrote it. But Paul undoubtedly had the

equivalent of a Ph.D. from the school of Gamaliel in Jerusalem, and he may well have attended the university at Tarsus before he went to Jerusalem.

c. The writer reveals his own personality. The Gospel of John can be summed up in one four-letter word--*love*. The concept permeates John's Gospel and all three of his epistles. John, more than any of the other apostles, imbibed this spirit, and yielded himself most fully to Christ's transforming love.[86] And thus his epistles, especially, breathe out this spirit of love.[87] His favorite theme was the infinite love of Christ.[88]

*d. The writer also uses his own words--*words of his selection, and in so doing,

e. The writer draws on his own personal background and experience. Luke was called the "beloved physician." And indeed, a whole volume has been written on the medical terminology employed in the Gospel of Luke. Luke writes with the perception of a scientist. For example, he is the only one of the four Gospel writers to mention that Jesus "sweat . . . as it were great drops of blood."

Amos speaks the language of the herdsman, the shepherd.

And Paul? Trained in the methodology and phraseology of philosophy, Paul wrote some things that to a fisherman like Peter were "hard to be understood" (2 Peter 3:16).[89]

Then, the *divine* aspect, the work of the Holy Spirit, is revealed in four ways, as suggested by T. Housel Jemison:

a. He enlightens the mind: The writer is enabled to comprehend truth.

b. He prompts the thinking: That is, He stimulates the reasoning processes.

c. He enlightens the memory: The prophet is thus enabled to recall events and ideas.

d. He directs attention to matters to be recorded: This deals specifically with the selection of topic and content.[90]

5. Verbal Versus Plenary. Mrs. White states directly that it is not the words of the Scriptures that are inspired, but rather the men who wrote them--the prophets were "God's penmen, not His pen." [91]

The semantic problem here is recognized--a given word may convey different ideas to different people. Yet if a writer or speaker is intellectually honest, he can usually convey his meaning plainly.[92] The same truth may be expressed in different ways without essential contradiction.[93]

Basically, "inspiration acts not on the man's words or his expressions but on the man himself, who, under the influence of the Holy Ghost, is imbued with thoughts." [94]

6. What the Bible is not. The Bible does not represent the words, the logic, or the rhetoric of God.[95] "God, as a writer, is not represented." [96] Indeed, God says that His thoughts are not our thoughts, neither are His ways our ways (Isaiah 55:8, 9). But the Bible does point to God as its "Author." [97] Christ "Himself [is] the Author of these revealed truths." [98]

7. *Totality*. Ellen White took the Bible just as it stood--"I believe its utterances in an entire Bible."[\[99\]](#) And she urged her hearers and readers to "cling to your Bible, as it reads."[\[100\]](#) Amplifying this thought elsewhere, she continues, "Every chapter and every verse is a communication of God to man."[\[101\]](#)

8. *God's superintendency*. The Lord miraculously preserved the Bible through the centuries in essentially its present form.[\[102\]](#) Indeed, the preservation of the Bible is as much a miracle as its inspiration.

Of course, the Bible was not given in "one unbroken line of utterance." Rather, through successive generations, it was given, piece by piece, as a beneficent Providence recognized various needs in different places. "The Bible was given for practical purposes."[\[103\]](#)

The continuing hand of God is seen in the giving of the messages, in the recording of the messages, in the gathering of the books into the Canon, and in the preservation of the Bible through successive ages.[\[104\]](#)

9. *Unity*. Ellen White draws an interesting distinction with regard to unity: While there is not always "apparent" unity, there is, however, a "spiritual unity." And this unity she likens to one grand golden thread, running through the whole, which is discovered by the "illuminated soul."

However, to trace out this unity requires the searcher to exercise patience, thought, and prayer.[\[105\]](#)

In the days when Britannia ruled the waves, and ships were propelled by wind rather than by steam or oil, the ships of His Majesty's royal navy all carried rope that had a crimson thread woven through its entire length. This thread served two purposes: It made identification easy in cases of suspected theft; and it also assured the sailors (whose lives often depended upon the quality of the rope they handled) that they had the very best.

Applying this analogy to the Bible, the blood of Jesus is the crimson thread that runs throughout the whole Scripture. This unity is exhibited in at least five areas, according to Jemison:

- a. Purpose: the story of the plan of salvation.
- b. Theme: Jesus, the cross, the crown.
- c. Harmony of teaching: Old and New Testament doctrines are the same.
- d. Development: the steady progression from creation to the fall of redemption to final restoration.
- e. Coordination of the prophecies: evident because the same Holy Spirit was at work![\[106\]](#)

10. *Degrees of inspiration*. Ellen White makes it clear that the Christian is not to assert that one part of the Scripture is inspired and that another is not, or that there are degrees of inspiration among the various books of the Bible. God has not qualified or inspired any man to do this kind of work.[\[107\]](#)

Theory of Encounter Inspiration [\[108\]](#)

A third view of inspiration goes by a variety of labels: "Neo-orthodoxy," "existentialism" (the religious kind), or "encounter" (after one of the more prominent words in its in-house jargon). This view is based, at least in part, on the "I-Thou" concept of Philosopher Martin Buber. The three basic tenets or postulates will now be examined:

Subjective Rather Than Objective.

1. Inspiration is, by its very nature, inherently subjective rather than objective.

Although the verbalist and plenarist views are quite different and distinct, the former holding that inspiration resides in the exact word used, and the latter believing that the inspiration resides instead in the thought conveyed by the prophet, both are alike in one respect: They each hold that inspiration is essentially objective rather than subjective.

Until the turn of the century, these were the two basic positions held by the Christian world. Then along came philosopher-theologian Martin Buber, who helped to develop a new theory of inspiration. This theory holds, among other views, that inspiration is, by its very nature, inherently subjective rather than objective. What does this mean in practical terms?

As "encounter" theology sees it, revelation (or inspiration) is an experience that takes place in an "I-Thou" encounter between the prophet and God. It is then, primarily, an *experience*, with no exchange of information taking place.

Revelation, for the encounter theologian, is "the personal self-disclosure of God to man, not the impartation of truths about God, . . . an 'I-Thou' encounter with God, the full presence of God in the consciousness" of the prophet, as seminary professor Raoul Dederen has phrased it. [\[109\]](#)

There is no communication of information in encounter theology. God does not utter a word. No statements of truth of any kind are made in this unique relationship. Truth is seen not as conceptual in an objective sense, but as experiential in a subjective sense.

At this point the encounterist would argue that there is a content. But the content is not the impartation of some concept about God, but, rather, the imparting of some *One--God Himself*, addressing the individual Christian's soul and calling for a personal response in the transaction.

Revelation, ultimately, for the encounterist, is the full revelation of God to the full consciousness of the prophet. In this experience there is no communication of ideas, truths, concepts, or messages.

As we noted earlier, the Bible writers convey emphatically that God speaks particularly and uniquely through inspired men. There is simply no twisting such declarations as the one made in 2 Samuel 23:2: "The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue"!

The inquiry of Zedekiah the king to Jeremiah the prophet is central to a genuinely biblical view of inspiration: "Is there any word from the Lord?" (Jeremiah 37:17).

Nor is this merely an Old Testament view of inspiration. In three places in Acts Luke uses such expressions as "the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake" (chap. 1:16), "God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began" (chap. 3:21), and "by the mouth of thy

servant David [God] hast said," et cetera. Chapter four of 1 Timothy opens with "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that . . .," and the opening words of Hebrews declare that whereas in former days God spoke by the mouth of the holy prophets, in more recent times He has spoken more directly to mankind through His Son.

The encounterist holds that the prophet *as a person* is inspired (which is true), but that the thoughts and the words the prophet conveys are his own ideas rather than God's ideas (which is false).

Further, the encounterist holds that the prophet is the interpreter of God's self-disclosure in terms relevant to his own day; and those ideas may contain error. They may even be scientifically or historically inaccurate (as, for example, Moses' idea of a seven solar-day literal creation); yet the prophet nevertheless is held to be inspired, since, in this view, inspiration has nothing whatever to do with ideas!

The encounterist lays great stress on context. His purpose is to demonstrate "historical conditioning"--the idea that the prophet is the helpless victim (as well as the product) of his environment, background, education, and climate of thought.

Although the plenarist is also interested in context, he uses it to discover, by examination of the historical circumstances surrounding the giving of a particular message, whether the prophet's words constitute a *principle*--(an unchanging, unerring rule of human behavior) or a *policy* (the application of a principle to a particular situation, in which case the application may change as the situation changes).

2. *Contains the word versus being the word.* The encounterist says that the Bible *contains* the word of God, but it is *not itself* the word of God. In this view, the Bible is no longer revelation in the pre-twentieth century sense of the word. It is no longer God's revealed word, but rather a *witness* to the revelation experience.

Regarding content, this view sees the Bible as merely the result of its writer's rational reflection upon God's individual and personal self-manifestation to them. In other words, Moses did not receive the Ten Commandments directly from God, nor did he obtain specific instructions concerning the earthly tabernacle, its furnishings, or its ceremonies.

Thus the encounterist does not believe that the concepts conveyed in Scripture are the word of God, as the plenarist believes. The plenarist holds inspiration to be objective--that is, something apart from the individual by which he is daily judged. The encounterist sees the word of God as a personal, subjective experience--an inner experience that is remarkably powerful and compelling. *Experience*, as the encounterist sees it, constitutes the word of God--not ideas, thoughts, conceptions, or propositional truth.

As the prophet attempts to express *his own* ideas or thoughts in describing this "divine-human encounter" he thus attempts to convey the word of God as he feels it from within. This attempt could be compared to a person's relating in a prayer meeting testimony what God did for him that week.

For the encounterist, *the prophet is inspired in heart, rather than in head.* Thus the person who hears or reads the prophet's words also has a subjective experience. Truth is therefore defined as

experiential. The experience becomes the word of God for the student, rather than the word of God being defined as the literal words, concepts, and propositions expressed by the prophet.

The plenarist does not disparage the place of experience in the life of the Christian; indeed, in at least 13 locations Ellen White uses the expression *experimental religion*. But human experience *never supersedes* the objective word of God, which must itself determine the validity of *all* experience.[\[110\]](#)

3. *Quantitative, not qualitative*. Finally, for the encounterist, *everyone* is inspired. The prophet simply has a more superlative degree of inspiration than the ordinary individual.

The issue at this point is *a difference in degree versus a difference in kind*. The prophet has a more intense degree of inspiration, it is held, than that of average people. A prophet's, minister's, or politician's eloquence may lead people to do things they would not otherwise do. Because such a person lifts others up out of themselves, he is thus considered "inspired."

There may certainly be some kind of secular, nonprophetic inspiration. We sometimes think of an artist, a sculptor, a musical composer or performer as being "inspired." But this ordinary, secular inspiration has nothing whatever to do with the kind of prophetic inspiration spoken of in the Bible.

In Biblical inspiration, the prophet is taken off in vision. He or she may lose natural strength only to receive a supernatural endowment. For the prophet, God breathes--literally; for in the vision state the prophet does not breathe. And while in this state, the prophet receives infallible messages from the Lord.

Ordinary individuals may be moved by the inspired words of the prophet; their lives may be fundamentally altered for the better. But that experience is not the "inspiration" that the Bible writers and Ellen White possessed. When ordinary people are "inspired," it is some other *kind* of inspiration than the biblical variety. *It is a difference in kind, not in degree.*

This idea of degrees of inspiration that is so prevalent in encounter theology has, historically, had a certain appeal with Adventism. In 1884 then-General Conference President George I. Butler's series of ten articles in the *Review and Herald* posited this idea of degrees of inspiration. Ellen White wrote him a letter of rebuke[\[111\]](#) in which she pointed out that God had not inspired this series on inspiration, nor had He approved of the teaching of these views at the sanitarium, college, or publishing house in Battle Creek!

A Significant Difference

At this point, the reader may, rather wearily, say, "What practical difference does it make which position I take?" It makes a big difference. Let us note some of the significant implications that result from accepting the encounterist view:

1. The Bible is no longer the bearer of eternal truths; it is no longer a book of doctrine. It degenerates into merely a witness to the "divine-human encounter" between God and a prophet. It is no longer a statement of truths *from* God or truths *about* God. It is merely the personal view of the prophet giving his subjective reaction to a highly subjective experience.

2. The *reader* of the prophet's words, then, becomes the authority, the arbiter who decides what (for him) is inspired and what is not. He reads the Bible critically; but he is not obliged to believe what it says *in principle*, conceptually, but rather what he interprets it to mean *to him*. He decides whether a given statement is to be accepted at face value, or whether it is to be accepted at all.

The reader's subjective experience becomes normative--the standard of what he will accept or reject as binding on his life and experience.

However, if there is no objective revelation as criterion, then there is no way an individual can validate his experience, no way for him to determine whether this experience is from the Holy Spirit or from an unholy spirit. It is simply not enough to say that one's experience is "self-authenticating." As John former theology professor Robertson commented, "It may also be self-deceiving."

3. The subjective view is a distortion. It distorts the proper, legitimate place of context. It also distorts the proper place of experience, by making it the criterion for authenticity. The subjective view emphasizes "the autonomy of historical conditioning," and makes demythologizing of the prophet a necessity to contemporary understanding. Further, it distorts genuine prophetic inspiration by imposing the idea of degrees of inspiration upon it as a central category.

4. The encounter view results in the adoption of the following theological positions:

- a. Creation, as taught in Genesis, is neither literal nor scientific. Rather, evolution becomes the favored view, with Genesis being seen as merely recording the quaint ideas extant in the time of Moses.

- b. With regard to the incarnation of Christ, Jesus was not really a divine-human being. He was only a man. The encounter view rejects supernatural events such as the virgin birth and miracles, as we commonly define them.

5. In demonology, the Bible, says the encounterist, merely reports the common ideas of a time when it was popularly but incorrectly believed that demons possessed the physical bodies of certain unfortunate human victims. Today, says the encounterist, we know that *all* mental illness and insanity are caused by external conditions such as chemical imbalances and unfavorable environment--but not by spirits.

Plenarists can certainly agree that some mental illness, perhaps much of it, is caused by external, nonsupernatural causes; but they cannot accept a view that declares that *all* mental illness is so caused. This author saw too much in his 12 years of mission service to believe otherwise!

In the final analysis, then, the encounterist, subjective view of inspiration ultimately constitutes a denial of the "faith once delivered to the saints." It is a clever substitution of "cleverly devised fables" for an infallible revelation of truth as given by God through divinely (and objectively) inspired prophets. And those who accept this view risk losing eternal life.

IV. The Purpose of Inspiration/Revelation

Leslie Hardinge, a veteran Seventh-day Adventist college and seminary Bible teacher, once made a very profound statement: "Without analogy, there is no real teaching." The most effective teaching in the Bible, or anywhere else, is done through metaphor and simile. Let us notice, then,

two metaphors that Bible writers employ in the New Testament to enlarge our understanding of the purpose of inspiration/revelation.

Two Biblical Metaphors

1. The Apostle Paul repeatedly speaks of prophetic inspiration as the gift from the Holy Spirit--one of the so-called "spiritual gifts" (Ephesians 4; 1 Corinthians 12).

A person may receive many kinds of gifts. Some gifts are useless or even embarrassing. However, the most valuable gifts I have ever received were either utilitarian gifts that filled a particular need in my day-to-day existence (such as a pen, an attache case, or a typewriter) or gifts of love in which the sentiment that prompted the gift far transcended the inherent, immediate value of the gift. This sentiment bestowed upon the gift a value it would not otherwise have possessed.

The gift of prophecy can be described in the same terms. To some it is useless. To others it is a continual embarrassment and annoyance, for it cuts across their lifestyle repeatedly, dealing as it does with particulars of day-to-day existence.

The choice of the metaphor *gift* is a fortunate one when we come to the question of inspiration/revelation. The purpose of this gift is to promote the work of the ministry of the body (church) of God--to strengthen and guide the church (Ephesians 4:12-15). Notice in particular its four purposes in this connection:

- a. The *perfection* of the saints (that they may grow up into Christ).
- b. The *unification* of the saints (so that there will be no schism in the body of Christ. See 1 Corinthians 12:25).
- c. The *edification* of the saints (inspired writings provide doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness. See 2 Timothy 3:16).
- d. The *stabilization* of the saints (that they may have an anchor to keep them from drifting about on every wave of doctrine).

2. The Apostle Peter adds a second metaphor, actually borrowing it from one of David's psalms. He sees prophetic inspiration as resembling a light that shines in a darkened place for a practical and necessary purpose--to keep us from stumbling and falling (2 Peter 1:19). A millennium earlier David had likened the word of God to a "lamp" to the feet, a "light" to the path (Psalm 119:105).

As a "light," prophetic inspiration serves two valuable functions:

- a. One of the main purposes of the prophetic writings (although certainly not their only function) is to reveal future events. Revelation thus helps us to make adequate preparation for coming events and enables us to relate constructively to these events when they occur.[\[112\]](#) However, a less obvious reason for including the prophetic element in Scripture is to validate the Bible's divine origin--to show that God is its Author. Mortals cannot predict what will happen even moments in advance; but God can tell centuries in advance what will transpire. This function of inspiration was the particular burden of Isaiah.[\[113\]](#)

b. Equally important is the function of revelation as light to protect the believer. Inspired writings provide a light that exposes Satan's goals and his proposed methodology for accomplishing his objective. Truly, "where there is no vision, the people perish" (Proverbs 29:18).

Conclusion

"Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter" is not only a sound pedagogical device, but also a spiritual imperative.

Inspiration has been seen as a process in which God uniquely imparts eternally important truths through "his servants, the prophets," who "at sundry times and in divers manners" have spoken to their contemporaries and to those who would later follow to enable them to understand the divine mind and will of God for their lives.

Especially in these closing hours of earth's history, there is an overriding need to understand how this phenomena operates, so that one may not only have an intelligent understanding of what God is trying to say, but also to avoid the perils and pitfalls that arise from the holding of false views.

Paul's admonition to the saints of the New Testament--"Quench not the Spirit [don't let the candle go out!]. Despise not prophesyings. Prove all things; hold fast that which is good" (1 Thessalonians 5:19-21)--is but the echo of the counsel of Jehoshaphat in the Old Testament: "Believe in the Lord your God, so shall ye be established; believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper" (2 Chronicles 20:20).

In the second presentation in this series we will consider the question of inerrancy and infallibility--Does the true prophet ever err? The experience of Ellen White will be examined in the light of the evidence of Bible prophets.

Part II: Infallibility: Does the True Prophet Ever Err?

Introduction

The theological footballs of "infallibility" and "inerrancy" are agitating minds and hearts in evangelical Christendom today, especially as these issues relate to the question of prophetic inspiration. Much of the discussion revolves around semantical considerations,[\[114\]](#) and is rather closely associated with the verbal view of inspiration. Nevertheless, important questions need to be raised--and answered--such as: Does a true prophet ever err? Do all the predictions of a true prophet come to pass 100 percent of the time? Does a true prophet ever have to change anything he or she has written or said?

Webster defines *infallible* as "1: incapable of error: unerring; 2: not liable to mislead, deceive, or disappoint: certain; 3: incapable of error in defining doctrines touching faith or morals."[\[115\]](#) He further renders *inerrant* as "free from error: infallible."[\[116\]](#)

The issue of prophetic infallibility is raised because the Scriptures claim to be more reliable than ordinary literacy productions of human authors.

As was noted in part 1 of this series, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God" (2 Timothy 3:16). It is not amenable to "private interpretation" because the message did not originate by private initiative or from private creativity. Instead, "holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Peter 1:21). Therefore, said Peter, "take heed" to it (vs. 19).

In what may well have been the first book of the New Testament to be written, Paul, in the same spirit as the reference cited above from Peter, admonished the Thessalonian Christians: "Quench not the Spirit. Despise not prophesyings. Prove all things; hold fast that which is good" (1 Thessalonians 5:19-21).

Why? Peter responds, because we have a "more sure" word of prophetic writings (2 Peter 1:19). More recent translators have rendered the passage: the word of the prophetic writers is "made more certain,"[\[117\]](#) "made more sure,"[\[118\]](#) "surer still,"[\[119\]](#) "firmer still,"[\[120\]](#) "confirmed,"[\[121\]](#) "reaffirmed,"[\[122\]](#) and "more fully guaranteed."[\[123\]](#)

The question, then, is not the uniqueness of the inspired writings in being "more sure" than uninspired writings; it is, rather, what is the essence of this "more sureness"? In *what way* are these writings "more sure"?

Several possible analogical models may be found among evangelical Christians and among Seventh-day Adventists:

1. The "straight-jacket" theory: This view holds that the control of the Holy Spirit over the prophet during the process of inspiration is so rigid, so tight, that the prophet is prevented from making any type of error.

This position is well illustrated in the words of one Seventh-day Adventist evangelist in a sermon explaining Ellen White to non-Adventists:

And by the way, Ellen White's predictions up to this very minute have been right every time. The psychics like to talk about their batting average. They are proud if they are right seventy-five or eighty percent of the time.

Listen! A prophet of God with a batting average? Never! A prophet of God is right one hundred percent of the time or he isn't right at all!

And another thing! A prophet of God doesn't change his mind!

I think you are beginning to see the difference between a prophet--a true prophet--and a psychic.

Three postulates are thus suggested: (a) The true prophet has a PAQ (Prophetic Accuracy Quotient) of 100 percent, whereas psychics (and false prophets) typically have only a 75-80 percent PAQ; (b) if a prophet of God is not right 100 percent of the time, he or she is not right *any* of the time; and (c) a true prophet never has to go back and change anything he wrote or said in his professional capacity as a prophet.

This position borrows heavily from the basic philosophy of inspiration held by the author of a popular book about Ellen White published a few years ago:

A true prophet [italics in original] is not a psychic who performs with the aid of a mental or "spiritual" crutch, but is someone who has *no degree of freedom* either in tuning or in controlling

the prophetic impulses or prophetic recall. These impulses are superimposed over the prophet's conscious mind by a supernatural personal being, having absolute knowledge of both past and future, *making no allowance for error or human miscalculation.* [\[124\]](#)

This position has serious problems and implications with regard to both the Bible and the writings of Ellen White, as will subsequently be noted.

2. *The "intervention" theory:* This view holds that if in his humanity a prophet of God errs, *and* the nature of that error is sufficiently serious to materially affect (a) the direction of God's church, (b) the eternal destiny of one person, or (c) the purity of a doctrine, *then* (and only then) the Holy Spirit immediately moves the prophet to correct the error, so that no permanent damage is done.

This position can be squared with the objective reality of Scripture and of the writings of Ellen White. But before we apply the acid test of these two theories, we should pause to examine the nature and source of religious belief.

Several penetrating questions are relevant here: (1) Which of the two theories presented above do you believe? (Or do you have a third theory to which you subscribe?) (2) Why do you believe it? This second question may be even more important than the first.

Is your belief based on *source credibility*--some favorite preacher, pastor, Bible teacher, or Biblical scholar whom you highly respect has taken this position, and because of your high regard for this person, you have accepted, uncritically, what you were told? Or do you hold your belief because you have *objectively validated* the position?

In Paul's day the Christian believers in Berea were said to have been "more noble" than their counterparts at Thessalonica for two reasons that have great relevance for us in this discussion:

1. They received Paul's words "with all readiness of mind." That is, they were open to new light; they did not have closed minds.
2. They "searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so" (Acts 17:11). That is, they validated what they had heard before they accepted it; they did not gullibly, uncritically accept what they were told without personally verifying it in God's Word.

Paul might have been forgiven somewhat had he told the Bereans, "I am not only an inspired prophet of the Lord, but I also have the highest spiritual gift--that of apostleship. You don't need to check out what I have told you; you can take my word for it, for I have the highest authority from God on this earth."

But he didn't tell them that. Instead, he praised them for *not* simply taking his word for things, but for going instead to the previously inspired writings to verify what he had said.

Validating Truth

How should one validate truth? By counting heads and accepting the position that attracts the largest number of subscribers? Hardly.

What is the best way to determine the correct time of day? If someone is asked, "What time is it?" and responds, "It is 7:10," how does one know whether he is correct? Incidentally, if you ask

several individuals for the time of day, you may get as many different answers as there are persons with watches. Furthermore, each person will probably assume that his is the only right time if others disagree.

Many communities have a telephone number one may dial to get the exact time of day. Some radio and television networks have a "blip" signal that may be heard exactly on the hour, superimposed over the voice of the announcer giving the call letters of the station.

Validating the time of day for most of us may not be crucial. Whether we are one or two minutes off may not be too important. But validating spiritual truth may be eternally important.

And how does one validate truth? The response of Jacques Bénigne Bossuet, French bishop and seventeenth century court preacher to Louis XIV, is apropos. Louis was a great lover of the theater, and often had command performances in his court. Bossuet, on the other hand, was widely known to oppose the theater as being inimical to the development of Christian character and as being an instrument of evil.

One day, as the story goes, during a lull in the proceedings of court, Louis looked around and, seeing Bossuet on the periphery, called loudly in his direction, "My bishop, what do you think of the theater?"

Courtiers gasped, for they knew the views of both men. They also knew the peril of rendering a verdict contrary to the royal opinion. At the very least, the offender might be banished from court (a fate, for these sycophants, almost worse than death); at the very worst, he might be sent to his death.

Everyone waited breathlessly for Bossuet's response, wondering whether he would take the expedient way out of the dilemma (on the theory that it is better to be a live coward than a dead hero), or whether he would risk all to speak the conviction of his heart.

Bossuet gravely made his way into the immediate presence of the Sun King, genuflected, and said with great dignity, "Sire, you have asked what I think of the theater. I will tell you, Sire, what I think. There are some great persons in favor of it . . . and there are some great reasons against it!"

It might equally be said of the "strait-jacket" theory of "more sureness." "There are some great persons in favor of it; but there are some great reasons against it." How does one decide? Validation is potentially a painful process, for facts sometimes force us to change long-held highly cherished opinions. But validation is an intellectual necessity to anyone who holds truth to be as important as life itself.

It is important for each of us to know *what* we believe, as well as why we believe it.

In part 1 of this series we noted Paul's declaration that "we have this treasure in earthen vessels" (2 Corinthians 4:7) and Ellen White's observation that "in the work of God for man's redemption, divinity and humanity are combined."[\[125\]](#) Jesus was both Son of God and Son of man; and this same union of the divine and the human exists also in the Bible. The "treasure" consists of truths revealed and inspired by God; the "earthen vessel"--the human packaging--is the words of men, chosen by them to communicate divine truth.[\[126\]](#)

The "treasure"--the God-given truth or message--is not only "an infallible revelation of His will" but is also "authoritative"[\[127\]](#)--normative and binding upon the Christian. Commenting upon the question of infallibility, Ellen White wrote, "God alone is infallible."[\[128\]](#) "Man is fallible, but God's Word is infallible."[\[129\]](#)

Concerning the "earthen vessel," the human side of the equation, Mrs. White added, "Everything that is human is imperfect";[\[130\]](#) and "no man is infallible."[\[131\]](#)

Some have stumbled over the fact that there are imperfections in the writings of Ellen White. Examples cited by the critics include her incorrect numbering of Abraham's allies; her early statement that God commanded Adam and Eve not to touch the forbidden fruit, later changed to state that these were Eve's words; her assertion that only eight souls received Noah's message, contradicted in another place by her statement that there were others who believed and who helped build the ark; and her account of the daily ministrations in the ancient tabernacle,[\[132\]](#) which does not entirely square with the account given in the Pentateuch.

Some critics have gone on to ask if these imperfections, these inaccuracies, this demonstrated untrustworthiness, are not sufficient reason for not basing any doctrine upon her writings.[\[133\]](#)

There is no charge that can be leveled against Ellen White, in her professional role as a prophet, that could not and has not first been leveled against the writers of the Bible by the so-called "higher critics," whether such accusations allege misstatements of fact, copying uninspired writers (a charge examined in detail in part 1 of this series), unfulfilled prophecies, or having to retract statements made at an earlier time.

Let us not claim more for Mrs. White than we would for the Bible writers; but let us not claim less, either (for reasons that will be discussed in some detail in part 3 of this series).

Coming back to Peter's forthright claim, "We have also a more sure word of prophecy," let us examine, successively, the lives of the prophets, and then the declarations of the prophets, to see if we are able to determine how this "more sureness" operates--or does not operate.

I. Inerrancy and the Prophet's Personal Life

The evidence of history and Scripture testify that the control of the Holy Spirit over the lives of the prophets did not preclude their freedom to sin. If "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23), this would presumably include the prophets as well. To verify this, one need but examine their lives individually, as recorded in sacred writ, to discover the nature and extent of their sins of omission and commission.

One of the earliest prophets mentioned in Scripture is Abraham (Genesis 20:7). Repeatedly the canonical writers of both Old and New Testaments call him the father of the faithful, and indeed, both Jews (through Isaac) and Arabs (through Ishmael) consider him their lineal ancestor as well.

Abraham was not only made the progenitor of peoples too numerous to count, not only given the special relationship with God signified by the role and office of a prophet, but he was also given the title--by Jehovah Himself--"Abraham my friend."[\[134\]](#) (In the Koran, written by Mohammed in Arabia, this title is rendered *El Khalil*. Islamic philologists state that the word in Arabic--a language noted for its nuances and fine distinctions of meaning--should not be rendered merely "friend" but rather "*a very special friend*.")

What kind of man was the "very special friend" of God? In Genesis 12 we find Abraham and his wife Sarah in Egypt. Because Sarah is a very beautiful woman, Abraham fears that Pharaoh will want to add her to the royal harem, and will kill Abraham to pave the way for this conquest. So Abraham prevails upon Sarah to declare that she is Abraham's sister instead of his wife.

Now Sarah was indeed Abraham's *half*-sister, so what she said was half true; but she was also his *whole* wife. And what is half-truth is whole-lie, because the intent is to deceive. God stepped into the situation in a remarkable manner to protect the life of His friend; and Abraham and Sarah were allowed to leave Egypt unmolested, with all of their possessions intact.

But eight chapters later, in Genesis 20, we find the same story being repeated--with the same results. God bore long with His very special friend--even as He bears long with us. But one somehow tends to expect a little higher standard of behavior of prophets! Surely Abraham should have learned a lesson the first time. But he did not, as we often do not.

Abraham was not only a "royal liar" twice over, but he also sinned in acquiescing to Sarah's proposal that he take Hagar as a secondary wife in order to "help" God's plan to make Abraham's progeny as numerous as the sands of the sea and the stars of the sky.

Sarah was beyond normal child-bearing years (Genesis 18:11); and not believing that God would work a miracle, she sought a naturalistic solution. But in taking Hagar, one of Sarah's servants, as his wife, Abraham demonstrated a serious lapse of faith. God intended Isaac to be a "miracle" child--for he was in several ways to be a type of Christ. And even if Abraham and Sarah's conduct was acceptable by the cultural standards of the day, it was contrary to God's plan. Paul uses this illustration in Galatians, chapter 4, to allegorize Hagar as salvation by works, with Sarah representing salvation by faith.

The seriousness of Abraham's lack of faith at this point is underscored by a more recent prophet. Because he did not trust God to produce a miracle child, but instead took Hagar as his wife, Abraham was called upon, a few years later, to offer Isaac as a human sacrifice on Mount Moriah. Wrote Ellen White, "If he had endured the first test and had patiently waited for the promise to be fulfilled in Sarah . . . he would not have been subjected to the closest test that was ever required of man." [\[135\]](#)

So much for *El Khalil*, the friend of God.

Abraham's grandson, Jacob, a prophet, was also a sinner. In fact, his very name had to be changed to Israel after his conversion because the old name meant deceiver or supplanter; and God couldn't have a prophet going around with *that* kind of name in a day when the giving of a name had a significance far transcending the same event in modern times.

Then there was David. Twice in Scripture, once in the Old Testament and once in the New, David is given the title "a man after his [God's] own heart" (1 Samuel 13:14; see also Acts 13:22). And what kind of man was he? Well, among other things, he was first an adulterer with Bathsheba, and then a murderer of her husband Uriah in a cover-up effort (2 Samuel 1). Is that any way for a prophet to behave--especially one so close to the heart of God?

Incidentally, the experiences of Abraham and David have been used in recent times by lapsed Christians to condone polygamy, among other sins. However, the question persists, was

Abraham the friend of God and was David a man after God's own heart *because* of their sins, or rather *in spite* of them?

Although the prophets were all sinners--and some of them rather lurid ones at that--their sins did not invalidate their prophetic gift!

Jeremiah complained, charging God wrongfully (chaps. 12:1; 15:15-18). Both Jonah (chap. 1:3) and Elijah (1 Kings 19) ran away from duty. And then there was Peter.

Peter denied his Lord three times with foul fishermen's oaths that had not stained his lips for three years. Jesus forgave him, and restored him to the gospel ministry, and even gave him the gift of prophetic inspiration. And did Peter then live a morally impeccable, upright life forever after? He did not.

Peter was subsequently guilty of gross hypocrisy. While with the Gentile Christians he was the epitome of friendship; but on occasions when Jews were present, Peter catered to their narrow chauvinistic prejudices by not according the Gentiles the same warmth of Christian fellowship as he would have in private. In fact, this was such a serious moral issue that the apostle Paul was obliged to rebuke Peter in a rather forthright and public manner (Galatians 2:11-14). And Peter was a prophet.

What about Ellen White? She once wrote, "God and heaven alone are infallible. . . . In regard to infallibility, I never claimed it; God alone is infallible." [\[136\]](#)

A recent critic reportedly found Ellen White guilty of three sins (if not crimes): (1) she was a literary thief, since he charged that she stole the writings of others; (2) she was a liar, for she allegedly claimed that those writings were from her own pen when they were not; and (3) she and her husband James were held to be shameless, opportunistic exploiters, writing for a guaranteed, captive market for the purpose of enriching their own family fortunes! [\[137\]](#)

Now, for a moment, let us assume that the critics' worst charges about Ellen White are absolutely true. Although these charges have been answered in substantial detail, [\[138\]](#) for the sake of the argument let us momentarily assume the worst. *If* Ellen White were guilty, as charged, would that invalidate her prophetic gift?

And the answer comes quickly, No--not unless you are willing to invalidate Peter's prophetic gift, Jonah's prophetic gift, Elijah's prophetic gift, Jeremiah's prophetic gift, David's prophetic gift, and Abraham's prophetic gift, among others.

We must be consistent; we must treat Ellen White exactly as we would any prophet of biblical times. If we don't tear out of our Bible the Psalms written by David, the prophecies of Jeremiah and Jonah and the two epistles of Peter, then we have no right to throw out the writings of Ellen White.

History and the Scripture testify that the control of the Holy Spirit over the lives of the prophets did not preclude their freedom to sin; and yet, their sinful acts did not invalidate their prophetic gift!

At this point someone is likely to assert that Peter did not say we have a more sure prophetic life; but rather that we have a more sure prophetic word. What about the *words* of the prophet?

II. Inerrancy and the Prophet's Prophetic Word

Three categories of "problems" appear when we examine the utterances of the prophets, biblical and modern, in which significant questions have been raised: (1) unfulfilled prophecies; (2) inconsequential errors of minor, insignificant detail; and (3) major errors of substance. Let us examine each successively, in detail.

A. Unfulfilled Prophecies

Some time ago I was holding a series of class lectures and public meetings at one of our educational institutions on the Atlantic seaboard. At the close of the Thursday evening presentation a denominational worker at this school asked if he might speak with me privately. I invited him to my guest room where we conversed for more than an hour.

As soon as he was seated, he began, "I really want to believe in Ellen White as a legitimate, authentic prophet of the Lord." I could tell by the tone of his voice that he was not only deeply sincere, but also deeply concerned as well.

"Fine," I responded. "Is there any impediment to the fulfillment of your wish?"

Without answering my question directly, he went on, "Isn't the fulfillment of predictions one of the Bible's tests of a true prophet?"

"Oh, yes," I smiled. "When I used to teach college prophetic-guidance classes in California and Nigeria, we examined four such tests (1) the words of the 'prophet' under scrutiny must agree with earlier inspired revelations known to have come from the Lord (Isaiah 8:20); (2) the fruitage test must be applied, both the prophet's own life and the lives of those who follow the prophet (Matthew 7:16, 20); (3) the prophet must testify that Jesus was the divine-human incarnate Son of God (1 John 4:1-3); and (4) the predictions of the prophet must come to pass.

"This last test," I told my inquirer, "is twice mentioned in the Old Testament. Jeremiah (chap. 28:9) presents it from the positive perspective: 'When the word of the prophet shall come to pass, then shall the prophet be known, that the Lord hath truly sent him.' And Moses presents it from the negative perspective; 'When a prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him' (Deuteronomy 18:22)."

"I thought so," my friend said quietly. Then he went on, "Well, what do we do, then, with Ellen White's predictions that never came to pass? For example, I understand that in 1856 she said she was shown a group of our church members at a meeting somewhere. She said that some of them would be 'food for worms,' some would be subjects of the seven last plagues, and some would be alive and translated at the second coming of Christ. Are any of the persons who attended that meeting still alive?"

"Not to my knowledge," I replied. "In fact, the last known survivor died in 1937 at the age of 83. His name was William C. White, and he was a babe in arms at the time his mother, Ellen White, made the prediction."

"That is what I have heard. Well, how do you handle it--in the light of this Biblical test of a prophet--that his prediction must come to pass, and if it doesn't this is evidence that the Lord has not spoken through him?"

"I handle it the same way I handle other unfulfilled prophecies of genuine prophets that appear in the Bible," I replied. "Incidentally, I will deal with this in substantial detail in just a moment. But my policy, when people raise questions about Ellen White's prophetic role, is to go first to the Bible, to see how the situation is resolved there, before I examine Ellen White. You see, I want to see her in the light of the Bible, not the other way around."

And so we began a most interesting study of unfulfilled prophecies by authentic, acknowledged prophets in the Bible. Probably the best known example is Jonah.

After finishing his celebrated "submarine" ride in the belly of the great fish, Jonah went to Nineveh to do the Lord's bidding. Nineveh was a large city; it would take Jonah three days to cover it entirely. His message was as simple as it was stark: "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown" (Jonah 3:4). No hope was offered, no compromise, no conditional element.

After delivering the message, Jonah went out of town and found a vantage place where he could witness (and relish) the massacre of his nation's most hated enemies. Jonah despised these people with a passion, for the Assyrians were the most warlike and fearsome of Israel's pagan foes. When they captured Jewish prisoners of war, they flayed them--skinned them alive--to extract every ounce of trauma in torture that they could before they killed the victim. In such instances death, when it came, was a welcome, merciful release. The Jews quite understandably had no love for the Ninevites.

Although there was no hope explicit in the message of Jonah, the Ninevites (who may have had some prior knowledge about Jehovah from hearing other Jewish prophets, or from reading Jewish prophetic writings) decided to mend their ways. They expressed their repentance in the cultural manifestation appropriate to the times--they put on sackcloth and covered themselves with ashes. God beheld it all, and in love and mercy granted them a stay of execution.

Meanwhile, the prophet was becoming more angry by the moment. One suspects that the real cause of this growing irritation was not merely his narrow chauvinistic Jewish loyalty, but rather a fear that word of this new development might get back to Jerusalem before he did.

Jonah may have been more concerned about his professional reputation as a prophet than about the fate of his 120,000 "converts." Instead of wishing them baptized by water, he wanted them incinerated by fire! Perhaps he was afraid that when he got back to Jerusalem the little children playing in the street would chant after him, "Jonah's a false prophet; Jonah's a false prophet." Why? Because his prediction didn't come to pass.

Interestingly, in a footnote to history, we learn that several centuries after this event the Ninevites "repented" of their former repentance (see 2 Corinthians 7:10) and went back to their former ways. God then "repented" of His reprieve, and sent the threatened destruction that Jonah had originally foretold.

But was Jonah proved a "true" prophet 200 years *ex post facto*? No, not at all. If the Ninevites had *never* subsequently been destroyed, Jonah would still have been deemed a true prophet, even though his prediction did not come to pass.

How? By the conditional element that exists in some prophecies, either explicitly or implicitly. A clue to this is found as early as 950 B.C. when the prophet Azariah instructed King Asa, "The Lord is with you, while ye be with him; and if ye seek him, he will be found of you; but if ye forsake him, he will forsake you" (2 Chr 15:2).

More to the point, however, is the interesting (and significant) fact, that in *both* of the biblical books where the test of fulfillment is mandated, this conditional element is also explicitly stated.

Ten chapters *before* giving the test of fulfillment, Jeremiah mentions this conditional element:

At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it; If that nation against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them. And at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it; If it do evil in my sight, that is obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good, wherewith I said I would benefit them (Jeremiah 18:7-10).

Moses also mentions the conditional element repeatedly in Deuteronomy.[\[139\]](#)

Some have felt that this was a face-saving means of maintaining a prophet's professional reputation in the face of adverse evidence such as nonfulfillment of predictions,[\[140\]](#) but it is not. It is a biblical principle. One does not need an advanced degree in theology to be able to figure out what kind of prophecies are amendable to the conditional element and which are not.

One could cite other biblical examples of unfulfilled prophecies given by authentic, legitimate prophets. The category that comes most quickly to mind is that of a host of predictions made by a half-dozen Old Testament prophets about Israel's national honor and glory--predictions about the worldwide mission of Israel and the ingathering of the Gentiles, eternal rest in Canaan, and deliverance from political enemies.

A few of these predictions were fulfilled, secondarily, through "spiritual Israel" (the Christian church); and some may be fulfilled to Christians ultimately, after sin and sinners are destroyed following the last judgment. Despite these exceptions, the majority of these prophecies were not fulfilled in Bible times, are not being fulfilled today, and never will be fulfilled.[\[141\]](#)

Then do we say that the prophets who made these predictions--notably Moses, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Joel, Zephaniah, and Zechariah--were false prophets? No. Nor do we say, as do the Secret Rapture theorists, that these prophecies will be fulfilled in our own time. Indeed, these latter expositors have built a whole theology on the misunderstanding of the conditional element in prophecy, and they posit a last-day fulfillment in order that these Old Testament writers may be proved to be reliable, authentic prophets of the Lord![\[142\]](#)

A Look at the "Food for Worms" Vision

Let us now come back to Ellen White and the "Food for Worms" vision, to discover the facts in that case. During the latter part of May 1856, a conference in Battle Creek was attended by members and denominational workers of a church which was still four years away from assuming a corporate name. Attendees came to the conference from various parts of the eastern and midwestern parts of the United States and from Canada. The conference opened on Friday afternoon, May 23, and closed on Monday, May 26. On Sabbath the attendance was so large that

it was necessary to leave the modest chapel that then served the Adventists and go across the street to a large tent pitched to accommodate the crowd.

On Tuesday morning, May 27, another meeting was held, this time back in the chapel, attended largely by workers who were still in Battle Creek. It was at this service that Mrs. White was taken off in vision, and was shown some of those attending the May 23-26 conference.

The report of this vision is found in *Testimonies for the Church*, volume 1, pages 127-137, and is still published by the church, although some critics claim that the church tries to hide Mrs. White's unfulfilled predictions.

Incidentally, carefully drawn lists of the names of those in attendance at that conference were compiled by a number of interested parties. Some of these lists still survive in the archives of the Ellen G. White Estate in the General Conference office. The lists were actively circulated among Adventists in earlier days, and J. N. Loughborough tells, in a letter written in 1918, about two ministers, a "Brother Nelson" and George Amadon, who took such a roster to Ellen White in 1905 to see if she could add any names that they had overlooked.

Mrs. White is reported to have said, "What are you doing?" When told the purpose of the list--to show the nearness of Jesus' coming because very few of those attending still survived--Mrs. White asked what use would be made of the list. Brother Nelson responded, "I am going to have copies of it printed and sent out to all of our people."

Mrs. White's instant rejoinder was, "Then you stop right where you are. If they get that list, instead of working to push the Message, they will be watching the *Review* each week to see who is dead." Loughborough, in telling the story, concluded with the observation that Ellen White objected to using this incident as a "sign of the times."[\[143\]](#) Obviously, she recognized the conditional element in the vision, and the fact that the condition had not then been met by the Seventh-day Adventist church.

Was the conditional element explicit in the angel's testimony to Ellen White in the 1856 vision? No. But then, neither was the conditional element explicit in the testimony of Jonah as he trudged for three days throughout the "exceeding great" city of Nineveh. In both cases, however, the conditional element was implicit.

From as early as 1850 to as late as 1911,[\[144\]](#) Ellen White's writings repeatedly suggest that if the Seventh-day Adventist church had done its job, "the work would have been completed, and Christ would have come ere this."[\[145\]](#)

The conditional element in *some* prophecy is exhibited both in the Bible and in the writings of Ellen G. White. To accept it in one, but discard it in the other, is inconsistent and irrational.

True, there *are* some unfulfilled prophecies by authentic, legitimate Bible prophets, but the existence of such prophecies does not necessarily discredit the prophet who made them. There are also unfulfilled prophecies in the writings of Ellen White, and the church has never denied (nor tried to hide) this fact from the public. Those studying the prophetic writings should not ask more of Mrs. White than they would of the Biblical prophets.

B. Inconsequential Errors of Minor Detail

In inspired writings, ancient and modern, there are inconsequential errors of minor, insignificant detail. This is true of the Bible, as well as the writings of Ellen White. Such errors--indeed, all of them added up together--do not affect the direction of God's church, the eternal destiny of one soul, or the purity of any doctrine. That the Holy Spirit *could* have corrected these minor mistakes, one cannot seriously challenge. He obviously chose not to do so, probably because the error wasn't vital to the *message* or the purpose of inspiration.

Let us look first at the Bible. As we noted in part 1 of this series, the writer of the first Gospel informs us (in Matthew 27:9, 10) of a Messianic prophecy, written centuries before Christ's birth, which declared that Christ would be betrayed for 30 pieces of silver. Matthew attributes that prophecy to Jeremiah.

Matthew slipped. The writer was not Jeremiah, but Zechariah (chap. 11:12, 13).

We noted also the slight discrepancies among the four Gospel writers regarding the exact wording of the superscription written by Pilate and placed upon the cross above the head of Christ. Matthew lists Christ's miracles in a different order than does Luke, even as both writers handle the Sermon on the Mount in different ways--Matthew as a sermon outline, Luke as an evangelistic tool to demonstrate the truths taught by Jesus.

Mention might also be made of the fact that Hobab is described as Moses' brother-in-law in Numbers 10:29, while he is identified as Moses' father-in-law in Judges 4:11. The author of 1 Samuel 16:10 and 11 identifies David as the eighth son of Jesse, whereas the author of 1 Chronicles 2:15 says David was the seventh son. Luke 3:36 mentions a Cainan in the genealogy of Jesus, a person not mentioned in Genesis 11:12. Paul's account of the ratification of the first covenant in Hebrews 9:19 is not entirely in harmony with the account in Exodus 24:3-8.

Nor have we exhausted the list of inconsequential errors of minor, insignificant detail. The point we make here is, simply, that the "treasure" of God's good news is conveyed to mankind in "earthen vessels"; and that those earthen vessels--the packaging--contain mistakes, errors, discrepancies, call them what you will--that in no way deny the divine inspiration of the material nor the divine authority behind the messages.

Ellen White is in the same tradition with the Bible writers. The same kinds of minor errors found in Scripture also crop up here and there in her writings. A few were mentioned in the introduction to this presentation. Others could be cited.

Just after the turn of the century a worker in southern California attempted to justify his loss of confidence in the inspiration of the *Testimonies* because of an inconsistency in an Ellen G. White letter. In this letter Mrs. White spoke of the 40 rooms of the Paradise Valley Sanitarium near San Diego; in actuality there were only 38 rooms. The man apparently believed that if there were any inaccuracies in detail in any writings of one claiming prophetic inspiration, such inaccuracies negated the claim, and his confidence in Ellen White was seriously impaired.

In response, Mrs. White commented:

The information given concerning the number of rooms in the Paradise Valley Sanitarium was given, not as a revelation from the Lord, but simply as a human opinion. There has never been

revealed to me the exact number of rooms in any of our sanitariums; and the knowledge I have obtained of such things I have gained by inquiring of those who were supposed to know. . . .

There are times when common things must be stated, common thoughts must occupy the mind, common letters must be written and information given that has passed from one to another of the workers. Such words, such information, are not given under the special inspiration of the Spirit of God.[\[146\]](#)

On June 4, 1906, Ellen White wrote a letter to a brother in the church who had written to her earlier concerning the inspiration of the *Testimonies*:

In your letter, you speak of your early training to have implicit faith in the testimonies and say, "I was led to conclude and most firmly believe that *every* word that you ever spoke in public or private, that every letter you wrote under *any* and *all* circumstances, was as inspired as the Ten Commandments."

My brother, you have studied my writings diligently, and you have never found that I have made any such claims, neither will you find that the pioneers in our cause have made such claims.[\[147\]](#)

When writing about the St. Bartholomew Massacre in the 1888 edition of *The Great Controversy*, Mrs. White mentioned in passing that it was the ringing of the bell in the palace of King Charles IX in Paris that was a signal to begin the wanton destruction that cost the lives of tens of thousands of French Huguenot Protestants on August 24, 1572.

After that volume was in print someone questioned the accuracy of her statement, suggesting instead that it may have been the bell in the church of St. Germain, across the street from the palace. Still another said no, it was the bell in the Palace of Justice around the corner from the royal palace!

Ellen White, in the revised 1911 edition of the book, redrafted the statement to read simply, "A bell, tolling in the dead of night, was a signal for the slaughter."[\[148\]](#) The identity of the bell was not the issue; it was the events of that night that were important.

Matthew's mistake in attributing the messianic prophecy of 30 pieces of silver to a wrong source (Jeremiah, instead of Zechariah) was duplicated by Ellen White in a *Review and Herald* article less than two years before her death. She wrote: "'The love of Christ constraineth us,' the apostle Peter declared."[\[149\]](#) She was, of course, quoting 2 Corinthians 5:14, and the attribution should have been to Paul, not Peter.

Dates present unique problems. In two of her published volumes[\[150\]](#) Mrs. White mentions joining her husband, James, at Wallings Mills, Colorado, on "Monday, August 8," 1878. This was obviously a clerical error, for in that year Monday fell on August 5, not August 8.

Of potentially greater seriousness is another problem in dating, misunderstood by some, and considered by one critic to be an unassailable argument for downgrading the nature and degree of Ellen White's inspiration.

In a postscript to volume 2 of *Spiritual Gifts*, Ellen White wrote this rather unusual statement and appeal: "A special request is made that if any find incorrect statements in this book they will immediately inform me. The edition will be completed about the first of October; therefore send before that time."[\[151\]](#)

Can you imagine, exclaims one critic, the apostle Paul putting a postscript on one of his epistles telling the members of that church that if they found anything wrong in the epistle that they should write back to him before it was printed and sent out to all the churches?

How is this unusual statement to be understood?

First, volume 2 of *Spiritual Gifts* was an autobiographical account of the experiences of James and Ellen White from 1844 to 1860. The twofold purpose in writing this work was explained in the preface to the book (and therefore was quite likely overlooked by the critic; apparently very few people read the preface of *any* book!):

1. Ellen White wished, quite simply, to refute charges of Mormonism, which had been made especially in the "west." In March 1860, a man in Knoxville, Iowa, claimed to have known James and Ellen White 20 years earlier when they allegedly were leaders of the Mormon colony at Nauvoo, Illinois. (Twenty years earlier Ellen White was an unmarried girl of 12; she would not even meet James White for at least another five years!)
2. Ellen White also wished to confirm the faith of the believers. Some 16 years had now elapsed since 1844. There was now fruitage evident in the lives of others as well as in the lives of James and Ellen White. The last ten pages of this particular volume are filled with personal testimonies from different Adventist believers regarding the accuracy of the statements made in the text concerning her physical condition in vision, her healings from illness, the nature of the heresies the Whites encountered in the early days, in addition to the refutation of slanders made against the leadership.[\[152\]](#)

Further along in the preface is this clue explaining the rather odd request for reporting "incorrect statements":

In preparing the following pages, I have labored under great disadvantages, as I have to depend in many instances, on memory, having kept no journal [diary] till within a few years. In several instances I have sent the manuscripts to friends who were present when the circumstances related occurred, for their examination before they were put in print. I have taken great care, and have spent much time, in endeavoring to state the simple facts as correctly as possible.[\[153\]](#)

In writing this autobiographical account Mrs. White relied for dates largely on letters retrieved from the Stockbridge Howland family of Topsham, Maine. They had kept her child Henry for five years while Ellen journeyed with her husband James. Ellen had written the Howlands frequently as she and her husband itinerated from place to place.

Possible evidence that the odd request bore fruit is the fact that two dates appearing in *Spiritual Gifts*, volume 2, were altered in parallel historical accounts from the pen of Mrs. White in later publications:

In the earlier account of the first series of William Miller's prophetic lectures in Portland, Maine, the date is given simply as 1839, and the date of the second series was given simply as 1841.[\[154\]](#)

A later parallel account, however, amends the dates for the first series to March 1840,[\[155\]](#) and the second series to June 1842.[\[156\]](#) The two-year interregnum is preserved in the later accounts, but the dates are adjusted by one year in each instance.

Ellen White certainly was not asking any reader to correct a message she had received from the Lord! It is therefore incorrect to give that impression, as some critics have done.

Perhaps one more example of the "earthen vessel" imperfections in the "packaging" of the prophetic message will suffice to show that Ellen White (like the Bible writers before her) was thoroughly human, and subject to simple mistakes the Holy Spirit never bothered to correct (although He easily could have):

Ellen White conducted a continuing correspondence with a colporteur named Walter Harper for more than a score of years. In one letter she asked to borrow one thousand dollars, offering him four to five percent interest over the period of the loan^[157] (while banks at that time were offering only three to four percent--more evidence against the "exploitation" charge).

On November 9, 1906, Mrs. White wrote Brother Harper in a state of great agitation. Her embarrassment and discomfiture are all too evident; they drip from nearly every line on the page!

Harper had written for a copy of a testimony which Ellen White had originally sent to General Conference President George I. Butler and which apparently was already well known generally in the field. It was not uncommon for these kinds of quasi-public letters to be circulated freely among church members at large at that time.

After the letter had been dispatched, Mrs. White discovered to her consternation that she had sent the wrong letter! In writing to Colporteur Harper she first reminds him that what she sent him was "my special personal property," and then she asks for its immediate return, instructing him not to make the matter public, and if it has already been seen by other eyes such individuals should be instructed in the importance of confidentiality.

She concludes by instructing Brother Harper not even to make a personal copy of the letter before he returns it, telling him that she has, now, the letter she originally intended to send him.

Although obviously embarrassed by the mistake, she does not hesitate to speak of "what I have done in mistake," admitting (as she always did when asked directly) that she was human, and subject to the frailties of human nature.^[158]

Inspiration's "more-sureness" did not extend (as the "strait-jacket" theory would erroneously suggest) to precluding the prophet's making of minor errors. Only when such errors would materially affect (a) the direction of God's church, (b) the eternal destiny of one soul, or (c) the purity of a doctrine, would the Holy Spirit step in to correct the situation immediately through the prophet, so that there would be no permanent damage.

C. Major Matters of Substance

On occasion the prophets, ancient and modern, did make major mistakes that needed the immediate correction of the Holy Spirit. Probably the most prominent example in Scripture is the incident recorded in both 2 Samuel 7 and 1 Chronicles 17.^[159]

One day King David called in Nathan, a literary but noncanonical prophet, to tell him of his concern over the lack of a suitable building to house the ark of the covenant and other liturgical furniture of the Jewish ceremonial ritual, which dated back to Sinai and the Mosaic tabernacle tent.

In what was probably an expansive mood, David suggests that an appropriate building be constructed, especially since the king himself now lives in a luxurious palace. Perhaps he indicated that this building, worthy of the worship of Jehovah, be on such a scale of magnificence that any Gentile traveling within a hundred miles of Jerusalem would detour just to see this wonder of the ancient world.

Nathan, perhaps thinking of the tremendous cost of such an edifice, and possibly having some misgivings about the prospect that he might be asked to lead out in a fund-raising campaign, displayed some reticence. And quite possibly David, sensing that reticence, suggested further that he, the king, would pay the entire cost out of his royal treasury.

At any rate, Nathan now becomes as enthusiastic as the monarch; and gives his wholehearted approval of the project.

That night, when Nathan was back in his home, God came to him and told him, in effect, that he had not properly represented Jehovah's will when he gave the prophet's cachet to the king's proposal. Nathan should have checked with "headquarters" first before endorsing the project.

Nathan was instructed to go back to the king the next day and tell the monarch that God appreciated the generosity which prompted such a magnificent plan, but that it was not God's will for the temple to be built by David. Instead, it would be Solomon's temple, for David had been a man of war, a man of bloodshed. David could draw the blueprints and specifications, he could hire the contractors and artisans, and he could even provide the money to pay for it. But it would be Solomon's temple, not David's.

Nathan, probably somewhat abashed, manfully returned to the king the next day to tell him of the heavenly amendments to the royal plan. And David, "a man after his [God's] own heart," concurred and said, "so be it." And so it was.

In more modern times, God's most recent prophet of record, Ellen White, had several experiences in which she took positions contrary to the will of God, and the situation was sufficiently serious for God to intervene to correct the matter, again working through the prophet to accomplish that end.

One such incident was the resolution of the question of the correct time to begin observance of the Sabbath.^[160] Seventh-day Adventists originally learned of the seventh-day Sabbath through the labors of Seventh Day Baptist adherents, who observed the day from sunset Friday to sunset Saturday. Some Seventh-day Adventists followed the example of the Seventh Day Baptists in this sunset-to-sunset observance.

Three other positions were also taken by Seventh-day Adventists: (1) Some in Maine advocated a sunrise Saturday to sunrise Sunday observance, based upon a misunderstanding of Matthew 28:1 ("In the end of the Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week"). (2) Some "legalists" held out for "legal" time--midnight to midnight. (3) And a third group held for "equatorial time." On the equator the sun daily rises at 6:00 a.m. and sets at 6:00 p.m. Captain Joseph Bates was the leader of this group, and he had strong support from both James and Ellen White for his position.

The sunrise group was taken care of comparatively early, for in vision on one occasion Ellen White heard the angel quote from Leviticus 23:32, "From even unto even, shall ye celebrate your sabbath." Most Seventh-day Adventists, however, continued to follow equatorial time.

In the summer of 1855 James White requested John Nevins Andrews, one of our earliest scholars, to research the subject. His conclusions were presented to the General Conference session in Battle Creek in November of that year. On the basis of nine Old Testament texts and two New Testament texts, Andrews demonstrated that, for the purpose of the immediate discussion, "even" and "evening" were synonymous with sunset.

Nearly all attending the conference accepted the Andrews conclusion. But the redoubtable Captain Bates held fast to his equatorial time theory. And Ellen White (who first learned of the Sabbath from Bates) sided with her mentor. The conference was thus left divided and in confusion.

God moved quickly. As this General Conference session drew toward its close, those present united in a season of earnest prayer for the prosperity of the cause, and during this prayer meeting Ellen White was taken off in vision and shown that sunset was the correct time to begin the observance of the Sabbath. Nearly everyone accepted the light from heaven, and the spiritual gift of prophecy again produced its fruit of unity.

It was clear to everyone at the conference that God was speaking and leading, for Ellen White was not now merely repeating her personal, previously held views. And the function of the Spirit of prophecy in the life and work of the church again was illustrated in this experience. For the gift of prophecy was never given to *initiate*, but rather to confirm and corroborate whether the church members were headed in the right direction on the basis of their Bible study, or to correct and redirect, if they had gone as far as they could and were headed in the wrong direction.

Another incident in which Ellen White had to reverse an earlier position had to do with the proposed closing of Southern Publishing Association in 1902.[\[161\]](#)

Ellen White returned from nine years' service in Australia in 1900 and located in the Napa Valley at an estate called "Elmshaven" near St. Helena, California. In 1901 she left early to attend the General Conference session, which would open April 2 at Battle Creek, traveling by way of Nashville, Tennessee, where her son Edson had begun a new private publishing enterprise. A shoestring operation, the printshop was first housed in a chicken house/barn, and was subsequently relocated in town in March 1900.

On the day the GC session opened, Ellen White penned "An Appeal for the Southern Work." She spoke of the need for schools, sanitariums, and a publishing house where books could be produced for use by denominational workers in the south. She spoke of Edson's limited operation, and urged the brethren to take it over since a larger building was necessary for the kind of program she envisioned.

This counsel to establish and equip a large publishing house was one of the first perplexities to confront Arthur G. Daniells, newly elected president of the General Conference. The church already had two publishing ventures, one in Battle Creek and one in Oakland, California. Both were in a state of "marked depression," there being little demand for our literature at this time (there were only a few colporteurs in the field, and these were experiencing only average

success). In fact, both publishing houses were taking in a substantial volume of commercial printing in order to maintain solvency.

The GC Committee felt the time was not opportune to take on a third house when the other two were barely functioning on half-time, and that such a move would serve only to drive all three houses further into commercial work.

But Daniells had complete confidence in Ellen White's vision, for he had worked with her in Australia during the 1890s, and he persuaded the committee to ratify Heaven's plan.

Then Mrs. White further complicated the situation for church leadership by urging the discontinuance of all commercial work at all of our publishing houses. This would mean closing half of the presses and dismissing half of the employees, and some members on the committee began to wonder out loud if the prophet (now 74 years of age) might not be suffering from senility. Some even felt the messages on the publishing work were not really inspired of God.

At the end of the year Daniells went to Nashville for the first annual meeting of the board of Southern Publishing Association, only to discover that during the first year of operation the house had lost \$12,000, equivalent to the original capital invested in the venture! He was assured that they had now turned the corner; but at the end of the second year, and at the end of the third, the plant regularly continued to lose \$1,000 a month.

An investigative commission was appointed. It visited Nashville, and returned with the recommendation that the printing equipment be sold to a junk dealer (the machinery was secondhand and "broken-down" when purchased, and they feared the boiler would explode at any moment) and that the "publishing" house be downgraded to a depository where books printed at the other two plants could temporarily be stored until needed by colporteurs.

The GC Committee still deferred to its prophet, and sent a small delegation to Elmshaven to present the hard facts to Mrs. White and receive (they hoped) her approval of their stop-gap plan to salvage the new publishing house.

Meeting with Daniells and Ellen White were: W. T. Knox, president of the newly-organized Pacific Union Conference (in 1909 he would be elected treasurer of the General Conference); W. C. White, the prophet's son, traveling companion, and confidant; A. T. Jones, president of the California Conference (he would later defect and join John Harvey Kellogg in Battle Creek against Ellen White's counsel); J. O. Corliss, a minister in California at the time who had pioneered the work in Australia with both the prophet and Daniells; E. R. Palmer, secretary of the General Conference; and Clarence Crisler, formerly Daniells' private secretary and now stenographer to Ellen White.

Ellen White listened in silence to the tragic litany of failure reported by the brethren. She was deeply grieved and perplexed, undoubtedly in part because it was her son who had started the program, and because she had given her personal backing to the denomination's taking it over in an expansion program.

Perhaps the committee members reminded her of her recently published counsel:

As church schools are established, the people of God will . . . learn how to conduct the school on a basis of financial success. If this cannot be done, close the school until, with the help of God,

plans can be devised to carry it on without the blot of debt upon it. . . . We should shun debt as we should shun the leprosy.[\[162\]](#)

Mrs. White finally spoke. She agreed that the publishing house must be put on a sound financial basis. "If it cannot, it had better be closed." Pressed for a solution she did not have, Mrs. White finally conceded that the publishing house should be turned into a depository.

Daniells, fortified by Crisler with a transcript of Mrs. White's written words in his pocket, boarded the train for Battle Creek, greatly relieved. He promptly called the GC Committee into session upon his return, and they as promptly voted the publishing house out of existence as a printer of literature, and then turned their attention to other, more pressing concerns.

A few days later a bombshell exploded in the form of a follow-up letter from Mrs. White. She now counseled *not* closing the printing operation at Nashville, but rather recommended that the brethren lay plans to prevent further indebtedness and move forward in faith; if the Lord's counsel were followed, He would give success. With some embarrassment, undoubtedly, she said that the instruction she had given to the committee of visiting brethren was wrong. The very night after the meeting the Lord had given her a vision, showing her she was wrong, and telling her what course should actually be pursued.

On October 20, the day after the committee met under the large oak tree on the lawn at Elmshaven, Ellen White wrote A. G. Daniells:

Last night I seemed to be in the operating room of a large hospital, to which people were being brought, and instruments were being prepared to cut off their limbs in a big hurry. One came in who seemed to have authority, and said to the physicians, "Is it necessary to bring these people into this room?" Looking pityingly at the sufferers, he said, "Never amputate a limb until everything possible has been done to restore it." Examining the limbs which the physicians had been preparing to cut off, he said, "they may be saved. The first work is to use every available means to restore these limbs. What a fearful mistake it would be to amputate a limb that could be saved by patient care! Your conclusions have been too hastily drawn. Put these patients in the best rooms in the hospital, and give them the very best of care and treatment. Use every means in your power to save them from going through life in a crippled condition, their usefulness damaged for life."

The sufferers were removed to a pleasant room, and faithful helpers cared for them under the speaker's direction; and not a limb had to be sacrificed.[\[163\]](#)

In a letter written several weeks later, addressed to "My Brethren in Positions of Responsibility," Mrs. White pointed out that

During the night following our interview in my house and out on the lawn under the trees, October 19, 1902, in regard to the work in the Southern field, the Lord instructed me that I had taken a wrong position.[\[164\]](#)

The prophet had erred, and the error was sufficiently serious to warrant the Holy Spirit's stepping in immediately and correcting it so that there would be no permanent damage.

We *do* have a "more sure word of prophecy." If the prophet in his or her humanity errs, and the error is sufficiently serious to affect the direction of the church, the eternal destiny of a member,

or the purity of a doctrine, *God moves in* immediately through the prophet, to correct the error so that there is no permanent damage!

One other instance of Ellen White's reversing herself and her position comes to mind in connection with the premature issuance of her *Testimony* No. 11. The brethren were trying to raise money to launch Battle Creek Sanitarium, and they knew that Ellen White had had a vision on the subject. They felt, logically, that if they could use her counsels in marshaling their arguments on behalf of the sanitarium, they could more quickly raise the funds they so desperately needed.

So they pressured Mrs. White to bring out *Testimony* No. 11 before she was prepared to hand it over to the printer. She acceded reluctantly to their importunings, but later regretted it; and in *Testimony* No. 12, which followed shortly, she publicly admitted that "under these circumstances I yielded my judgment to that of others and wrote what appeared in No. 11 in regard to the Health Institute, being unable then to give all I had seen. In this I did wrong."[\[165\]](#)

Elaborating, she said, "What appeared in *Testimony* No. 11 . . . should not have been given until I was able to write out all I had seen in regard to it."

A comparison of No. 11 and No. 12 shows a slight (but perhaps significant) shift in her theological position with regard to the relationship between health reform and the third angel's message.

In No. 11 she wrote: "The health reform, I was shown, is a part of the third angel's message and is just as closely connected with it as are the arm and hand with the human body."[\[166\]](#) In No. 12 she wrote: "The health reform is closely connected with the work of the third message, yet it is not the message."[\[167\]](#)

Concerning this undue pressure from church leaders, Ellen White vowed never again to be forced into an untenable position of writing on any subject before she felt ready:

I must be allowed to know my own duty better than others can know it for me, especially concerning matters which God has revealed to me. I shall be blamed by some for speaking as I now speak. Others will blame me for not speaking before. . . . Should I delay longer to speak my views and feelings, I should be blamed the more by both those who think I should have spoken sooner and by those also who may think I should not give any cautions. For the good of those at the head of the work, for the good of the cause and the brethren, and to save myself great trials, I have freely spoken.[\[168\]](#)

Conclusion

What do Seventh-day Adventists say, then, about the infallibility and inerrancy of the prophets? "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter."

The Bible *writers* themselves were not infallible *men*. However, the Holy Spirit who inspired them *was* infallible. Their revelations ("this treasure") came directly from an infallible God. These inspired men communicated the message as fallible men, using imperfect human language ("earthen vessels") as the medium of that communication.

With regard to Ellen White, the question was raised while she was still alive, "Do Seventh-day Adventists regard Sister White as infallible?"

The question was answered in the pages of the *Review and Herald* in 1883 by W. H. Littlejohn in a succinct, forthright statement:

No. Neither do they believe that Peter or Paul was infallible. They believe that the Holy Spirit which inspired Peter and Paul was infallible. They believe also that Mrs. White has from time to time received revelations from the Spirit of God, and that revelations made to her by the Spirit of God are just as reliable as revelations made by the same Spirit to other persons.[\[169\]](#)

The Seventh-day Adventist denomination today still holds that Ellen White was reliable, trustworthy, and authoritative as a prophet of the Lord.

The Adventist church maintains that she was inspired in the same manner, and to the same degree, as the prophets of the Bible; and yet, paradoxically, the church holds also that we do not make her writings another Bible, nor do we even consider them an addition to the sacred canon of Scripture.

The explication of this position more fully in a discussion of "the proper relationship of the writings of Ellen G. White to the Scriptures" will be the subject of part 3 of this series.

With Peter one may declare with courage and confidence, "We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day drawn, and the day star arise in your hearts" (2 Peter 1:19).

Part III: The Relationship Between the Ellen G. White Writings and the Bible

Introduction

There is perhaps no subject more misunderstood in Seventh-day Adventist beliefs than the question of the proper relationship between the writings of Ellen G. White and those of Scripture.

A comparison of the writings of Christian authors such as Walter R. Martin,[\[170\]](#) Norman F. Doughty,[\[171\]](#) and others who have written critically about the doctrinal beliefs of Adventists, with some of the statements often quoted from Adventism's own writers which appear to present differing, if not conflicting, positions, makes one wonder if we in the church may not ourselves be responsible for causing some of the confusion outside!

For example, take the definition of two words we have often used in this three-part presentation: *inspiration* and *revelation*. Former Adventist minister Walter Rea, following Webster, sees inspiration as "the divine influence directly or immediately exerted upon the mind or soul of men." Rea labels this as "subjective." Revelation is seen as "God's disclosure of Himself and His will to His creatures"; this Rea labels as "objective."[\[172\]](#)

After further defining *objective* and *subjective*, Rea alleges that this objective revelation possesses authority, whereas subjective inspiration does not. Objective revelation, in Rea's eyes, is concerned with fact and policy, whereas subjective revelation is seen as associated with values and personal opinions.

Rea then draws the conclusion that Ellen White's utterances convey mostly subjective inspiration. That is, they consist mainly of personal values or opinions (either hers, those of persons who influenced her, or authors from whom she copied). As such, her writings possess virtually no authority from God unless they can be proved from other sources, preferably Scripture.[\[173\]](#)

John J. Robertson, in his book, *The White Truth*,[\[174\]](#) takes issue with this subjective/objective dichotomy. For him, "Revelation represents God's activity as the *sender* of a message to His chosen prophet. Inspiration represents God's activity upon or within the prophet, who then becomes the transmitter of that revelation to His people."[\[175\]](#)

This writer also takes issue with the subjective/objective dichotomy projected by Walter Rea, but would prefer to define the terms--as was done in part 1 of this series--somewhat differently than Robertson. Borrowing in part from Raoul Dederen, we suggested that inspiration may be thought of as a *process* by which God enables the prophet to receive and communicate His message, whereas revelation is seen as the *content* of the message thus communicated.[\[176\]](#)

A stranger to Adventism, reading these three sets of definitions, might perhaps be forgiven for wondering if the church really has its theological act together! It has been much the same with our pronouncements on the relationship of the writings of Ellen White to Scripture.

Inside the church there has also been some confusion about, as well as abuse and misuse of, Mrs. White's writings. Some members have indeed made a second Bible of them, often seeming to make Mrs. White the more important of the two. Some ministers and teachers have quoted Mrs. White ten or more times for every quotation from Scripture; some have even preached "freight-train" sermons (the locomotive is the sermon's introduction, followed by a string of freight cars--quotations from Mrs. White; bringing up the rear is the caboose, the conclusion of the sermon). The frustration and irritation experienced by a motorist who is held up by a long, slow freight train is almost identical to the feelings of exasperation and anger on the part of one forced to listen to this kind of homiletical monstrosity.

Mrs. White's writings have also been misused by parents, teachers, and preachers who have used statements from them as a theological club with which to bludgeon an offender into submission.

However, such misuse, whether by proponents of the "second-Bible" view (or even the "addendum to the Bible" idea) or by other misapplications, is not the position of the Seventh-day Adventist church even if these positions are adopted by some of its well-intentioned, though ill-informed, members. And, as John Quincy Adams was wont to say, "Arguments, drawn from the abuse of any thing, are not admissible against its use."[\[177\]](#) In other words, "Don't throw out the baby with the bath water!"

What, then, *is* the position of the denomination with regard to the proper relationship between the writings of Mrs. White and sacred Scripture? As I understand it, we hold that Ellen G. White was inspired in the same manner and to the identical degree as were the prophets of the Bible; but--and this will be paradoxical to some--we do *not* make of her writings a second Bible, or even an addition to the sacred canon of God's Word. Let me explain.

I. God's Word Through the Prophets

Seventh-day Adventists generally believe that the sacred canon of Scripture was closed with the inclusion of the Apocalypse of John. And the canon, therefore, is both complete and sufficient in itself. In other words, it is possible for an individual to find Jesus Christ, to obtain salvation and eternal life, without ever having heard of Ellen G. White or ever having read one word of her writings.

Adventists, further, have traditionally held since their earliest days that the Scriptures are the *source* of our doctrinal beliefs, the *authority* of those beliefs, and the *test* of all beliefs (and all religious experience, as well).

However, having said all that, it is also clearly evident from Scripture that God also used a number of prophetic messengers, many of whom were contemporaries of the Bible writers, but whose utterances do not form a part of the canon itself. Some of them did their work during Old Testament times, some during New Testament times. It seems evident that their prophetic ministries involved the same kinds of work as that of the Bible writers. And this list of noncanonical prophets included women as well as men--five such as mentioned in each of the Testaments.[\[178\]](#)

The first prophet mentioned in Scripture was Enoch, "the seventh from Adam" (Jude 14); thus the "spiritual gift" of prophecy was among the earliest of the so-called "gifts of the Holy Spirit" to be given to the human family. During the first 2,500 years of human history all prophetic utterances were oral. Moses marks a transition point: He was the first literary prophet. From his time onward both varieties of prophet flourished.

Literary but Noncanonical Prophets

Not all of the literary prophets, however, found themselves as authors of works that would later be gathered together in the canons of the Old or New Testaments. At least eight literary but non-canonical prophets are mentioned by name in the Old Testament. Jasher was the first, in the fifteenth century B.C., perhaps a mere 40 years after Moses' time. Although the Book of Jasher is mentioned in both Joshua 10:13 and 2 Samuel 1:18, this book was not included in the Old Testament.

For-and-one-half centuries later, "Nathan the prophet" and "Gad the seer" wrote books[\[179\]](#) during the reign as King David; but while the latter's psalms were incorporated into the Old Testament, the books of the former were not. About two decades later Ahijah the Shilonite authored prophetically inspired writings,[\[180\]](#) and another 20 years later along came the prophet Shemaiah[\[181\]](#) and Iddo the Seer[\[182\]](#) as literary but noncanonical prophets. Then some 20 years afterward, Jehu wrote an inspired prophetic book[\[183\]](#) and the last of the literary but noncanonical prophets (at least as referred to in the Bible) was Elijah[\[184\]](#) in the early ninth century B.C.

The question immediately comes to mind, if these men were truly inspired, why were their writings not included in the Old Testament? Some have suggested a ready solution: Their writings, though inspired, were not *as* inspired as those of the biblical authors. This idea of degrees of inspiration has a long history in Adventism; a variation of the theme has surfaced in our own time.[\[185\]](#)

One hypothesis of equal (if not superior) validity is that the messages of these literary but non-canonical prophetic writers were of a local nature: They were written to meet an immediate situation in their own day. The Holy Spirit in His infinitely superior wisdom felt that it was unnecessary to preserve those messages for later periods in history.

Degrees of Inspiration?

We now offer three arguments against the view of degrees of inspiration (or degrees of revelation):

a. From empirical observation: The scriptural record does not differentiate between the canonical and noncanonical prophets as to the source of their messages, or the "chain of command" employed in communicating the messages from the Godhead to the prophet. There is no difference in the method of communication; no difference with regard to the physical phenomena associated with a prophet in vision; no difference in the kinds of messages communicated--encouragement, counsel, admonition, reproof, rebuke; no difference in the kinds of "imperfections" in the "earthen vessels"; no difference in the responses the messages elicited--some hearers heeded and were blessed, others disregarded and paid the consequences. Admittedly this is arguing from silence; but is it unreasonable to hold that the burden of proof must rest squarely upon the person who would seek to establish different degrees of inspiration?

b. From logic: To raise the question of degrees of inspiration (or of revelation) immediately creates the necessity of determining just who will do the classifying. Such an arbiter must of necessity be raised not merely to the level of the prophet, but must be raised to a level *above* that of the prophet, since he sits in judgment, decreeing that one part of the prophet's writings is more inspired than another.

This problem is further compounded because no man can raise himself even to the level of a prophet--much less a position above a prophet. Paul clearly declares that the *Holy Spirit* divides the spiritual gifts "severally" to every man "according to his own will" (1 Corinthians 12:11; Hebrews 2:4). "No man taketh this honour unto himself"; the most any human, on his own, can do is to "covet earnestly the best gifts" (1 Corinthians 12:31). Surely no mere human should presumptuously place himself over the prophets to determine such a question as this!

c. From faith: I accept Ellen White as an inspired prophet of the Lord, and she once declared that there was no such thing as degrees of inspiration. And that, if there were no other argument, would be sufficient to settle the question for me.

No less a person than the president of the General Conference, George I. Butler, once discoursed on the subject of inspiration and revelation. In his ten articles, which were published from January 8 through June 3 of 1884 in the *Review and Herald*, Butler posited the idea that there were "differences in degrees" of inspiration.[\[186\]](#)

Ellen White remained silent for five years. Was she, charitably, hoping that he would discover his own blunder and correct it, thus sparing himself (and her) the embarrassment of a public rebuke?

We do not know; however, in 1889 she wrote a rather trenchant response:

Both in the [Battle Creek] Tabernacle and in the college the subject of inspiration has been taught, and finite men have taken it upon themselves to say that some things in the Scriptures were inspired and some were not. I was shown that the Lord did not inspire the articles on inspiration published in the *Review*, neither did He approve their endorsement before our youth in the college [there]. When men venture to criticize the Word of God, they venture on sacred, holy ground, and had better fear and tremble and hide their wisdom as foolishness. God sets no man to pronounce judgment on His Word, selecting some things as inspired and discrediting others as uninspired. The testimonies have been treated in the same way; but God is not in this.[\[187\]](#)

Degrees of Authority--An Untenable Position

Some favoring the idea of degrees of inspiration (or revelation) have recently advanced the idea that prophets also have degrees of authority. The latter position is as untenable as the former, largely for the same reasons. Empirically, there is no evidence from Scripture that one group of prophets had more--or less--authority than another group. However, if there were, indeed, degrees of authority, how would these be determined? And by whom?

King David's experience with two literary but noncanonical prophets who ministered during his reign would seem to provide evidence against degrees of inspiration or authority.

Nathan. In part 2 we discussed the problem of Nathan's enthusiastically endorsing David's plan to build the temple without first checking with God to see whether the plan met *His* divine approval. It did not, and that night God spoke to Nathan telling him to go back to the king and correct the earlier message (2 Samuel 7:1-17).

Five chapters later we find Nathan back at the palace, at God's direction, to rebuke David for his twin sins of adultery with Bathsheba and the murder of her husband, Uriah. Using the guise of a parable Nathan courageously drives home to David's heart the enormity of the monarch's crimes; and David, convicted by the Holy Spirit through His messenger, confesses and repents. Nathan then assures David that God has accepted his response and has forgiven him (2 Samuel 12:1-14).

Nathan warns, however, that inexorable consequences will result from David's acts. These consequences will still take place in spite of God's generous and merciful forgiveness (vss. 15-23). Later, out of his genuine repentance and remorse, David penned Psalm 51, in which he appeals to God to "blot out my transgressions, . . . cleanse me from my sin, . . . Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence, and take not thy holy spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and . . . Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee" (vss. 1, 2, 10-13). And God granted him this heartfelt wish.

Nathan and David were both prophets. A few hundred years later when the Old Testament canon would be drawn up (perhaps under the supervision of Ezra), the Book of Nathan would not be included, but the psalms of David would be. Thus David would become a canonical prophet, Nathan a noncanonical prophet. We know of this encounter not because it is found in the Book of Nathan, but because the author of 2 Samuel 12 included it in his book.[\[188\]](#)

If David perchance had been given a vision of the future, in which he was informed of his subsequent status and that of Nathan, and if David had subscribed to the fanciful theory of degrees of inspiration, the following exchange might logically have taken place:

Upon being rebuked by Nathan, David might have raised his hand in caution and said, "Wait a minute, Nathan. You must show more respect and deference to me. Yes, you're a prophet; but you will be a forgotten noncanonical prophet a few centuries from now. I'll be a canonical prophet; Christians three millennia from now will be singing my psalms in their churches. My fifty-first Psalm of repentance will encourage the hearts of millions down through the ages. But 3,000 years from now no one will know a single word of anything that you wrote in the Book of Nathan!"

David might even have chided Nathan somewhat, in an effort to defend himself, by adding, "Be careful now, Nathan. Remember, you didn't get it quite straight awhile back when you delivered your prophetic approval of my plan to build the Temple. Are you sure you've got it right now?"

What about degrees of authority? Well, the story begins very simply, "And the Lord *sent Nathan* to David." Did Nathan have authority? Whose authority? How much authority? Those simple words quoted from 2 Samuel 12:1 answer these questions in a most forceful way.

The experience of Gad, the other literary but noncanonical prophet who ministered to David, is useful at this point.

In 1 Chronicles 21 we read that Satan tempted David to sin by numbering Israel. The king's general, Joab, protested in vain. Israel was numbered (vss. 1-6), "and God was displeased with this thing; therefore he smote Israel" (vs. 7).

In the very next verse, David engages God directly in conversation. He confesses his foolishness and guilt and asks for pardon. But in verse 9 God does not address David directly, as He surely could have, for prophets have a special "pipeline" with the Almighty.

No, "the Lord spake unto Gad, David's seer." Since David would be a canonical prophet, why didn't God communicate directly with him? Why did He choose, instead, a noncanonical prophet?

Notice, further, what God said to Gad: "Go and tell David, saying, Thus saith the Lord . . ." (vs. 10). Surely this phrase indicates most forcefully the authority of Gad's message. Did Gad need any more authority than a "thus saith the Lord"? *Is there any more authority than a "thus saith the Lord"?*

What did God tell Gad to do? He was instructed to tell David that God was now offering the king his choice of three punishments: three years' famine, three months of destruction by his enemies, or three days of pestilence in the land (vs. 12).

God also told Gad to tell David, "Now therefore advise thyself what word I shall bring again to him that sent me" (vs. 12). David had the unique prophetic "pipeline"; but he was not to use it in this instance; rather, he was to communicate back to God through Gad.

Again, there is no evidence that David claimed inspiration superior to that of Gad. Instead, "David went up at the saying of Gad, which he spake in the name of the Lord" (vs. 19).

It is absurd to speak of degrees of inspiration. Either a prophet is inspired, or he is not. I recently attended a meeting in which there was a large number of women who were expecting to bear children at some time in the near future. Some were well advanced in pregnancy; some were in its early stages. Sometimes we speak of a woman in the first trimester of pregnancy as being "a

little bit pregnant." But the expression is not only inexact, it is incorrect. You have never seen any woman who was a "little bit pregnant." Either she is pregnant, or she is *not* pregnant!

Likewise, you have never seen a prophet who was a "little bit" inspired.

It is equally absurd to speak of degrees of authority. On February 2, 1980, respected Adventist scholar Don F. Neufeld^[189] preached a sermon in the Takoma Park, Maryland, Seventh-day Adventist church entitled "When Jesus Speaks." For this, the last message he ever preached,^[190] Neufeld took for his text Revelation 19:10: "For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." In his message he discoursed on the various possible renderings of those phrases familiar to Adventists, "the testimony of Jesus" and "the spirit of prophecy." And in his conclusion he drove home a very cogent point:

Through His witness to the New Testament prophets, Jesus predicted that prophetic activity, as one of many spiritual gifts, would continue in the church. In other words, the testimony of Jesus to His people was not to cease once the books that make up our present canon of Scripture would be written. Prophetic activity would continue beyond the close of the canon.

This brings us to an important question. If in all prophetic activity it is Jesus who is speaking, whether in Old Testament times, in New Testament times, or in post-New Testament times, *can we logically draw a distinction and say that what Jesus said in any one period is more or less authoritative than what He said in any other period*, at least with reference to the generations involved?

For example, could something that Jesus said in the first century A.D. be more or less authoritative than what He said in the 19th century A.D.? The answer, I think, is obvious. It doesn't make any sense to argue for degrees of inspiration, as if what Jesus said in one generation was more inspired than what He said in another.^[191]

Seventh-day Adventists generally hold that Ellen G. White is best understood in the role of the literary but noncanonical prophets of the Bible. As such, her writings were inspired by the Holy Spirit in the same way and to the same degree as the writings that were incorporated into the Bible; yet we do not make a second Bible of them, nor even consider them as an addition to the sacred canon of Scripture.

Let us note next how Ellen White saw her writings in relation to the Bible.

II. The "Greater Light"/"Lesser Light" Analogy

In an "open letter" to her fellow church members, written December 6, 1902, and published in the *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* of January 20, 1903, Mrs. White was looking ahead to the new year and was especially burdened about the colporteur work, which was languishing at the time. "I have been instructed that the canvassing work [door-to-door sales of Seventh-day Adventist literature] is to be revived, and that it is to be carried forward with increasing success."^[192]

She expresses appreciation for the united efforts of the laity and literature evangelists in promoting *Christ's Object Lessons* (the royalties from which she dedicated toward lifting the indebtedness of Battle Creek College), and urges giving greater attention to the circulation of her other works. Highlighting the importance of this missionary endeavor, she adds:

Sister White is not the originator of these books. They contain the instruction that during her life-work God has been giving her. They contain the precious, comforting light that God has graciously given his servant to be given to the world. From their pages this light is to shine into the hearts of men and women, leading them to the Saviour. The Lord has declared that these books are to be scattered throughout the world.[\[193\]](#)

Then, by way of amplifying this idea that "light is to shine" from her writings, and to demonstrate the relationship between those books and the writings of Scripture, she employed an oft-quoted metaphor:

The Lord has sent his people much instruction, line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little, and there a little. Little heed is given to the Bible, and *the Lord has given a lesser light to lead men and women to the greater light.*[\[194\]](#)

Here Mrs. White makes incidental reference to Genesis 1:16: "And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night." By analogy she is saying that the Bible is the "greater light," and her writings are the "lesser light."

Before examining this analogy in detail to determine what Mrs. White intended to teach by it (and, of equal importance, what she did *not* intend to convey), let us first examine the question of how Mrs. White herself viewed this "greater light" of Holy Scripture.

Synthesizing a helpful list provided by Denton E. Rebock[\[195\]](#) and some remarks in three paragraphs from the introduction to *The Great Controversy Between Christ and Satan*,[\[196\]](#) we note Mrs. White's position on Scripture, and then how she saw her writings vis-à-vis the Bible:

a. Nature of the Bible

1. The entire Bible is the inspired word of God.
2. The "truth of God is found in His word." No one need "seek elsewhere for present truth."

b. Purpose of the Bible

1. The Bible sets the pattern for Christian living.
2. It contains "comfort, guidance, counsel, and the plan of salvation as clear as a sunbeam."
3. It is fitted for the needs of all--rich and poor, learned and illiterate, "all ages and all classes."
4. It contains all the knowledge that is "necessary for salvation." Therefore, men should "cling" to their Bibles, believe and obey them; and then "not one" of them would be lost.

c. Primacy of the Bible

1. It is to be accepted "as an authoritative, infallible revelation" of God's will.

2. As such, it is "the standard of character, the revealer of doctrines, and the test of experience."

d. Role of Spiritual Gifts (Prophecy):

1. The existence of the Bible "has not rendered needless the continual presence and guiding of the Holy Spirit."
2. Rather, Jesus promised His followers the gift of the Holy Spirit to "open the word to His servants" and "to illumine and apply its teachings."
3. Since consistency is an attribute of Deity, and since it was the Holy Spirit who originally inspired the Bible, it is impossible that the teaching of the Holy Spirit through the gifts of the Spirit would be contrary to what the Bible says.
4. The Holy Spirit was not, is not, and never will be given "to supercede the Bible" because "the word of God is the standard by which all teaching and experience must be tested."
5. The *Testimonies* were given only because man has neglected his Bible; and these are given to direct him back to the Bible.

(a) They are not given as an addition to the Word of God.

(b) They are not to take the place of the Word of God.

Metaphors to Interpret the Analogy

There are perhaps four metaphors that can be used to help us understand what Mrs. White intended to teach from her "greater light"/"lesser light" analogy (and in so doing keep us from misinterpreting it):

1. Time and geographical relationships. The Bible is God's universal message for all men for all time. Its 66 books were written by approximately 40 literary, canonical prophets over a period of approximately 1,500 years, and the Bible has represented the will of God for all mankind for between two and three millennia. On the other hand, the literary but noncanonical prophets--eight are mentioned in the Old Testament, and Adventists today put Ellen White into this category--wrote primarily for their own time and people. Thus the canonical prophets may be seen in this narrow distinction to be the "greater light," and the noncanonical prophets may be seen as the "lesser light."

2. Tester/testee relationship. [\[197\]](#) Every nation in the world, from ancient Egypt with its Pharaonic cubit to modern nations with their meter and kilogram, have maintained national standards of line and mass measurement in which precision and accuracy are of paramount importance. Without such, no nation could function. Commerce and trade, the building professions, and mass production would be an impossibility.

A visitor to the museum adjoining the library of the United States National Bureau of Standards at Gaithersburg, Maryland, will see on display the original National Prototype Meter No. 27 which was the U.S. national reference for line measurement from 1893 until 1960 (when the

meter subsequently was defined in terms of the light emitted by electrically excited atoms of the gas krypton-86).

After the Treaty of the Meter was signed at Sèvres, France, in 1875, the International Bureau of Weights and Measures made 31 prototype meters and kilograms of platinum (90 percent) and iridium (10 percent), a substance especially noted not only for exceptional durability but also for a low coefficient of expansion and contraction. The signatory powers drew lots (the U.S. thereby acquired Meters Nos. 21 and 17 and Kilograms Nos. 4 and 20), and these new standards were sent to the national capitals of the participating nations. There these were preserved in an environment in which humidity and temperature were stringently controlled. (The technician who works with the national kilogram in Gaithersburg, for example, is not allowed to touch the metal weight--moisture from her fingers could affect its weight! She must also wear an aluminized apron to deflect body heat away from the standard.)

In addition to the national reference standards of length and mass, the National Bureau of Weights and Measures also has "working standards" of exactly the same length and weight, made of the same materials. If you suspect your yardstick or ruler is an incorrect length, you could take it to Gaithersburg and compare it with one of the working standards.

Incidentally, the working standards are indistinguishable from the national reference standard; the only difference between them is that one was arbitrarily chosen by lot for its elevated position as *the* standard of the nation.[\[198\]](#)

Now to the application: The national standard could be seen as the "greater light"; the working standard could be seen as the "lesser light." Or in an equally valid analogy, the working standard could be seen as the "greater light"; the ruler or yardstick you bring to have tested would thus be the "lesser light."

The national yardstick is never tested by your hardware-store yardstick; likewise, the Scriptures are never tested by the writings of Ellen G. White. However, if and when our store-bought articles of measurement are tested by the authority and found to be totally accurate and reliable, we do not hesitate to use them as an authoritative standard--but always in relationship and reference to the ultimate accepted standard (the "greater light").

3. *Forty candles/one candle.*[\[199\]](#) Place 40 identical lighted candles at one end of a table, and another lighted candle at the other. (The Bible was written by about 40 different authors, and Ellen G. White's writings, of course, by one author.) Since 40 candlepower is greater than one candlepower, so the Scriptures may be seen to be the "greater light," while the writings of Ellen White are seen as the "lesser light."

It is especially important in this context, however, to remember that what is emitted, by either the 40 candles or by the single candle, is "light." And Ellen White's analogy of the sun and the moon as superior/inferior lights is particularly apt because the light that is radiated by the two orbs in the heavens is all the same kind of light. The moon has no light of its own; it simply reflects the light of the sun. Light is light; whether from the sun--or the Son. And if the light that is in you goes out in darkness, "how great is that darkness!" (Matthew 6:23).

It is also worth remembering that these metaphors we call parables are generally intended to teach one truth and one truth only. If pressed too far, they will break down. For example, while Ellen White is to some extent well represented by the one candle, the fact remains that the bulk

of her writing exceeds by many times the total word content of the Old and the New Testaments combined (the "greater light"). The analogy should not be carried too far!

4. *National Map/State Map.* Many travelers in the United States take with them an atlas to aid them in navigating the nation's highways. Many atlases have a double-page map of the 48 contiguous States at the beginning, followed by individual single-page state maps. The national map would thus be seen as the "greater light," the State map as the "lesser light."

Two applications are worth making here: There is no disagreement between the representation of Maryland, for example, on the two-page national map and on that of the single-page state of Maryland map. However, there is substantially more detail on the "lesser light" state map of Maryland than there is on the "greater light" national map.

In concluding our discussion of this "greater light"/"lesser light" analogy, it is probably worth noting that, on the basis of Ellen White's own statements, it would seem to be an improper distortion to assert (as do some modern critics) that by this figure she meant that the Bible had greater inspiration or authority than her writings.[\[200\]](#)

The Analogy of the Telescope

Apart from the "greater light"/"lesser light" metaphors, another analogy, also drawn from the world of nature, has been particularly helpful in defining the relationship between the writings of Ellen White and those of Scripture. It was developed by Mrs. S.M.I. Henry, an "evangelist" for the Woman's Christian Temperance Union in the mid-nineteenth century and a convert to Seventh-day Adventism while a patient at the Battle Creek Sanitarium in 1896. (She subsequently found divine healing through prayer.)[\[201\]](#)

Mrs. Henry wrote, in an extended and fascinating autobiographical account, about her initial misunderstanding of the role of the *Testimonies*, her further disillusionment at discovering that many Adventists in Battle Creek gave only lip-service to belief, her personal struggle to understand the function of the spiritual gift of prophecy in modern times, and her subsequent enlightenment as a result of a season of special prayer. Her study led her initially to view Ellen G. White's writings as a lens--and subsequently, as a telescope--through which to look at the Bible.

Developing the analogy, she said that these writings were also "subject to all telescopic conditions and limitations":

Clouds may intervene between it and a heaven full of stars,--clouds of unbelief, of contention; Satan may blow tempests all about it; it may be blurred by the breath of our own selfishness; the dust of superstition may gather upon it; we may meddle with it, and turn it aside from the field; it may be pointed away toward empty space; it may be turned end for end, so that everything is so diminished that we can recognize nothing. We may change the focus so that everything is distorted out of all harmonious proportions, and made hideous. It may be so shortened that nothing but a great piece of opaque glass shall appear to our gaze. If the *lens* is mistaken for the *field* we can receive but a very narrow conception of the most magnificent spectacle with which the heavens ever invited our gaze, but in its proper office as a medium of enlarged and clearer vision, as a *telescope*, the Testimony has a wonderfully beautiful and holy office.

Everything depends upon our relation to it and the use which we make of it. In itself it is only a glass through which to look; but in the hand of the Divine Director, properly mounted, set at the right angle and adjusted to the eye of the observer, with a field, clear of clouds, it will reveal *truth* such as will quicken the blood, gladden the heart, and open a wide door of expectation. It will reduce nebulae to constellations; faraway points of light to planets of the first magnitude; and to suns burning with glory.

The failure has been in understanding what the Testimonies are and how to use them. They are not the heavens, palpitating with countless orbs of truth, but they do lead the eye and give it power to penetrate into the glories of the mysterious living word of God.[\[202\]](#)

Denton Rebok attests that "Sister White herself said that Mrs. S.M.I. Henry had caught the relationship between the writings of the Spirit of Prophecy and the Bible as clearly and as accurately as anyone could ever put into words."[\[203\]](#)

A telescope doesn't put more stars into the heavens; it simply reveals more clearly the stars that are already there. And Ellen White's writings, to change the figure, may also be seen as a microscope that helps "to magnify and make clear the details of the truths of the Word" of God.[\[204\]](#) Likewise, the writings of Ellen White add detail and make clear the teachings of the Scriptures.

III. The Jemison Model of Relationship

The late T. H. Jemison, in a work that for decades was the standard Seventh-day Adventist college textbook for prophetic guidance, devotes an entire chapter to "The Ellen G. White Writings and the Bible" in *A Prophet Among You*.

Quoting extensively from Ellen White's own words, chiefly in the chapter "The Nature and Influence of the 'Testimonies,'" [\[205\]](#) Jemison shows that Mrs. White saw her writings as fulfilling eight functions, which could readily be subsumed under three categories:

A. To Direct Attention to the Bible:

1. To exalt the Bible.
2. To attract minds to the Bible.
3. To call attention to neglected truths.

B. To Aid in Understanding the Bible:

4. To further impress truths already revealed.
5. To awaken minds.
6. To simplify truths.

C. To Help in Applying Bible Principles in Our Lives:

7. To bring out principles and help apply them.
8. To instruct in details.[\[206\]](#)

Jemison's concluding paragraph in this chapter is especially instructive. After posing the question, what is meant by such Ellen White expressions as "additional truth is not brought out"[\[207\]](#) and "the written testimonies are not to give new light"[\[208\]](#) and "are there no

descriptions given and details enumerated in the Ellen White books that are not mentioned in the Bible?" Jemison responds:

Certainly, or there would be little purpose in the giving of these messages. Are these not "additional truth" and "new light"? Not at all. *The writings introduce no new topic, no new revelation, no new doctrine. They simply give additional details and round out subjects already a part of the Scripture record.* The whole realm of spiritual truth is encompassed by the Bible. There is no need for more to be added. But further details, incidents, and applications made in these modern writings lead to keener perception and deeper understanding of the truth already revealed.[\[209\]](#)

The Two "Special Resurrections"

An illustration of how those writings give us not only additional details but also suggest new relationships between certain specific passages of Scripture is seen in the treatment Ellen White gives in her discussion of the two special resurrections spoken of in the Bible.

1. The special resurrection at Easter. Twice in the Bible, once in Matthew's Gospel and once in Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians, there is mentioned an intriguing subject with tantalizingly little detail: the special resurrection that took place on Easter Sunday morning and the amazing aftermath, 40 days later at the Ascension.

These are the facts as they are found in Scripture: In Matthew 27:51-53 we are told that (a) there was an earthquake at the moment of Christ's death; (b) It opened a number of graves; (c) after Christ arose Sunday morning "many" were raised to life; (d) these persons were identified as "saints" (in the Bible a saint is not some super-righteous, miracle-working holy person, but rather an ordinary, garden-variety Christian, a sinner saved by grace); (e) the persons raised from the dead then went into Jerusalem ("the holy city"); (f) they appeared to "many" of the citizens of that place; and in Ephesians 4:8 (margin) we are further told that (g) they ascended with Christ to heaven 40 days after they were raised from the dead.

Ellen White, however, draws back the veil and gives nearly a dozen additional facts of identification and information:

- During their natural lifetimes they were "co-laborers with God."[\[210\]](#)
- They were martyrs; "at the cost of their lives"[\[211\]](#) "they had borne their testimony unflinchingly for the truth."[\[212\]](#)
- They represented "every age" of history "from creation down even to the days of Christ."[\[213\]](#) (Abel was the first martyr; John the Baptist the last martyr of record before Calvary.)
- They differed in stature and form, "some being more noble in appearance than others. . . . Those who lived in the days of Noah and Abraham resembled the angels in form, comeliness, and strength."[\[214\]](#) [Adam was more than twice the height of men now living; Eve a little shorter (her head came a little above his shoulders)].[\[215\]](#)
- These were raised to immortality;[\[216\]](#) whereas the three persons raised during Christ's pre-Calvary ministry were not raised to eternal life, and subsequently died again.[\[217\]](#)

- Christ was the One who raised them to life.[\[218\]](#)
- Their work was to witness to the resurrection of Christ. They were witnesses that the priests could not silence.[\[219\]](#) Their testimony contradicted the perjury of the bribed Roman soldiers.[\[220\]](#)
- Their message was: The sacrifice for man is now complete; Jesus, whom the Jews crucified, is now risen from the dead.[\[221\]](#) The proof? "We be risen with Him."[\[222\]](#)
- They were the living fulfillment of the prophecy of Isaiah 26:19.[\[223\]](#)
- Jesus presented them in person to His Father in heaven as the first fruits of all the righteous dead who someday would be brought back to life.[\[224\]](#)

It is true that in Ellen White's writings we have "no new topic, no new revelation, no new doctrine"; but we do have a great deal of new information!

3. *The special resurrection just before the second coming of Christ.* Four passages of Scripture speak, directly or by implication, of a special resurrection just before the second coming of Christ.[\[225\]](#) Ellen White interprets for us: There will be three classes of people--(a) all those who have died in the faith under the third angel's message, keeping the Sabbath; (b) the crucifiers of Jesus who did not find salvation before they died 19 centuries ago; and (c) the most violent opponents of Christ's truth and His people.[\[226\]](#) Only the first two categories are reasonably inferred from Scripture, the third comes to us as additional, extrabiblical information, from the prophetic gift in our own time.

Ellen White and Development of Seventh-day Adventist Doctrine

Many of those in the Seventh-day Adventist church today who express concern (if not doubt) about the authority of Ellen White in the church generally focus their interest on the issue of doctrinal authority. This being the case, it is especially helpful for us to examine, successively, how we as a people arrived at our doctrine, what role Ellen White played in the development of these doctrines, and how Ellen White herself viewed the nature of her contribution to that process.

The Sabbath Conferences

Most Seventh-day Adventist church historians would probably agree that the doctrinal framework of the denomination was largely hammered out during a series of long weekend gatherings that we today call Bible conferences, but which in earlier times were generally known as Sabbath conferences.

The historians, however, appear to be in less agreement regarding the time of when these gatherings were held. LeRoy Edwin Froom, author of the monumental, exhaustive four-volume work, *The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*, in a chapter entitled "Sabbath Conferences Consolidate Emerging Movement,"[\[227\]](#) seems satisfied to settle for merely the six conferences held in 1848:

1. Rocky Hill, Connecticut, April 20-24, at Albert Belden's home. Attendance: about 50. Speakers: H. S. Gurney, Joseph Bates (the Sabbath and the law), and James White (the dawning significance of the third angel's message, its scope, and specifications).

2. *Volney, New York, August 18*, in David Arnold's carriage house. Attendance: about 35. Speakers: Joseph Bates (the Sabbath), and James White (the parable of Matthew 25:1-13).
3. *Port Gibson, New York, August 27 and 28*, in Hiram Edson's barn. No specific details available.
4. *Rocky Hill, Connecticut, September 8 and 9*, in Albert Belden's home. No specific details available.
5. *Topsham, Maine, October 20-22*, in the Stockbridge Howland home. Discussion centered around the possibility of publishing a paper, but since the participants were without funds, no concrete action was taken.
6. *Dorchester, Massachusetts, November 18*, Otis Nichols' home. A further discussion on publishing a paper took place, and Ellen White received affirmative counsel from the Lord regarding this literature ministry.

The editors of the *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia*, however, see a three-year period as involved in doctrinal formation, rather than merely the beginning year of 1848; and they point out that in 1849 there were another six conferences (James and Ellen White attended at least three of them: Paris, Maine, in September, and Oswego and Centerport, New York, in November). And in 1850 there were a total of ten Sabbath conferences, eight of which the Whites attended.[\[228\]](#)

The conferences were attended mostly by those who had been caught up in the Millerite movement and were unwilling, after the great disappointment of October 22, 1844, to throw over their former experience (as many others had done). Interested friends of these ex-Millerites also attended the meetings, which might run over Friday and Sabbath, or Sabbath and Sunday, or Thursday through Sunday.

Keeping in mind that the Millerite movement was probably the most ecumenical movement of the entire nineteenth century, it is not surprising that this remnant of it comprised a group of people with widely divergent theological viewpoints. Commenting upon the first of the 1848 conferences, James White, in a letter written afterward to Stockbridge Howland, said of the 50 who attended, "They were not all fully in the truth."[\[229\]](#)

Regarding the second of the Sabbath conferences (and the first general meeting to be held in western New York), Ellen White, in describing the positions of the approximately 35 attendees, wrote that "hardly two agreed. Some were holding serious errors, and each strenuously urged his own views, declaring that they were according to the Scriptures."[\[230\]](#) The problems discussed did not center so much on whether a belief could be found in Scripture, but rather on what the Scripture *meant* by what it said. Yet, invariably, when the weekend was over, there was unity of belief. What happened to bring this unanimity out of such diversity?

First, there was earnest Bible study and prayer. Writing in 1904, more than a half-century after the events, Ellen White still had vivid memories of the conferences. She wrote about them because "many of our people now do not realize how firmly the foundation of our faith has been laid." She identified by name some of the more prominent participants "who searched for the truth as for hidden treasure." Concerning her own participation, she added:

I met with them, and we studied and prayed earnestly. Often we remained together until late at night, and sometimes through the entire night, praying for light and studying the Word. Again and again these brethren came together to study the Bible, in order that they might know its meaning, and be prepared to teach it with power.[\[231\]](#)

But Bible study and prayer alone were not enough to convince the participants. These hardy farmers and tradesmen held tenaciously to their pet theological theories, hardly budging an inch. Concerning this Mrs. White added:

These strange differences of opinion rolled a heavy weight upon me. I saw that many errors were being presented as truth. It seemed to me that God was dishonored. Great grief pressed upon my spirits, and I fainted under the burden. Some feared that I was dying. Brethren Bates, Chamberlain, Gurney, Edson, and my husband prayed for me. The Lord heard the prayers of His servants, and I revived.[\[232\]](#)

In addition to earnest and extended Bible study and prayer the conferences saw the direct intervention of the Holy Spirit; but this intervention did not come until the participants had gone as far as they could go. Let us note next, then, the work of the Holy Spirit as He worked through the human vessels at these conferences at which our doctrinal positions were established.

The Role of the Visions in Doctrinal Formation

The function of the visions given at the conferences appears to have been to (a) correct the brethren if they were on the wrong track, or (b) confirm and corroborate if they were on the right track, but (c) never to initiate doctrinal formulation. As Arthur L. White would later state in point No. 12 (of 21) "Helpful Points in the Interpretation and Use of the Ellen G. White Writings":

The counsels are not given to take the place of faith, initiative, hard work, or Bible study. God did not use the Spirit of Prophecy to make us dependent or weak. Rather, the counsels are to make us strong by encouraging us to study the word of God, and by encouraging us to move forward.[\[233\]](#)

Wrote Ellen White concerning this stage of doctrinal development:

When they came to the point in their study where they said, "We can do nothing more," the Spirit of the Lord would come upon me, I would be taken off in vision, and a clear explanation of the passages we had been studying would be given me, with instruction as to how we are to labor and teach effectively. Thus light was given that helped us to understand the scriptures in regard to Christ, His mission, and His priesthood. A line of truth extending from that time to the time when we shall enter the city of God, was made plain to me, and I gave to others the instruction that the Lord had given to me.[\[234\]](#)

Speaking of the second Sabbath conference in particular, and of the work and place of the visions, Ellen White wrote in her autobiography:

The light from heaven then rested upon me, and I was soon lost to earthly things. My accompanying angel presented before me some of the errors of those present, and also the truth in contrast with their errors. These discordant views, which they claimed were in harmony with the Scriptures, were only according to their opinion of Bible teaching; and I was bidden to tell

them that they should yield their errors, and unite upon the truths of the third angel's message.[\[235\]](#)

What caused those post-Millerite Adventists to accept the visions of this young prophet hardly into her twenties? Perhaps three reasons were instrumental:

First, there was the content of the visions. They were relevant and helpful in solving the immediate problems with which the conferences were dealing.

Second, there was the awesome physical phenomena accompanying an open vision. This was never a *test* of authenticity, because Satan can and does counterfeit physical phenomena, but it surely was an evidence of supernatural activity.

Third, there was the continuing phenomena of the prophet's mind being "locked" when she was not in vision. This apparently lasted for a period of "two to three years"--concurrent with the Sabbath conferences--and during this time when *not* in vision, all Mrs. White could do was to report what she had seen in vision; she could not enter into the subsequent discussions of either the meaning of what she had seen or of Bible truth generally. "My mind was locked, as it were," she wrote years later, "and I could not comprehend the meaning of the scriptures we were studying." And it remained thus "locked" until all of the principal points of our faith had been systematically developed.[\[236\]](#)

She also wrote of the effect of this on those attending the conferences: "The brethren knew that when not in vision, I could not understand these matters, *and they accepted as light direct from heaven the revelations given.*"[\[237\]](#)

From her perspective at the age of 77 years, Ellen White's observation concerning her feelings toward this phenomena in which her mind was locked is even more poignant: "This was one of the greatest sorrows of my life."[\[238\]](#)

Largely because of the helpful nature of her visions at the Bible conferences, Mrs. White could write of such occasions: "Our meeting closed triumphantly. Truth gained the victory. Our brethren renounced their errors and united upon the third angel's message, and God greatly blessed them and added many to their numbers."[\[239\]](#)

Froom, looking at the above facts, sees Ellen White's role in doctrinal formation as essentially that of an umpire: To one, "your idea is right"; to another "your idea is wrong." Says he:

Throughout this entire time of intense searching the Spirit of prophecy was a help--but only a help. No doctrine or interpretation of prophecy was initially discovered or disclosed through the Spirit of prophecy. The doctrines of the Sabbatharians were *all* founded upon Holy Scripture, so that theirs was a truly Protestant platform.[\[240\]](#)

One cannot help but wonder, however, if Froom's statement conflicts with Mrs. White's testimony that "a line of truth . . . was made plain to me" and, in addition, "instruction was given as to how we were to labor and teach effectively"; although Froom's observation is probably fairly close to the mark.[\[241\]](#)

How Ellen White Saw Her Authority

In view of the rather dramatic, if not sensational, experiences through which she passed, not only during 1848-1850 but in later years as those original doctrines were repeated and amplified by the Holy Spirit, it is interesting to examine the effect of these experiences upon Ellen White's consciousness. How did she see herself? How did she evaluate the work God led her to perform? What consequences would result from a rejection of her work?

1. She disclaimed giving merely personal knowledge/opinion. Ellen White was the object of vitriolic attack even during her lifetime; and she spoke out sharply in defense of herself--and God. She disclaimed the notion that she was presenting merely human information or opinion, but rather asserted that all her statements came from God and that she was merely the conduit.

I have no special wisdom in myself; I am only an instrument in the Lord's hands to do the work He has set for me to do. The instructions that I have given by pen or voice have been an expression of the light that God has given me.[\[242\]](#)

In her letters and testimonies, said Ellen White, "I am presenting to you that which the Lord has presented to me. I do not write one article in the paper expressing *merely* my own ideas. They are what God has opened before me in vision--the precious rays of light shining from the throne."[\[243\]](#)

Ellen White claimed a unique place in her church--a work not given to any other member. She quoted an angel as telling her "God has raised you up and has given you words to speak to the people and to reach hearts as He has given to no other one. . . . God has impressed this upon you by opening it before your vision as He has to no other one now living."[\[244\]](#) Speaking for herself, she went on, "God has not given my brethren the work that He has given me."[\[245\]](#) To illustrate the essential nature of that uniqueness she added:

"When I am speaking to the people I say much that I have not premeditated. The Spirit of the Lord frequently comes upon me. I seem to be carried out of, and away from, myself. . . . I . . . feel compelled to speak of what is brought before me. I dare not resist the Spirit of God."[\[246\]](#)

"From higher ground, under the instruction given me of God, I present these things before you," she declared.[\[247\]](#) She went on to deny that anyone could accept part of her writings, while rejecting other parts. "We cannot be half the Lord's and half the world's. We are not God's people unless we are such entirely."[\[248\]](#) Next, note this: Speaking of her testimonies, she affirmed:

"God is either teaching His church, reproving their wrongs and strengthening their faith, or He is not. This work is of God, or it is not. God does nothing in partnership with Satan. My work . . . bears the stamp of God or the stamp of the enemy. There is no halfway work in the matter. The *Testimonies* are of the Spirit of God, or of the devil."[\[249\]](#)

She was not giving "merely the opinion of Sister White"; and those who asserted this, she declared "thereby insulted the Spirit of God."[\[250\]](#) She further amplified this, saying:

If those to whom these solemn warnings are addressed say, "It is only Sister White's individual opinion, I shall still follow my own judgment," and if they continue to do the very things they were warned not to do, they show that they despise the counsel of God, and the result is just what

the Spirit of God has shown me it would be--injury to the cause of God and ruin to themselves.[251]

2. *Mrs. White claimed authority to define doctrinal truth.* But she went still farther. Not only when she spoke about matters in the homes and churches of her fellow church members was she a direct spokesperson for God, but also when she defined a doctrinal position, that definition was authoritative and reliable.

Speaking of "our early experience" (undoubtedly a reference to the Sabbath conferences of 1848-1850), when "one error after another pressed in upon us," with "ministers and doctors bringing in new doctrines," the little bands would sometimes spend "whole nights" searching Scripture and praying to God for guidance. At these times "the Holy Spirit would bring the truth to our minds. . . . The power of God would come upon me, and *I was enabled clearly to define what is truth and what is error.*"[252]

Mrs. White declared, in effect, that her statements on doctrine were essentially without error. "There is one straight chain of truth, without one heretical sentence, in that which I have written." [253] Her testimonies "never contradict" the Bible because she was "instructed in regard to the relation of Scripture to Scripture." [254] Even doctrinal matters in her personal diaries, she wrote five years before her death, should be put in print because they contain "light" and "instruction" that was given her to "correct specious errors and to specify what is truth." [255] To Evangelist W. W. Simpson, laboring in southern California, she wrote in 1906 that "I am thankful that the instruction contained in my books establishes present truth for this time. These books were written under the demonstration of the Holy Spirit." [256]

In 1905, shortly after having had to rebuke the spurious doctrines advanced by Dr. John Harvey Kellogg and his followers, and again looking back to those early Sabbath conferences in which the manifestation of the Holy Spirit was so marked, Mrs. White declared without equivocation:

When the power of God testifies as to what is truth, that truth is to stand forever as the truth. No after suppositions contrary to the light God has given are to be entertained. [257]

In the rest of the passage she talked of men arising in the future (as they had in the past) with "interpretations of Scripture which are to them truth, but which are not truth." These people would claim to possess "new light." But, she asserted, the doctrines of these men would "[contradict] the light that God has given under the demonstration of the Holy Spirit." She then counseled the future leaders of the church to reject such messages that contradict the "special points of our faith" and move even "one pillar from the foundation that God has sustained" from 1844 to the turn of the century. Acceptance of such views would "lead to a denial of the truth that for the past fifty years God has been giving to His people, substantiating it by the demonstration of the Holy Spirit." [258]

3. *Motivation of critics.* The fundamental motivation of those who "dissect" Mrs. White's writings "to suit your own ideas, claiming that God has given you ability to discern what is light from heaven and what is the expression of mere human wisdom" [259] was identified by the prophet as "the prevailing spirit of our time . . . infidelity and apostasy--a spirit of pretended illumination . . . but in reality . . . the blindest presumption." She added:

There is a spirit of opposition to the plain word of God and to the testimony of His Spirit. There is a spirit of idolatrous exaltation of mere human reason above the revealed wisdom of God. [260]

And pressing the question of causation still farther, Mrs. White explained the "*true*" reason (italics hers) for opposition to her writings which is seldom uttered publicly: She has written or said something that cuts across the lifestyle of the critic, perhaps in the area of diet or dress, reading matter, entertainment and amusement, stewardship, or Sabbath observance. The critic thus exhibits by his criticism "a lack of moral courage--a will, strengthened and controlled by the Spirit of God, to renounce hurtful habits."[\[261\]](#)

4. *The danger of doubt.* Next we notice Mrs. White turning her attention to the question of doubt--doubt of Scripture and doubt of the writings of God's contemporary prophet:

"Satan has ability to suggest doubts and to devise objections to the pointed testimony that God sends, and many think it a virtue, a mark of intelligence in them, to be unbelieving and to question and quibble. Those who desire to doubt will have plenty of room. God does not propose to remove all occasion for unbelief. [If He did, He would simultaneously remove all opportunity for the exercise of faith!] He gives evidence, which must be carefully investigated with a humble mind and a teachable spirit, and all should decide from the weight of evidence." "God gives sufficient evidence for the candid mind to believe; but he who turns from the weight of evidence because there are a few things which he cannot make plain to his finite understanding will be left in the cold, chilling atmosphere of unbelief and questioning doubts, and will make shipwreck of faith."[\[262\]](#)

Mrs. White earnestly declared, "If you lose confidence in the *Testimonies* you will drift away from Bible truth."[\[263\]](#) She even gives the successive steps on the ladder that leads down to "perdition." Note them:

a. Satan causes church members to engage in a spirit of criticism of denominational leadership at all levels--he excites "jealousy and dissatisfaction toward those at the head of the work."

b. Spiritual gifts in general (and the gift of prophecy, as exercised through Mrs. White, in particular) "are next questioned;" with the end result that they have "but little weight, and instruction given through vision is disregarded."

c. The basic, or pillar, doctrines of the church, "the vital points of our faith," engender skepticism; and closely following this:

d. "Then [follows] doubt as to the Holy Scriptures" themselves, "and then the downward march to perdition."

Mrs. White elaborates:

When the *Testimonies*, which were once believed, are doubted and given up, Satan knows the deceived ones will not stop at this; and he redoubles his efforts till he launches them into open rebellion, which becomes incurable and ends in destruction." "By giving place to doubts and unbelief in regard to the work of God, . . . they are preparing themselves for complete deception."[\[264\]](#)

5. *An appeal--and a warning.* Mrs. White earnestly entreated the critics of her day

not to interpose between me and the people, and turn away the light which God would have come to them. Do not by your criticisms take out all the force, all the point and power, from the *Testimonies*. . . . If the *Testimonies* speak not according to the word of God, reject them.

Christ and Belial cannot be united. For Christ's sake do not confuse the minds of the people with human sophistry and skepticism, and make of none effect the work that the Lord would do. Do not, by your lack of spiritual discernment, make of this agency of God a rock of offense whereby many shall be caused to stumble and fall, "and be snared, and be taken."[\[265\]](#)

Going further, she charges that "your unbelief will not change the facts in the case";[\[266\]](#) "your unbelief does not affect their [the *Testimonies*] truthfulness. If they are from God they will stand."[\[267\]](#)

Then, "God is not as man; He will not be trifled with."[\[268\]](#) And "opposition to God's threatenings will not hinder their execution. To defy the words of the Lord, spoken through His chosen instruments, will only provoke His anger and eventually bring certain ruin upon the offender."[\[269\]](#)

Speaking about her work, and the Lord who commissioned it, Mrs. White further warned:

If God has given me a message to bear to His people, those who would hinder me in the work and lessen the faith of the people in its truth are not fighting against the instrument, but against God. "It is not the instrument whom you slight and insult, but God, who has spoken to you in these warnings and reproofs." "It is hardly possible for men to offer a greater insult to God than to despise and reject the instrumentalities that He has appointed to lead them."[\[270\]](#)

In a night vision the Lord told Mrs. White about those who had turned from the light sent them. "In slighting and rejecting the testimony that I have given you to bear, it is not you, but Me, your Lord, that they have slighted."[\[271\]](#)

And, finally, "if you seek," said Mrs. White, "to turn aside the counsel of God to suit yourselves, if you lessen the confidence of God's people in the testimonies He has sent them, you are rebelling against God as certainly as were Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. You have their history."[\[272\]](#)

On the other hand, "all who believe that the Lord has spoken through Sister White, and has given her a message, will be safe from the many delusions that will come in the last days."[\[273\]](#)

To sum up this consideration of Ellen White's role in the development of Seventh-day Adventist doctrine, we conclude that she played an important part in the formation of Adventist doctrinal belief, especially during the Sabbath conferences of 1848-1850; but her role was essentially limited to passing on messages from God given in vision, rather than entering into dialog with those who were developing the framework of our doctrinal system.

The Spirit of God did not come upon her until those engaged in serious study and prayer had gone as far as they could; then the messages given through Mrs. White tended either to correct (if the participants were going in a wrong direction) or to *confirm* and *corroborate* (if they were headed in the right direction); but there is no evidence that the visions were given to *initiate* doctrinal formulation.

Mrs. White, while maintaining the primacy of Scripture, nevertheless saw herself as the counterpart of the Bible prophets in receiving God's messages and passing them on to His people. Since it was the same Holy Spirit, speaking in Bible times and again in modern times,

those messages carried equal weight. They could not be ignored with impunity, either by critics who tried to dissect them, or by others who conveniently neglected or ignored them.

IV. "The Bible and the Bible Only!"

In the days of the Protestant Reformation the rallying cry of the "protesters" against the primacy of human tradition over inspired Scripture was "The Bible and the Bible Only!"

In the early days of the Advent movement this same slogan was often heard, but at this time the slogan was primarily employed to camouflage subtle denigrations of Ellen White's ministry and messages. This slogan is also heard today in the same connection.

At a camp meeting last spring an Adventist pastor from one of our North American colleges told this experience: One Sabbath, in a certain Sabbath school class taught by a professor on campus and attended by college students, the teacher started out by asking the class members individually what insights they had found in extrabiblical contemporary writings that would bear on the day's lesson study. Responses were offered by way of quotations from such helpful writers as Luther and Calvin, as well as Keith Miller, Paul Tournier, C. S. Lewis, and so on. Next the teacher asked for student reaction to the lesson, and a series of individual testimonies followed. At this point one member of the class, a college student well versed in the writings of Ellen White, said that she had found something helpful, something that met her need, in Mrs. White's writings; but before she could elaborate, the teacher cut her off with the remark, "Let's stay with 'The Bible and the Bible Only' in this class!" Ironically, up until that moment, the direct witness of the Bible had been totally absent from the class!

Ellen White, in addressing Sabbath school teachers in 1900, instructed them to "leave the impression upon the mind that the Bible, and the Bible alone, is our rule of faith."[\[274\]](#) And in the last book she wrote before her death in 1915 she admonished the church's ministers that "the words of the Bible, and the Bible alone, should be heard from the pulpit."[\[275\]](#) Did this mean, as some today allege, that her writings should never be incorporated into a sermon? Not at all.

In a helpful 37-page monograph[\[276\]](#) Arthur L. White, for years the secretary of the Ellen G. White Estate at the General Conference (and himself a grandson of the prophet), surveys the position of the pioneers of our denomination and cites published statements not readily available to the present-day inquirer. He also examines the 13 major statements from Mrs. White's pen in which she used the Reformation slogan "The Bible and the Bible Only," and comes to four conclusions in summarizing the documentary evidence:

1. That at no time was this phrase employed to exclude the binding obligation to respond to the visions as light which God has given to His people.
2. That in most instances the words are employed in the setting of contrasting the teachings of God's Word with tradition or man's theories of a false Sabbath, et cetera.
3. In several cases the words are used in defining our position on the visions with the explanation that to follow the Bible enjoins the acceptance of the workings of the gift of prophecy as binding upon all who accept God's Word, which forecasts the appearance of this gift in the last days.

4. That through the visions God has led us to a correct understanding of His Word and has taught us and will continue to do so. Further, we must ever recognize our obligation to accept this leading of God.

Arthur White also points out that although the 13 major statements from Ellen White's pen span more than half a century (from 1851 to c. 1914), still the tenor of the statements at the end of her life are not appreciably different from the earliest statements written on the subject.^[277] Mrs. White never changed her stand on this subject.

Uriah Smith's Parable

"Do We Discard the Bible by Endorsing the Visions?" was the question posed by Uriah Smith in an editorial in an 1863 issue of the *Review and Herald*. He answers with a resounding "No!" and in the course of his treatment of the subject he tells an interesting parable to illustrate his position:

"Suppose," he proposes, "we are about to start on a voyage." Before departure the ship's owner gives the crew a "book of directions," and assures them that its instructions are sufficient for the entire journey. If these instructions are heeded, the vessel will arrive safely at its destination.

So the crew sets sail, and opens the book to learn its contents. They discover that, in general, the author has laid down basic principles to govern the conduct of the crew during the voyage, and has touched on various contingencies that might arise. However, the author points out that the latter part of the voyage may be particularly hazardous, for "the features of the coast are ever changing by reason of quicksands and tempests." Because of this, the author has arranged for a pilot to join the crew to provide special help in guiding the ship safely into the final port.

The author also counsels the crew to give heed to the directions and instructions of the pilot, "as the surrounding circumstances and dangers may require."

At the appointed time, the pilot appears, as promised. But, inexplicably, as he offers his services to the captain and crew, some of the sailors rise up in protest, claiming that the original book of directions is sufficient to see them through. "We stand upon that, and that alone; we want nothing of you," they declare.

Smith then raises the rhetorical question, "Who now heed that original book of directions? Those who reject the pilot, or those who receive him, as that book instructs them? Judge ye."

Finally, anticipating the objection of some of his readers that he intended this parable to oblige the church to take Ellen White as their "pilot," the editor attempts to forestall such complaint with this postscript:

We say no such thing. What we do say is distinctly this: That the gifts of the Spirit are given for our pilot through these perilous times, and whenever and in whomsoever we find genuine manifestations of these, we are bound to respect them, nor can we do otherwise without in so far rejecting the Word of God, which directs us to receive them.^[278]

The position of General Conference President George I. Butler, in a *Review and Herald* article, is fairly typical of the apologetic response of early Seventh-day Adventist pioneers. To the objection that the Bible is sufficient because Paul declares that "all scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in

righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (2 Timothy 3:16, 17), Butler's rejoinder was:

If all Scripture is profitable, we suppose those portions are which teach the perpetuity of spiritual gifts, and that tell us they will be in the church in the last days, and tell us how to distinguish between the false and genuine. These prove the visions under consideration to be of the right stamp.[\[279\]](#)

Many who today sound the Protestant rallying call, "The Bible and the Bible Only," seem to infer a false dichotomy, an either/or situation: If you have the Bible, you cannot have Ellen White; if you have Ellen White, you cannot have the Bible. This dichotomy is patently invalid.

Some Seventh-day Adventists, including ministers and scholars, say, for example, "I cannot find the Seventh-day Adventist doctrine of the investigative judgment in the Bible." These persons state, however, that they still accept the doctrine because of the legitimate hermeneutical rule that allows for a later prophet to enlarge the understanding of truth by an earlier prophet.

What these people are really saying, in the opinion of this writer, is: "With my present theological a priori and my present hermeneutical tools--my presuppositions and my predilections--I do not find that doctrine in Scripture." However, other Seventh-day Adventist scholars, of equally impeccable academic pedigree, assert that they do find that doctrine in Scripture--in the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation, and in Jesus' parables of the wedding garment and the net.

Conclusion

What does the Seventh-day Adventist church hold regarding the relationship between the writings of Mrs. White and the Bible?

1. We do not regard the writings of Ellen G. White as an addition to the sacred canon of Scripture.
2. We do not think of these writings as of universal application, like the Bible, but as written particularly for the Seventh-day Adventist church.
3. We do not regard Mrs. White's writings in the same sense as the Holy Scriptures, which stand alone and unique as the standard by which all other writings must be judged.[\[280\]](#)

But, having said that, we need to say more. Since we believe that inspiration is indivisible, and since the only activity of the prophet is to tell us what Jesus told him ("the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy"), there is therefore no basis for a belief in either degrees of inspiration or degrees of authority. Ellen White was inspired in the same manner and to the same degree as were the Bible prophets. And the counsel that Mary gave to the servants at the wedding feast at Cana concerning her Son might well be paraphrased: "Whatsoever he saith unto you [and by whatever prophet] do it" (John 2:5).

If, as at least some scholars believe, Paul's first epistle to the Thessalonians was the first book of the New Testament to be written, then his concern as expressed in its closing verses may have an interesting significance to Christians today:

"Quench not the Spirit" (1 Thessalonians 5:19). "Don't tune Him out," as we might put it in today's vernacular. The existence of the possibility of doing just this undergirds the necessity for the warning.

"Despise not prophesyings" (vs. 20). Was Paul here, first of all, telling the Christians that the word of God to them did not end with the closing of the Old Testament canon of Scripture? That the spiritual gift of prophecy was still being exercised--and would continue to be exercised--until the end of time? Was he warning, don't despise latter-day prophets, who will be just as inspired and authoritative--prophets whose messages also come directly from the Holy Spirit? Perhaps.

"Prove all things" (vs. 21). The Christian has an obligation to "try the spirits" (1 John 4:1), because while not all of them are from God, the obverse is equally true: Not all of them are from the devil, either! The Christian is hereby commanded (by the Holy Spirit through Paul) to seriously examine the content of purported prophetic writings. He must also examine the fruitage of these writings, both in the life of the alleged prophet and in the lives of those who follow that prophet. This task must be undertaken with an open mind willing to receive more truth, a mind that seeks to validate all new light by what has been tested before (Acts 17:11). And, having made the test, and noted the results:

"Hold fast that which is good" (1 Thessalonians 5:21).

In a time of acute crisis, at the turn of the century when leaders in the Adventist church were bringing in subtle heresies, God's prophet proclaimed a message that has startling relevance for us today, in another time of crisis:

The Lord will put new, vital force into His work as human agencies obey the command to go forth and proclaim the truth. . . . The truth will be criticized, scorned, and derided; but the closer it is examined and tested, the brighter it will shine. . . .

The principles of truth that God has *revealed* to us are our only true foundation. They have made us what we are. The lapse of time has not lessened their value. It is the constant effort of the enemy to remove these truths from their setting, and to put in their place spurious theories. He will bring in everything that he possibly can to carry out his deceptive designs. But the Lord will raise up men of keen perception, who will give these truths their proper place in the plan of God.[\[281\]](#)

May you be one of them!

[\[1\]](#) Matthew 13:57. For an especially helpful--and relevant--examination of this phenomenon of rejection, in the context of the current controversy over the role and function of Ellen G White, see J. R. Spangler's editorial, "Persecuting the Prophets," in *Ministry* (February 1981), pp. 21, 25.

[\[2\]](#) Joel 2:28-32; Revelation 10; 12:17; 10:10; Ephesians 4:11-15; 1 Corinthians 12:12, 28. See also "Prophecy After New Testament Times," chapter 8 of T. Housel

Jemison's *A Prophet Among You* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1955), pp. 135-147.

[\[3\]](#) Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1958), book 1, p. 48.

[\[4\]](#) *Ibid.*

[\[5\]](#) Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1948), vol. 5, p. 667. Hereafter shortened to *Testimonies*.

[\[6\]](#) *Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 48.

[\[7\]](#) Ellen G. White, *Sons and Daughters of God* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1955), p. 276.

[\[8\]](#) Indebtedness in deriving working definitions is acknowledged to Dr. Raoul Dederen's "Toward a Seventh-day Adventist Theology of Revelation-Inspiration," North American Division Bible Conference Notebook, 1974, pp. 1-20.

[9] 2 Timothy 3:16. *Holy Bible: New International Version*. Copyright © 1978 by the New York International Bible Society. Used by permission of Zondervan Bible Publishers. Italics supplied. See also *The Amplified Bible*.

[10] See Daniel 10:17, also a subsequent discussion of physical phenomena which follows below.

[11] Acts 27:17, 27.

[12] *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia* (Chicago, IL: The Howard Severance Co., 1915), 3:479, 1480.

[13] Dederen.

[14] *Ibid.*

[15] Ephesians 3:3-5.

[16] 1 Corinthians 2:6-14.

[17] 1 Corinthians 12:29.

[18] John 14:26.

[19] *Ibid.*

[20] John 16:13.

[21] *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 512.

[22] Revelation 1:11; 21:6; 22:13.

[23] 1 Corinthians 12:7.

[24] 1 Corinthians 12:11, 18; cf. also John 15:16.

[25] Ephesians 4:11.

[26] 1 Corinthians 12:29, 30.

[27] 1 Corinthians 1:5-7; 12:28; 14:1.

[28] 1 Corinthians 12:31.

[29] Genesis 1:2, 26. The "Elohim" of verse 26 is plural noun.

[30] Revelation 1:1; John 8:28; 5:19, 30.

[31] John 16:7, 13, 14.

[32] 2 Peter 1:21.

[33] Revelation 1:1; 22:6. Cf. Daniel 8:16; 9:21; Luke 1:19, 26.

[34] For example, 1 Kings 22:19. This exact expression appears 36 times in the Old Testament alone; variations appear even more frequently throughout the entire Bible.

[35] Revelation 5:11.

[36] John 13:16; 15:20

[37] Exodus 20; cf. Ellen G. White, *Evangelism* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1946), p. 616; and *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1953), vol. 1, pp. 1103, 1104.

[38] Ellen G. White, *The Spirit of Prophecy* (Battle Creek, Mich.: Steam Press of the Seventh-day Adventist Publishing Association, 1870), vol. 1, p. 399; *Early Writings* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1882), p. 32.

[39] Matthew 3:17; 17:5; John 12:28.

[40] Numbers 27:21; 1 Samuel 28:6; *The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 1, pp. 398, 399; *Patriarchs and Prophets* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1913), p. 351.

[41] *The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 1, p. 399; *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 349.

[42] Leviticus 16:8; Joshua 7.

[43] Acts 1:26.

[44] Letter 37, March 4, 1900; cited in *Selected Messages*, book 2, p. 328.

[45] 1 Samuel 3:1; Numbers 12:6; Joel 2:28-32; Acts 16:9.

[46] Cited by Arthur L. White in quoting his father, William C. White, in *Ellen G. White: Messenger to the Remnant* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1969), p. 7.

[47] See Acts 2.

[48] From the stenographically prepared transcript of Walter Rea's lecture, "White Lies," Adventist Forum, San Diego, Calif., February 14, 1981, p. 10. In a letter dated July 17, 1981, I requested in writing that Walter Rea grant me permission to quote him directly from his verbatim transcript. In his reply dated July 21, Rea in effect declined the request, tacitly admitting that he might have made some small errors in his presentation to the Forum. Instead, he appealed to me not to get into minor nitpicking but to stay with the larger issues. Physical phenomena is one such larger issue, and Walter Rea had tended to emphasize it by alleging that published reports of Ellen White's holding a large Bible in vision are mythical and without foundation.

[49] Published in *Spectrum* 10:1 (May 1979), pp. 23-57.

[50] *Ibid.*, p. 28.

[51] See, for example, "The Witness of the 'Big Bible,'" by Arthur L. White, September 13, 1979; and "Ellen G. White and the Big Bible," by Ron Graybill, 1981; both unpublished manuscripts circulated as working papers among the Ellen G. White Estate staff.

[52] See *General Conference Bulletin*, January 29, 1893, pp. 19, 20; *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1976), p. 374; and Paul Gordon's monograph, "Revelation-

Inspiration: Ellen G. White's Witness and Experience," July 1978, p. 1.

[53] Eight-page report of Otis Nichols (n.d.), p. 7. From internal evidence it is apparent that Nichols could not have written this first-person eyewitness account before 1847; and it is obvious that it could not have been penned after 1860, since Ellen White quotes three paragraphs of it in *Spiritual Gifts* (Battle Creek, Mich.: James White, 1860), vol. 2, pp. 77-79.

[54] *Ibid.*

[55] See "How the Visions Were Given," in *Messenger to the Remnant*, pp. 6-8.

[56] See "The Alpha and the Omega" and "The Foundation of Our Faith" in *Selected Messages*, book 1, pp. 193-208.

[57] *Review and Herald* (October 8, 1867), cited in *Messenger to the Remnant*, pp. 13, 60, and 79.

[58] *Ibid.*

[59] "A False Prophets?" *Newsweek* (January 19, 1981), p. 72.

[60] Robert W. Olson, *101 Questions on the Sanctuary and on Ellen White* (Washington, D.C.: Ellen G. White Estate, 1981), pp. 105, 106.

[61] See *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, p. 345.

[62] See *ibid.*, vol. 5, pp. 346, 356.

[63] *101 Questions on the Sanctuary and on Ellen White*, p. 106.

[64] From the *New American Standard Bible*, © The Lockman Foundation, 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975. Used by permission.

[65] *101 Questions on the Sanctuary and on Ellen White*, pp. 106, 107.

[66] See *ibid.*, pp. 64-85; 105-108.

[67] *Testimonies*, vol. 1, pp. 600-604.

[68] Virgil Robinson, *Reach Out* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1970), p. 300.

[69] A. W. Spalding, *Pioneer Stories* (Nashville, TN: Southern Pub. Assn., 1942), pp. 206, 207, cited in *The Spirit of Prophecy Treasure Chest* (Los Angeles, Calif.: Voice of Prophecy, 1960), pp. 28, 29.

[70] J. N. Loughborough, *Rise and Progress of Seventh-day Adventists* (Battle Creek, Mich.: General Conference Association of

Seventh-day Adventists, 1892), pp. 231-233.

[71] The author acknowledges indebtedness to Dr. Earle Hilgert, who taught a course in "Introduction to New Testament" at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary, January 1959, in which much of the material in this section of the article was presented.

[72] *Selected Messages*, book 1, pp. 15-23.

[73] *Ibid.*, pp. 15, 16.

[74] *Ibid.*, p. 16.

[75] *Ibid.*, p. 18.

[76] *Ibid.*, p. 16.

[77] *Ibid.*, p. 20.

[78] *Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 562.

[79] *Selected Messages*, book 1, pp. 19, 20.

[80] *Ibid.*, p. 22.

[81] *Ibid.*

[82] *Ibid.*, p. 16.

[83] *Ibid.*

[84] Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1911), p. vi; *Steps to Christ* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1956) p. 73.

[85] *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 747.

[86] Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1940), p. 250.

[87] Ellen G. White, *The Sanctified Life* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1937), pp. 68, 81.

[88] *Ibid.*, p. 62.

[89] Earle Hilgert.

[90] *A Prophet Among You*.

[91] *Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 21.

[92] *Ibid.*, p. 19.

[93] *Ibid.*, p. 22.

[94] *Ibid.*, p. 21.

[95] *Ibid.*

[96] *Ibid.*

[97] *The Great Controversy*, p. v. Italics supplied.

[98] *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 710.

[99] *Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 17.

[100] *Ibid.*, p. 18.

[101] *Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 449.

[102] *Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 15.

[103] *Ibid.*, p. 20.

[104] T. Housel Jemison, *Christian Beliefs* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1959), p. 22.

[105] *Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 20.

[106] *Christian Beliefs*, p. 17.

[107] *Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 23.

[108] Indebtedness is acknowledged for many of the ideas in this section to Dr. John L. Robertson, "The Challenge to God's Word," and Dr. Raoul Dederen. Unfortunately, it is not possible to identify individual contributions from existing notes.

[109] Dederen.

[110] *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 512.

[111] Letter 12, 1889, published in *Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 23.

[112] See Revelation 1:1, 2; 22:6; John 16:13; 13:19; 14:29; Daniel 2:28; and Amos 3:7.

[113] Isaiah 41:21-23; 42:9; 43:9; 44:7, 8; 45:3, 21, 22; 46:9, 10.

[114] For a recent balanced and extremely helpful discussion of various positions and proponents, see editorial "Rhetoric About Inerrancy: The Truth of the Matter" in *Christianity Today*, vol. 25, no. 15 (September 4, 1981), pp. 16-19.

[115] *Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary* (Springfield, Mass.: G & C Merriam Co., 1976), p. 590.

[116] *Ibid.*, p. 589.

[117] *Holy Bible: New International Version*. Copyright © 1978 by the New York International Bible Society. Used by permission of Zondervan Bible Publishers.

[118] *Holy Bible: American Revised Version*. American Bible Society edition. Copyright © 1901 by Thomas Nelson & Sons, New York. *The Bible: Revised Standard Version*. American Bible Society edition. Copyright © 1946 and 1952 by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America, New York. *New American Standard Bible* (Carol Stream, Ill.: Creation House, Inc.). Copyright © 1971 by The Lockman Foundation, La Habra, Calif.. Used by permission.

[119] *Confraternity New Testament-The New Testament of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ*. Translated from the Latin Vulgate. A Revision of the Challoner-Rheims Version. Edited by Catholic Scholars under the Patronate of the Episcopal Committee of the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine. (Patterson, N.J.: St. Anthony Guild Press). Copyright © 1941 by the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine.

[120] *The Amplified Bible* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan

Publishing House). Copyright © 1965 by Zondervan Publishing House.

[121] *King James II Version of the Bible* (Byron Center, Mich.: Associated Publishers and Authors, Inc.). Copyright © 1971 by Jay P. Green. *The New Testament in Modern Speech*. Translated by Richard Francis Weymouth. Revised by James Alexander Robinson (New York: Harper & Brothers, Publishers). Copyright © by James Clarke & Co, Ltd., London.

[122] *The Holy Bible: The Berkeley Version in Modern English* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan Publishing House). Copyright © 1945, 1959 by Zondervan Publishing House.

[123] *The New Testament: An American Translation*. Edgar J. Goodspeed, trans. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press). Copyright © 1923, 1948 by The University of Chicago.

[124] Rene Noorbergen, *Ellen G. White: Prophet of Destiny* (New Canaan, Conn.: Keats Publishing, Inc., 1972), p. 21. Italics supplied unless otherwise indicated.

[125] *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 747. Complete bibliographical information for Ellen G. White writings used in both parts 1 and 2 of this article, may be found in the footnotes at the end of part 1.

[126] *The Great Controversy Between Christ and Satan*, p. vii.

[127] *Ibid.*, p. vii.

[128] *Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 37.

[129] *Ibid.*, p. 416.

[130] *Ibid.*, p. 20.

[131] Ellen G. White, *Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1944), p. 376.

[132] Ellen G. White, *The Story of Patriarchs and Prophets* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1958), p. 354.

[133] Robert W. Olson, *101 Questions on the Sanctuary and on Ellen White* (Washington, D.C.: Ellen G. White Estate, 1981), p. 52.

[134] Isaiah 41:8. See also James 2:23.

[135] *Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 1, p. 98.

[136] *Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 37.

[137] "Plagiarism Found in Prophet Books" by John Dart, *Los Angeles*

Times, October 23, 1980, pp. 1, 3, 21.

[138] See Olson.

[139] Deuteronomy 4:9; 8:19; 28:1, 2, 13-15; cf. also Zechariah 6:15.

[140] Walter Rea is one such, and he lists the "failed" prediction of 1856 as "White Lie" No. 8 of a total of 18 such alleged "White Lies," in an address to the Association of Adventist Forums, San Diego, Calif., on February 14, 1981: see transcript pp. 14, 15.

[141] For an excellent and extremely helpful treatment of the subject, see "The Role of Israel in Old Testament Prophecy," *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 4, pp. 25-38.

[142] For additional examples of the conditional element in biblical prophecies, see LeRoy Edwin Froom, *Movement of Destiny* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1971), pp. 573, 574.

[143] J. N. Loughborough letter, from Sanitarium, Calif., August 28, 1918.

[144] For a comprehensive view of several such statements by Ellen White, see Froom, pp. 583-588; and Robert W. Olson, *The Crisis Ahead* (Angwin, Calif.: Pacific Union College Bookstore, 1976), pp. 75-78.

[145] Ms. 4, 1883; published in *Evangelism*, pp. 695, 696, and *Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 68.

[146] Ellen G. White, Ms. 107, 1909; cited in T. Housel Jemison, *A Prophet Among You* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1955), pp. 394, 395.

[147] This letter, written from Sanitarium, California, on June 14, 1906, was subsequently published in *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, August 30, 1906, p. 8. Cited in *Selected Messages*, Book I, pp. 24-28. Italics in original. For a helpful consideration of "How Much Was Inspired?" see Jemison, pp. 394-406.

[148] *The Great Controversy* (1911 ed.), p. 272. For a fuller account of this question, see Arthur L. White, *The Ellen G. White Writings* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1973), pp. 31-34.

[149] *Review and Herald*, October 30, 1913, p. 3. Arthur L. White discusses this question at length in *Inspiration and the Ellen G.*

White Writings, a reprint of 11 articles from the *Adventist Review* of 1978 and 1979.

[150] Ellen G. White, *Life Sketches of Ellen G. White* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1915), p. 235; and *Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 297.

[151] *Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 2, p. 295.

[152] *Ibid.*, p. iv.

[153] *Ibid.*, p. iii.

[154] *Ibid.*, p. 12, 14.

[155] *Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 14, and *Life Sketches*, p. 20.

[156] *Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 21; and *Life Sketches*, p. 26.

[157] Letter 339, 1904, p. 2.

[158] Letter 353, 1906, p. 1.

[159] Incidentally, these two chapters, which were written by two different biblical authors, are almost word-for-word accounts of the same event; yet neither indicates the source of his data--an interesting situation in the light of the current controversy over a modern prophet's "copying" from other sources!

[160] The chronological events of this experience are told in Arthur L. White, *Ellen G. White: Messenger to the Remnant* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1969), pp. 34-36.

[161] Arthur Grosvenor Daniells, *The Abiding Gift of Prophecy* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1936), pp. 322-329.

[162] *Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 217.

[163] Letter 162, 1902; cited in Daniells, pp. 326, 327.

[164] Letter 208, 1902; cited in *ibid.*, p. 327.

[165] *Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 563.

[166] *Ibid.*, p. 486.

[167] *Ibid.*, p. 559.

[168] *Ibid.*, pp. 563, 564.

[169] *Review and Herald*, December 11, 1883, p. 778.

[170] Walter R. Martin, *The Truth About Seventh-day Adventism* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan Publishing House, 1960).

[171] Norman F. Doughty, *Another Look at Seventh-day Adventism* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Book House, 1962).

[172] Stenographic transcript of Walter Rea's lecture on "White Lies," San Diego, Calif.: Association of Adventist Forums (February 14, 1981), p. 9.

[173] *Ibid.* Walter Rea refused to grant copyright permission to cite verbatim statements from the

transcript. His remarks, therefore, are paraphrased.

[174] John J. Robertson, *The White Truth* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1981).

[175] *Ibid.*, p. 79.

[176] *The Journal of Adventist Education*, vol. 44, No. 1 (October-November 1981), p. 18.

[177] John Quincy Adams, sixth president of the United States and part-time Boylston Professor of Rhetoric and Oratory (1806-1809) at Harvard College. From a series of 37 lectures on rhetorical theory and practice, *Lectures on Rhetoric and Oratory*, recently republished (New York: Russell & Russell, 1962), pp. 62-67.

[178] *Seventh-day Adventists Answer Questions on Doctrine* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1957), pp. 90, 91, hereafter cited as *Questions on Doctrine*.

[179] 1 Chronicles 21:9; 29:29; 2 Chronicles 9:29; 29:25.

[180] 2 Chronicles 9:29; 1 Kings 11:29; 14:7.

[181] 2 Chronicles 12:15.

[182] 2 Chronicles 9:29; 12:15; 13:22.

[183] 1 Kings 16:1, 7; 2 Chronicles 19:2; 20:34.

[184] 2 Chronicles 21:12.

[185] The efforts of contemporary polemicists to disassociate the new "degrees of revelation" from the discredited "degrees of inspiration" position instinctively brings to mind Shakespeare's observation: "What's in a name? That which we call a rose by any other name would smell as sweet" (*Romeo & Juliet*, Act II, Scene 2, Line 43).

[186] See especially the article published January 15, 1884.

[187] Letter 22, 1889; cited in Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1958), book 1, p. 23.

[188] There is a Jewish tradition that Nathan and Gad authored 1 Samuel 25-31 and 2 Samuel. [See *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1953), vol. 2, p. 447.] However, the only source is Talmudic tradition, whose accuracy and authenticity is "problematical" at best, according to Dean Gerhard F. Hasel, Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Mich.

(interview, November 6, 1981). Whether the last part of 1 Samuel and the whole book of 2 Samuel incorporate portions of the "lost" Book of Nathan and Gad is only conjecture. It is not known whether these books--and the writings of the other noncanonical literary prophets--even survived until the time (perhaps 400 B.C.) when the Old Testament canon was formed; so we do not know whether their exclusion was a deliberate decision on the part of the compiler(s), or whether there was no choice because the books were already lost to history.

[189] Neufeld edited the *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Student's Source Book* and the *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia* (vols. 9 and 10 of *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary* series), as well as serving as one of the general editors of *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*. At the time of his death he was one of the associate editors of the *Adventist Review*.

[190] Letter of Maxine M. Neufeld, Loma Linda, Calif., n.d. (in response to the author's letter of inquiry of August 19, 1981).

[191] Sermon manuscript, "When Jesus Speaks," p. 10; preached at the Takoma Park Seventh-day Adventist Church, February 2, 1980. Italics supplied.

[192] "An Open Letter From Mrs. E. G. White to All Who Love the Blessed Hope," *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, January 20, 1903, p. 15. Hereafter shortened to *Review and Herald*.

[193] *Ibid.*

[194] *Ibid.* Italics supplied.

[195] Denton Edward Rebok, *Believe His Prophets* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1956), pp. 165, 166.

[196] Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy Between Christ and Satan* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1911), p. vii.

[197] Carlyle B. Haynes was perhaps the foremost exponent of this analogy in his evangelistic crusades in North America during the first half of the twentieth century.

[198] Interview with Walt Weinstein, Historical Information Specialist and Curator of Museum, National Bureau of Standards, United States Department of

Commerce, Gaithersburg, Md., October 29, 1981.

[199] M. L. Venden Sr., is believed to have originated this illustration, and popularized it during his evangelistic crusades in North America during the first half of the twentieth century.

[200] For an interesting, if somewhat controversial, discussion of the entire question, see Ron Graybill, "Ellen White's Role in Doctrinal

Formation," *Ministry*, October 1981, pp. 7-11. Especially valuable to this writer are Graybill's two compilations of Ellen G. White statements, one emphasizing the subordination of her writings to Scripture and the other illustrating her claim to the right to define and interpret Scripture (p. 9).

[201] "Sarepta Myrenda (Irish) Henry," *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia*, p. 581. Mrs. Henry is credited with conceiving a plan for what she called "woman ministry," and with being the first in the Seventh-day Adventist church to present an organized plan to train mothers and fathers in the art and science of parenting (*ibid.*).

[202] Originally published in *The Gospel of Health*, January 1898, pp. 25-28, cited in Rebok, pp. 180, 181.

[203] *Ibid.*, p. 181.

[204] *Ibid.*, p. 182.

[205] Ellen G. White, *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 665.

[206] T. Housel Jemison, *A Prophet Among You* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1955), pp. 367-371.

[207] *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 665.

[208] *Ibid.*

[209] Jemison, p. 372. Italics supplied.

[210] Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1940), p. 786.

[211] *Ibid.*

[212] *Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 304.

[213] Ellen G. White, *Early Writings* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1945), p. 184.

[214] *Ibid.*

[215] Ellen G. White, *Spiritual Gifts* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1945), vol. 3, p. 34.

[216] *Selected Messages*, book 1, pp. 304, 305.

[217] *The Desire of Ages*, p. 786.

[218] *Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 304; *The Desire of Ages*, p. 786.

[219] *The Desire of Ages*, p. 786.

[220] *Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 305.

[221] *Early Writings*, p. 184.

[222] *Ibid.*; *The Desire of Ages*, p. 786.

[223] *Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 305.

[224] *Selected Messages*, book 1, pp. 306, 307.

[225] Daniel 12:1, 2; Matthew 26:64; Revelation 1:7; 14:13.

[226] *Early Writings*, p. 285; *The Great Controversy*, p. 637.

[227] LeRoy Edwin Froom, *The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1954), vol. 4, pp. 1021-1048.

[228] "Sabbath Conferences," *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia*, p. 1255.

[229] Cited in *Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 2, p. 93.

[230] Ellen G. White, *Life Sketches of Ellen G. White* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1915), p. 110.

[231] *Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 206.

[232] *Life Sketches*, p. 111.

[233] *Comprehensive Index to the Writings of Ellen G. White* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1963), vol. 3, p. 3214.

[234] *Selected Messages*, book 1, pp. 206, 207.

[235] *Life Sketches*, p. 111.

[236] *Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 207.

[237] *Ibid.* Italics supplied.

[238] *Ibid.*

[239] *Life Sketches*, p. 111.

[240] Froom, pp. 1046, 1047.

[241] For a more detailed step-by-step analysis of the formulation of Seventh-day Adventist doctrines, see Froom, pp. 1021-1048; and Arthur L. White, *Ellen G. White, Messenger to the Remnant* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1969), pp. 34-37.

[242] *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 691.

[243] *Ibid.*, p. 67. Italics supplied. The use of "merely" should alert the reader to the fact that Ellen White was *not* claiming that she never got ideas or materials from the writings of others, but rather that what she wrote was always in harmony with the messages God gave her in vision.

[244] *Testimonies*, vol. 5, pp. 667, 668.
[245] *Ibid.*, p. 677.
[246] *Ibid.*, p. 678.
[247] Ellen G. White, *Christ in His Sanctuary* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1969), p. 10.
[248] *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 83.
[249] *Ibid.*, p. 671.
[250] *Ibid.*, p. 64.
[251] *Ibid.*, pp. 687, 688.
[252] Ellen G. White, *Gospel Workers* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1948), p. 302. Italics supplied.
[253] Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages* (Washington D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1980), book 3, p. 52.
[254] *Ibid.*, p. 38.
[255] *Ibid.*, p. 32.
[256] Letter 50, 1906; cited in Graybill, *Ministry*, p. 9.
[257] *Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 161.
[258] *Ibid.*, pp. 161, 162.

[259] *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 691.
[260] *Ibid.*, p. 79.
[261] *Ibid.*, p. 675.
[262] *Ibid.*, pp. 675, 676.
[263] *Ibid.*, p. 674.
[264] *Ibid.*, p. 672.
[265] *Ibid.*, p. 691.
[266] *Ibid.*, p. 66.
[267] *Ibid.*, p. 674.
[268] *Ibid.*, p. 664.
[269] *Ibid.*, p. 678.
[270] *Ibid.*, p. 680.
[271] *Ibid.*, p. 668.
[272] *Ibid.*, p. 66.
[273] *Selected Messages*, book 3, p. 84.
[274] Ellen G. White, *Counsels on Sabbath School Work* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1938), p. 84.
[275] Ellen G. White, *The Story of Prophets and Kings* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1943), p. 626.
[276] Arthur L. White, "The Position of 'The Bible, and The Bible Only' and the Relationship of

This to the Writings of Ellen G. White," unpublished document, Ellen G. White Estate, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Washington, D.C., January, 1971, 37 pages.
[277] *Ibid.*, pp. 19, 20. The appendix material in this monograph is especially helpful, consisting in part of reprints of periodical articles by J. N. Andrews, Uriah Smith, and Ellen G. White.
[278] *Review and Herald*, January 13, 1863; cited in Robert W. Olson, *101 Questions on the Sanctuary and on Ellen White* (Washington, D.C.: Ellen G. White Estate, 1981), p. 40. The entire editorial appears as Appendix D in the Arthur White monograph.
[279] *Review and Herald*, June 9, 1874; cited in White monograph, p. 12.
[280] *Questions on Doctrine*, p. 89.
[281] *Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 201. Italics supplied.

The Truth About *The White Lie*

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Introduction

Late in 1980, a professional survey was conducted which enabled researchers to discover, among other things, the differences between the Christian attitudes and behaviors of Seventh-day Adventists who regularly read Ellen G. White's books and those who do not.^[1] The results were very revealing. Eighty-five percent of those who read Mrs. White's books indicated that they had an intimate relationship with Jesus Christ, while only 59 percent of the non-readers did. Eighty-two percent of the readers had the assurance that they were "right with God," while only 59 percent of the nonreaders did. Daily personal Bible study was a habit with 82 percent of those who read Ellen White's writings regularly, while only 47 percent of those who did not read Ellen White studied their Bible regularly.

And so it went, in category after category. Those who regularly spent time reading from Mrs. White's writings felt better prepared for Christian witnessing, engaged in witnessing more often, felt more at home with their fellow church members, prayed more, gave more to support local soul winning, were more willing to help their neighbors with personal problems, and had family worship more regularly. In short, their religious experience was stronger, more active, and more positive.

These actual survey results present a far different picture from that set forth by Walter Rea in his recent book, *The White Lie*.^[2] On the dust jacket of the hard-back edition, the author likens the Seventh-day Adventist regard for Ellen White's prophetic gift to the tragic fascination of Jonestown's inhabitants for their demonic leader, Jim Jones. The book sets out to describe what it calls "the depths of that cult's [Adventism's] far reaching ramifications over the past 140 years and the millions of souls it has affected." Indeed, the book claims to be "every whit as shocking in its expose as the horrendous Jonestown tragedy wherein only a few hundred were involved and died." Like this one, many of the author's claims are either so lacking in substance or so harsh and sarcastic that they fall of their own weight.

Ellen White is not the only object of attack in *The White Lie*. Ministers of all faiths are repeatedly characterized as "supersalesmen" or "salesmen of the psychic." The theme pervades the book:

All supersalesmen sell the advantages of their particular name brands. In the cults and sects, it's the brand of their saint and what is required by that saint to be saved. In the larger and longer established forms of religion, it's the Clan Plan, mother's religion, the faith of the fathers, the true light. ^{[3][*]}

Christian beliefs are ridiculed:

Who tagged all of us with sin? Was it God, or that snake in the grass that came in when Adam was down on the south forty? Or do we get it from our ancestors of past eons? Or is the Devil, like Santa Claus, our dad?[\[4\]](#)

Heaven is scoffed at:

*Not very often, if ever, is one dealing with pure truth, either small or large, in religion. One is dealing with truth as filtered, expanded, diminished, bounded, or defined by the **I-saws** of all the Ellens of Christendom with a lot of help from the divines. What does emerge from all the froth is that the map for this life and the one to come, if indeed it does come, is drawn by the clan--and thus becomes the Clan Plan. Heaven becomes the main gate to isolation, where all the bad as we conceive of it (which in humanity's case means other people) is snuffed out, and only us good guys go marching through. Thus we make our own ghetto.*[\[5\]](#)

Religion is deemed little more than a word game:

In most libraries, the religion department is under the subject heading of philosophy--and that is what it is, the defining and redefining of terms and ideas that have defied defining for centuries.[\[6\]](#)

The ways God has dealt with His people are scorned:

Freethinkers have always gotten [p. 2] into trouble. In the time of Moses, if anyone started a fire on his own to enjoy a cup of hot herb tea on Sabbath, he was stoned, and not in the modern sense of the word either. If he wandered around in the local swapmeet on Sabbath in the days of Nehemiah he might run the risk of having his beard pulled or his toupee disrupted. Even in the New Testament times, if Ananias kept out a few shekels from the tithe to pay the rent, he was told by the local divine to drop dead--which he did. [\[7\]](#)

Nevertheless, in spite of the book's emotion-laden attacks on Ellen White, on the Seventh-day Adventist Church, and on Christian beliefs in general, it does provide an opportunity to illuminate some interesting corners of Seventh-day Adventist history. Because the Seventh-day Adventist Church is growing so rapidly, there are always many new members who may not be well acquainted with Ellen White's life. They will appreciate having positive answers to some of the questions raised by the book. Then too, since the volume has received attention in the popular press in the United States, our fellow Christians in other denominations deserve a calm and candid evaluation of the book.

Those who know Ellen White from wide reading in her works will generally not need more than a taste of the bitterness of *The White Lie* to realize how foreign it is to the spirit of Christ which so permeates Mrs. White's writings. And yet they too may profit from further background information concerning her life and work.

It is not our purpose here to defend present-day church leaders, even though many have been maligned in the book. As for defending Ellen White, we suggest that her own writings offer the best defense. But we take this occasion to discuss the more important issues raised by *The White Lie*, and report the fruits of research in many fields which bear on those issues.

THE USE OF LITERARY SOURCES

A glance at *The White Lie* reveals many pages of similarities between Mrs. White's writings and the writings of others. How much did Ellen White borrow from other sources?

In 1982 when *The White Lie* was published, there were more than 70 Ellen G. White books in print, an aggregate of more than 35,000 pages.^[8] Although there is some repetition in the books, there are also some 50,000 typewritten pages of letters, sermons, diaries, and manuscripts on file in the White Estate and at eight research centers around the world. Thus, when compared to the total volume of Ellen White's writings, the amount she borrowed still appears to be quite small.

On the other hand, representatives of the church have stated that the amount of borrowing was greater than they had previously known.^[9] In the Ellen G. White Estate, systematic research is going forward on this topic, and from time to time, further parallels are discovered. The Seventh-day Adventist journal for ministers, *Ministry*, recently devoted a special issue to a broad and candid summary of the subject of Ellen White's use of sources.^[10]

The amount of borrowing is not the most important question however. An instructive parallel is found in the relationship of the Gospels. More than 90 percent of the Gospel of Mark is paralleled by passages in Matthew and Luke. Even so, contemporary critical Biblical scholars are coming more and more to the conclusion that although Matthew, Mark, and Luke used common materials, each was a distinct author in his own right.^[11] Thus even "higher critics" have a more analytical approach to the study of literary sources than does *The White Lie*.

At one time in the infancy of "source criticism" the Gospel writers were thought by higher critics to be little more than "scissors and paste" plagiarizers. Now critical scholars realize that literary studies are not complete until they move beyond cataloging parallel passages to the more significant question of how the borrowed material was used by each author to make his own unique statement.

It is our hope that the study of Ellen White's literary borrowing will move beyond the mere noting of literary parallels and discussing how much literary borrowing was acceptable, to the more interesting question of the unique uses to which Mrs. White, under the Spirit's guidance, put the materials she adapted.

Would people in the nineteenth century have agreed with *The White Lie's* judgment that Mrs. White's literary borrowing constituted "wholesale" stealing?^[12]

Some would have, especially critics. For instance, in 1889, the Protestant pastors of Healdsburg, California, invited D. M. Canright, a recently apostatized Adventist minister, to come from Michigan and lecture against the Adventists and Ellen White. In those lectures, Canright raised the charge of plagiarism against Ellen White, and Adventist pastors William Healey and J. N. Loughborough responded, showing where Canright had overstated his case. When the debate was over, the opposing pastors published their parting shot in the local newspaper, accusing Ellen White of plagiarism.^[13] But these pastors were hardly unbiased judges. For centuries, the charge of plagiarism has been a favorite weapon used against religious leaders--John Bunyan and John Wesley were both vigorously accused.^[14]

In the nineteenth century, plagiarism was known and condemned, but uncredited paraphrasing was widely practiced. American humorist Mark Twain once wondered if there was "anything in any human utterance, oral or written, except plagiarism!"[\[15\]](#) Edgar Allen Poe was not so relaxed on the subject. He caused a considerable uproar when he accused Longfellow of plagiarism. Ironically, modern scholars find that Poe himself plagiarized.[\[16\]](#) Literary borrowing is much more easily defined and condemned in the abstract than it is avoided in actual practice.

Even closer to Ellen White was Uriah Smith, who condemned the plagiarizing of his sister Annie's poem,[\[17\]](#) while in his own writings on prophecy he made free use of the paraphrased words of George Storrs and Josiah Litch.[\[18\]](#) In this, Smith was not hypocritical. He, like other nineteenth-century writers, simply drew the line between plagiarism and legitimate borrowing at a different point than many would today.

It has been rumored that Ellen White was threatened with a lawsuit for her literary borrowing from Conybeare and Howson's *Life and Epistles of the Apostle Paul*. What are the facts?[\[19\]](#)

[p. 3]

In spite of A. G. Daniells' faulty memory in this regard, Mrs. White was never accused of plagiarism by the British authors Conybeare and Howson, nor was she threatened with a lawsuit, nor was her book withdrawn because of criticisms of its use of sources. In the 1890's there was a letter of inquiry about *Sketches From the Life of Paul* addressed to the Review and Herald Publishing Association by one of the several American publishers of Conybeare and Howson, the T. Y. Crowell Co. of New York. Large quantities of Conybeare and Howson's book had earlier been purchased from the Crowell Co. to give away as prizes to those who would secure subscriptions to the *Signs of the Times*. W. C. White, the only source of information about this letter, indicates that it was written in a "kindly spirit" and contained "no threats of prosecution, nor any complaints as to plagiarism." [\[20\]](#)

When the Crowell company was quizzed about the matter some thirty years later, they replied:

*We publish Conybeare's **Life and Epistles of the Apostle Paul**, but this is not a copyrighted book and we would have no legal grounds for action against your book and we do not think that we have ever raised any objection or made any claim such as you speak of.* [\[21\]](#)

Like many of Ellen White's books, *Sketches From the Life of Paul* was out of print for some time while Mrs. White worked toward enlarging it into *The Acts of the Apostles*, but aside from scurrilous speculation and faulty memories, there is no evidence that this had anything to do with any alleged criticism of Ellen White's use of Conybeare and Howson.

On the question of the legality of literary borrowing, Attorney Vincent Ramik, who is not a Seventh-day Adventist, investigated Ellen White's use of sources according to the copyright laws and cases in the nineteenth century. He concluded that her use did not constitute literary piracy *even if* all the books from which she drew had been legally copyrighted.[\[22\]](#)

What about the structure and chapter titles of Ellen White's *Patriarchs and Prophets*--Are they similar to Alfred Edersheim's *Old Testament Bible History*?[\[23\]](#)

It is easy to create a false impression by looking at superficial similarities. Close examination shows that of the 73 chapter titles in *Patriarchs and Prophets*, only nine of the titles are either identical to those in Edersheim's book, or differ only by the inclusion or deletion of the article "the." Furthermore, these nine include such common titles as "The Creation," "The Flood," "Destruction of Sodom," "The Marriage of Isaac," and "The Death of Saul."

The misleading nature of the comparison is even more obvious when one discovers that in Edersheim's book there are no chapter titles as such. Rather, there are up to half a dozen or more summary phrases indicating the subject matter of each chapter. It is from these summary phrases that the allegedly parallel "titles" have been drawn. Furthermore, the order of the chapters is really established by the order in which the stories appear in the Old Testament.

What about the illustrations from Wylie's *History of Protestantism* which the Pacific Press published without credit to the Cassell Company?[\[24\]](#)

Here is a case where *The White Lie* recycles a charge made in the 1930's by former Adventist E. S. Ballenger in his paper, *The Gathering Call*.[\[25\]](#) At that time the charge was laid to rest by pointing out that W. C. White carried on extensive correspondence with the Cassell, Petter and Galpin Company of Great Britain, in order to purchase the rights to the illustrations in question.

Typical of Elder White's care in this matter is a letter written to Henry Scott on April 7, 1886. He advised Scott, who was publishing Adventist literature in Australia, to become acquainted with the Cassell Company agent in Melbourne, in order to purchase the rights to the cuts owned by that company. "When we will credit the work from which the cut is taken, as is now being done in *Present Truth* [the British Adventist paper], they make a 40 percent discount." However, Elder White went on, "I do not like the idea of promising to credit each picture." It is clear then, that he favored purchasing the rights to the illustrations outright.

Although any records of the Pacific Press's negotiations with the publishers were destroyed in the 1906 fire, they certainly were within their rights if they followed W. C. White's preferences in this matter. No conclusions can be drawn from the fact that the artists' initials appear on some cuts used in Wylie's book and not in *The Great Controversy* because we do not know in what form the Pacific Press received the engravings from the Cassell Company. It is perfectly possible that the initials were removed by the Cassell Company because of some arrangement with the artist prior to their sending the materials to the Pacific Press.[\[26\]](#)

What about the use James and Ellen White made of the writings of J. N. Andrews and Uriah Smith?[\[27\]](#)

W. C. White has aptly summarized the pioneers' view on this subject:

All felt that the truths to be presented were common property and wherever one could help another or get help from another in the expression of Biblical truths, it was considered right to do so. Consequently there were many excellent statements of present truth copied by one writer from another. And no man said that aught which he wrote was exclusively his own.[\[28\]](#)

Ellen White explained her own use of other Adventist writers in the introduction to *The Great Controversy* where she says that "in narrating the experience and views of those carrying forward the work of reform in our own time" she had made use of their writings in a way similar

to the use she made of the language of historians.[29] Thus James White used Uriah Smith just as Ellen White used James White. Outside Adventist circles, the popular historical writer Charles Adams used historian Merle D'Aubigne just as Ellen White used Charles Adams.[30]

Did Mrs. White make any attempt to conceal from Adventists her literary borrowing?[31]

No, she even urged that they read some of the very books from which she borrowed most freely:

The Life of St. Paul by Conybeare and Howson, I regard as a book of great merit, and one of rare usefulness to the earnest student of the New Testament History.[32]

On another occasion, she wrote:

*Provide something to be read during these long winter evenings. For those who can procure it, D'Aubigne's **History of the Reformation** will be both interesting and profitable.*[33]

Clearly, Mrs. White was not trying to hide anything or she would not have recommended the very books from which she was at the time choosing [p. 4] material.

On the other hand, she did not generally draw particular attention to her use of other authors, except in the *Health Reformer* in the 1870's, where, as she wrote her monthly column and selected material for republication for the non-Adventist public, she regularly quoted from other writers, gave credit to them, and even recommended that her readers secure their books.[34]

Did Mrs. White feel that it was permissible for her to paraphrase the language of others?

Yes, in fact, in a letter to her secretary, Fannie Bolton, she once gave an enlightening illustration of her concept of the ownership of truth. Fannie, from time to time, felt that Mrs. White had not given her proper credit for the work she had done in editing Mrs. White's material in the process of preparing it for publication.

In vision, Ellen White "was shown Fannie gathering the fruit, some ripe, the best, some unripe. She put it in her apron and said, 'This is mine. It is mine.' I said, 'Fannie, you are certainly claiming that which is not yours. That fruit belongs to that tree. Anyone may pluck and enjoy it, but it belongs to that tree.' "[35] This concept of the tree of truth suggests that God is the author and owner of all truth, just as the tree is the author and owner of its fruit. God provides truth unstintingly to all who will receive it and use it.

Mrs. White explained Christ's use of familiar concepts in much the same way:

He was the originator of all the ancient gems of truth. Through the work of the enemy, these truths had been displaced. . . . Christ rescued them from the rubbish of error, gave them a new, vital force, and commanded them to shine as jewels, and stand fast forever.

Christ Himself could use any of these old truths without borrowing the smallest particle, for He had originated them all.[36]

In the later years of her life, when she became aware that questions were being raised about whether her copying from other writers was an infringement on their rights, she asked "Who has

been injured?"^[37] Significantly, this question was the very one asked by the courts of her day to determine whether borrowing was proper.^[38] If she were writing today, her approach might be different, but she must be judged by the concepts of literary property and legality current in her own day.

What about the statements where Mrs. White appears to claim an exclusive divine source for what she wrote?^[39]

The question is a pertinent and important one. In 1867 Mrs. White wrote: "My views were written independent of books or of the opinions of others."^[40] But when the statement is put in proper context, as it can be found in the *Review and Herald* of Oct. 8, 1867, one discovers she was speaking of her earliest health writings. After her initial writing on health, she tells us in this very same article that she read the books of various reformers and then proceeded to publish excerpts from them in *Health: or, How to Live*. Why? She says it was to show how the things shown her in vision had also been brought out by other able writers on the subject.

It was also in the context of those early health writings that she said:

Although I am as dependent upon the Spirit of the Lord in writing my views as I am in receiving them, yet the words I employ in describing what I have seen are my own. . . .^[41]

Here she is clearly drawing a distinction between words she has to provide and divinely dictated words. Since she described her vision of the proper length for women's dresses in different language on different occasions, some women questioned her vision. She had to explain that except in rare instances, the visions did not provide the exact words in which to describe what she was seeing.

Elsewhere, Mrs. White wrote:

I do not write one article in the paper expressing merely my own ideas. They are what God has opened before me in vision--the precious rays of light shining from the throne.^[42]

This statement was made in a long article responding to charges from Battle Creek that her reproofs of the church there were merely her own opinions based on gossip she had heard. This charge Mrs. White honestly and forthrightly denied. She affirmed her deep conviction that the messages she bore were messages from heaven. This would not rule out the fact that they might occasionally contain concepts or words gleaned from her reading; but even in such cases it was the Holy Spirit that convicted her of the truth and value of what she was reading.

On yet another occasion, Mrs. White wrote:

I have not been in the habit of reading any doctrinal articles in the paper, that my mind should not have any understanding of anyone's ideas and views, and that not a mold of any man's theories should have any connection with that which I write.^[43]

Once again, the context is essential to understanding. This letter was written at a time when G. I. Butler and E. J. Waggoner were locked in heated debate over the meaning of the "law" in Galatians. At this crucial juncture, when she had to counsel both men, she avoided reading

doctrinal articles in the paper [*The Signs of the Times*] in order that her counsel would not bear the mold of either Waggoner's or Butler's theories.

Mrs. White's statements about the source of her writings refer consistently to the ultimate authority by which she spoke, not to the "divers manners" in which the Lord communicated to her, nor to the aid she received in expressing God's truth. Why did she not say more about her use of sources? Perhaps because she had seen how prone people were to see the human elements in her writings as proof that they were merely her own opinion, not divine messages. *The White Lie* is eloquent testimony to the continuing difficulty many people have in recognizing a union of both human and divine elements in inspired writings.

How could it happen that Mrs. White, in describing what she was shown in a vision, employs the words of other authors? [44]

Most likely there were times when Mrs. White read an impressive passage in a book and later the Lord called her attention to the same truth while in vision, applying that truth to a specific need in her own life or the life of the church. In such cases, she could easily express a part of what she was shown in language paraphrased from another author. We know of a half dozen or so cases where this appears to have happened.[45]

A similar experience occurred in connection with the "Iceberg" vision. Mrs. White read an incident about a ship meeting an iceberg. Then, several days later, during a vision, a ship became a symbol of the church, and the iceberg became the symbol of the opposition and [p. 5] heresies of Dr. John Harvey Kellogg and his faction.[46] Just as in the cases where Mrs. White used the words of other authors to describe, in part, what she had seen in vision, here a dramatic event about which she had read offered the Lord a symbolic vehicle in which to convey truth to her.

Is the comparison between the use of literary sources in the Bible and Ellen White's literary borrowing really valid?[47]

Yes, if one recognizes what issue is involved. Borrowing by Biblical authors has no direct bearing on the ethical propriety of literary borrowing in the nineteenth century, for concepts of literary property were different in biblical times. However, literary borrowing in the Bible speaks to the question of *inspiration*. In other words, if the question is whether genuinely inspired writers can employ uninspired literary sources, then we can look to the Bible for an answer to that question. When we do, we discover that Biblical writers used sources while writing under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.[48]

The White Lie argues invalidly that if the Gospel writers had borrowed as much as Ellen White did they would have had to borrow every verse. This argument is based on the fact that the reader will find "more than four hundred references to eighty-eight authors in *The Great Controversy*." [49] When W. C. White gave these statistics, he was discussing the 1911 revision of *The Great Controversy*. At that time, Ellen White instructed her literary assistants to go through the book and supply specific references for the quotations. In doing so, the literary assistants did not attempt to specify where Ellen White originally found the quotation, but where the modern reader could most readily find it. In fact, Mrs. White drew from far fewer authors than the number of references would seem to suggest, for, in many cases, a single author from whom she originally drew quoted from several prior sources himself.[50]

THE PIONEERS AND THE PROPHET

What authority did Ellen White have for the pioneers of the Adventist Church? Did they believe in her inspiration?[51]

Truly, the pioneers should be allowed to speak for themselves. Of the 16 "witnesses" brought forward in *The White Lie* two are represented by statements made by other individuals (Andrews and Clough), one had no direct knowledge of what he was talking about (House), and several in no way express or imply disbelief in the inspiration of her writings (Starr, Lacey, and James and Ellen White). One was simply wrong (Colcord), and the Healdsburg Ministerial Association spokesmen were hostile opponents from the beginning. Fannie Bolton made numerous conflicting statements, and A. G. Daniells and Uriah Smith are misrepresented because their "witness" consists of only isolated comments. Contrary to *The White Lie's* claim that these individuals were "in most cases" separated from the church after they made these statements, not more than three of the 16 were disfellowshipped for causes relating to their beliefs.

Neither the pioneers nor anyone else has ever claimed that every line Ellen White penned was inspired. She herself said that the "sacred" and the "common" must be distinguished, and that there were times when she had to write on everyday matters and business affairs.[52] Consistent with Mrs. White's statement that she was writing from memory in her autobiographical sketch, *Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 2, it has been noted that Mrs. White "did not lay claim to divine aid as she attempted to reconstruct the story of her life or in recounting the happenings at home or in her travels." [53]

Did Uriah Smith have some periods of doubt concerning Ellen White's prophetic gift?

Yes, he did. One of those is reflected in his letter to D. M. Canright.[54] But although Smith had some struggles when he was reproofed, he took the reproof to heart and soon stood firmly on the integrity and value of the Mrs. White's writings. On one occasion he explained to Adventists everywhere how he almost slipped but didn't:

Considerable handle, I understand, has been made in some directions of the fact that the editor of the Review has been troubled over the question of the visions, has been unsound on that question, and at one time came very near giving them up. It strikes me that this is quite a small amount of capital to work up much of a trade on--"came very near giving them up";--but didn't! I also, at one time came very near getting run over by the cars, and rolled into jelly; but I didn't, and so continue to this day. Some have met just such a catastrophe. The difference between them and myself is that they did, and I didn't. Some have given up the visions. The difference between them and myself is the same--they did, and I didn't.[55]

Smith acknowledged that there were times when "circumstances seemed very perplexing" but the weight of evidence in his mind had never "balanced on the side of surrender," and he affirmed his position of trust and confidence.

J. N. Andrews is said to have doubted Ellen White's prophetic gift because he saw similarities between Milton's epic poem, *Paradise Lost*, and Ellen White's writings. Did Mrs. White borrow from *Paradise Lost* and did J. N. Andrews question the gift?[56]

In 1858, after hearing Ellen White give an account of her vision of the great controversy, J. N. Andrews asked her if she had read Milton's epic. She assured him she had not, so he brought a copy to her home. This was not at all unusual. On several occasions the studious Andrews made gifts of books to the Whites. Interestingly, although *The White Lie* alleges again and again that Ellen White borrowed from Milton, the book provides no evidence to substantiate the claim. Scholarly studies have noted some similar thoughts, but no literary dependence.[\[57\]](#)

As for J. N. Andrews, early in his experience he found that his parents and in-laws were critical of James and Ellen White, and in a moving confession, said:

My influence against the visions has not been from a multiplicity of words against them. . . . But I confess I have not stood up for them and borne testimony in their favor.[\[58\]](#)

Later, after he had spent time in the Whites' home and seen the anguish and tears which accompanied the writing of counsels and reproof, he wrote:

My convictions that the testimonies of Sister White are from Heaven, have been greatly strengthened by the opportunity which I have had to observe the life, and experience, and labors of these servants of Christ.[\[59\]](#)

Shortly afterward, he wrote of the [p. 6] important contribution made by the testimonies:

Their work is to unite the people of God in the same mind and in the same judgment upon the meaning of the Scriptures. Mere human judgment, with no direct instruction from heaven, can never search out hidden iniquity, nor adjust dark and complicated church difficulties, nor prevent different and conflicting interpretations of the Scriptures. It would be sad indeed if God could not still converse with His people.[\[60\]](#)

Like all of us, the pioneers were people who in their human weakness sometimes struggled with pride and doubt even as we do today, but, with a very few exceptions, those who knew Ellen White best came to believe firmly in her inspiration.

Apparently A. G. Daniells was criticized in his own time for not being a sufficiently strong supporter of Ellen G. White's ministry. What was his attitude?[\[61\]](#)

Elder Daniells's faith and confidence were unimpaired to the very hours of his death. At the 1922 General Conference he was indeed criticized by some who believed that Ellen White's inspiration was both verbal and inerrant, even in the smallest detail.[\[62\]](#) Daniells did not hold this rigid view. He was deeply hurt by what he considered to be false and unfounded criticisms of his position regarding Ellen G. White.

Shortly before his death in 1935, he recalled his experience of March, 1903, a day or two before the opening of the General Conference session in Oakland, California. He referred to the Battle Creek crisis and of his agony of soul as he reached out to God for evidence of His support in "the awful battle that was before us." He told how he wrestled through the hours of the night:

Finally, there fell upon me these words, "If you will stand by My servant until her sun sets in a bright sky, I will stand by you to the last hour of the conflict. . . ." I fell on my side, and I couldn't talk any more with God. I was overcome. And although I have made mistakes, God has stood by

me, and I have never repudiated that woman, nor questioned her loyalty, to my knowledge, from that night to this. O, that was a happy experience to me. And it bound me up with the greatest character that has lived in this dispensation. That is all I can say.[\[63\]](#)

What was H. Camden Lacey's role in the preparation of *The Desire of Ages*?[\[64\]](#)

Lacey at one point claimed he was the first Adventist to urge the idea that the Holy Spirit was a person, and that it was because of his influence that Ellen White first referred to the Holy Spirit as "He" instead of "it." Lacey was wrong in this, since Mrs. White used the personal pronoun "He" to refer to the Holy Spirit in the very first edition of *Steps to Christ*, published in 1892 while Lacey was still a college student in Battle Creek, and well before Mrs. White or her literary assistants became acquainted with him.[\[65\]](#)

At the time *The Desire of Ages* was being prepared he was 25 years old; he was at the Avondale School teaching, not Bible, but mathematics, natural science, and elocution.[\[66\]](#) Lacey himself, in response to an inquiry, wrote that his only contribution to the preparation of *The Desire of Ages* was to help in the arrangement of the sentences, or paragraphs, or the choice of a more suitable word in the first two or three chapters:

Never at any time, was there an alteration of the thought, or the insertion of an idea that was not already expressed in the original text. The resultant copy was always submitted to Sister White herself for final approval.

*The entire **Desire of Ages** as it is now printed is, therefore, I hold, the product of Sister White's mind and heart, guided by the good Spirit of God. And the "editing" was merely technical.*[\[67\]](#)

Elsewhere in the letter he makes clear his understanding of the book:

*I gladly and with all my heart accept the **Desire of Ages** as an inspired book; indeed, I regard it as the most spiritual life of Christ, outside the Gospels, ever given to His church. . . . I have scores of extracts taken from this wonderful book, and from other writings of Sister White. I value them as products of the same "Spirit of Prophecy" as indicated in the Scriptures. And thousands of my hearers in church and classroom will bear witness to that.*[\[68\]](#)

Was a failure to grasp the true nature of inspiration one reason why some persons in the past questioned the propriety of Ellen White's use of literary sources and her reworking of her writings?[\[69\]](#)

Conservative Christians have held two general views with regard to the nature of inspiration. The commonly held view--sometimes called verbal inspiration--holds to the belief that the Holy Spirit inspires the exact words of a Heaven-sent message. For many this would mean that a truly inspired writer would have no recourse to uninspired sources nor would he ever need to rephrase a message, since, in their thinking, a Spirit-indited message would be in the exact form preferred by God.

Other Christians believe the Biblical data indicates that the Holy Spirit inspires the person, and only occasionally specifies the words he is to use. The Holy Spirit imbues his mind with the thoughts or messages that He would have him convey (2 Pet. 1:21). This view is sometimes described as thought inspiration. Under the continued guidance of the Spirit the prophet speaks or writes in his own words, according to his ability, what he has been instructed (cf. 1 Sam. 3:11-18) or shown (cf. Rev. 1:10, 11). Thus, he may be led to draw upon the writings of others to frame more effectively the intent of the message (cf. Titus 1:12, 13). On occasion he may rewrite or rephrase an earlier message to make it clearer and more forceful (cf. Jer. 36:32).

This latter view of the revelation-inspiration process was held by the pioneers of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. However, a failure to grasp the implications of this position led some later workers to misunderstand the procedures employed by Ellen White in producing her writings. A broader view of the Biblical doctrine of inspiration would have prevented the perplexity then, even as it will now for the membership of the church. Statements by W. C. White, who assisted his mother in her publishing work, set forth both Ellen White's position, and that of the church, on inspiration:

Mother has never laid claim to verbal inspiration, and I do not find that my father, or Elder Bates, Andrews, Smith, or Waggoner, put forth this claim. If there were verbal inspiration in writing her manuscripts, why should there be on her part the work of addition or adaptation? It is a fact that Mother often takes one of her manuscripts, and goes over it thoughtfully, making additions that develop the thought still further.[\[70\]](#)

You refer to the little statement which I sent you regarding verbal inspiration. This statement made by the [p. 7] General Conference of 1883[\[71\]](#) was in perfect harmony with the beliefs and positions of the pioneers in this cause, and it was, I think, the only position taken by any of our ministers and teachers until Prof. [W. W.] Prescott, president of Battle Creek College [1885-1894], presented in a very forceful way another view--the view held and presented by Professor Gausen. [Probably Louis Gaussen, a Swiss clergyman (1790-1863), who maintained that the Bible was verbally inspired.] The acceptance of that view by the students in the Battle Creek College and many others, including Elder Haskell, has resulted in bringing into our work questions and perplexities without end, and always increasing.

Sister White never accepted the Gausen theory regarding verbal inspiration, either as applied to her own work or as applied to the Bible.[\[72\]](#)

Where can one read a good sample of the pioneers' views on Ellen White's prophetic gift?

Adventist Book Centers are now able to supply the book *The Witness of the Pioneers Concerning the Spirit of Prophecy*, a facsimile reprint of periodical and pamphlet articles written by the contemporaries of Ellen G. White.

ELLEN WHITE AND THE BIBLE

Do Seventh-day Adventists make Ellen White the final, infallible standard of all Adventist faith and practice?[\[73\]](#) Has the church changed its position on this topic in recent years?

The church has not changed its position, in spite of the imprecision of some individuals in attempting to explain the church's position. The church today holds the same position that the

pioneers held. At the General Conference Session in Dallas in 1980, a *Statement of Fundamental Beliefs* was adopted which stated in part:

*One of the gifts of the Holy Spirit is prophecy. This gift is an identifying mark of the remnant church and was manifested in the ministry of Ellen G. White. As the Lord's messenger, her writings are a continuing and authoritative source of truth which provide for the church comfort, guidance, instruction, and correction. **They also make clear that the Bible is the standard by which all teaching and experience must be tested.** (Emphasis supplied.)*

The above statement clearly places the Bible as the standard and rule of Adventist faith and practice. The writings of Ellen White must be judged by that standard.

Do Adventists consider Ellen White "canonical"?

No. The "canon" is the collection of books that make up the Bible. Seventh-day Adventists believe the canon was closed with the last book of the New Testament. Ellen White expressed herself very clearly on the issue:

1. *During the first twenty-five hundred years of human history, there was no written revelation.*
2. *The preparation of the written word began in the time of Moses.*
3. *This work continued during the long period of sixteen hundred years. . . .*
4. *This work continued . . . to John, the recorder of the most sublime truths of the gospel.*
5. *The completion of the Old and New Testaments marks the close of the canon of Scripture.* [\[74\]](#)

In connection with the above statements, Ellen White also noted how the Spirit speaks apart from the Sacred Canon:

During the ages while the Scriptures of both the Old and the New Testament were being given, the Holy Spirit did not cease to communicate light to individual minds, apart from the revelations to be embodied in the Sacred Canon. The Bible itself relates how, through the Holy Spirit, men received warning, reproof, counsel, and instruction, in matters in no way relating to the giving of the Scriptures. And mention is made of prophets in different ages, of whose utterances nothing is recorded. In like manner, after the close of the canon of the Scripture, the Holy Spirit was still to continue its work, to enlighten, warn, and comfort the children of God. [\[75\]](#)

We can say unequivocally that the church has never considered Ellen White's writings canonical and does not believe so today. We do affirm, on the other hand, that she spoke by the same inspiration of the Holy Spirit as Bible writers did. The pioneers spoke to this point repeatedly:

James White: *The Bible is a perfect, and complete revelation. It is our only rule of faith and practice. But this is no reason why God may not show the past, present, and future fulfillment of His word in these last days by dreams and visions, according to Peter's testimony. True visions are given to lead us to God, and His written Word.* [\[76\]](#)

Uriah Smith: *The Protestant principle of "the Bible and the Bible alone," is of itself good and true; and we stand upon it as firmly as anyone can; but when reiterated in connection with outspoken denunciations of the visions, it has specious appearance for evil. So used, it contains a covert insinuation, most effectually calculated to warp the judgment of the unguarded, that to believe the visions is to leave the Bible, and to cling to the Bible, is to discard the visions. . . . When we claim to stand on the Bible and the Bible alone, we bind ourselves to receive, unequivocally and fully, all that the Bible teaches.* [77]

Is Ellen White's inspiration equal to that of the Bible?

Her inspiration is equal in *quality* [p. 8] to the inspiration of the Bible, but the *function* and *purpose* of Ellen White's inspiration is different from that of the Bible. A parallel is found in Scripture. The prophet Nathan was as fully inspired as King David, but Nathan's inspiration had a different function from David's. David's inspired writings became a part of the canon of Scripture. Nathan's inspiration did not result in any canonical writings.

One cannot make differences in the quality of inspiration because inspiration is either present or absent, so that various manifestations of it cannot be distinguished by degrees. The Holy Spirit was just as careful in the superintendence of Nathan's inspired messages as in David's writings, although, in harmony with the divine purpose, only the latter were incorporated into the canon.

Ellen White's writings do not function as a standard or rule for doctrine. The Bible does function in this manner. In this sense Ellen White does not have equal *doctrinal* authority with the Bible.

THE QUESTION OF INFALLIBILITY

Ellen White is said to have made a number of errors. Do we claim she was infallible?

No, and neither did Ellen White claim "infallibility." For example, when she was criticized for stating the wrong number of rooms in a sanitarium--40 instead of 38--she said:

There has never been revealed to me the exact number of rooms in any of our sanitariums; and the knowledge I have obtained of such things I have gained of those who were supposed to know. In my words, when speaking upon these common subjects, there is nothing to lead minds to believe that I receive my knowledge in a vision from the Lord and am stating it as such. [78]

Ellen White also recognized that she was not infallible in her personal behavior. She once wrote her husband:

I wish that self should be hid in Jesus. I wish self to be crucified. I do not claim infallibility, or even perfection of Christian character. I am not free from mistakes and errors in my life. Had I followed my Saviour more closely, I should not have to mourn so much my unlikeness to His dear image. [79]

In this connection, there is a Bible experience worth noting in Acts 21. The Apostle Paul was especially called to preach to the Gentiles. Because he did not include the Jewish ceremonial law in his preaching there were certain Jewish Christians that looked upon him with suspicion. Upon returning to Jerusalem from a successful missionary journey among the Gentiles, he was persuaded to lend his influence to the observance of certain ceremonial rites that were no longer

required, in order to conciliate his critics. Ellen White makes the following significant comment, which she would doubtless apply to herself as well:

He was not authorized of God to concede so much as they had asked. This concession was not in harmony with his teachings, nor with the firm integrity of his character. His advisors were not infallible. Though some of these men wrote under the inspiration of the Spirit of God, yet when not under its direct influence they sometimes erred. [\[80\]](#)

W. C. White did not claim infallibility for his mother with regard to historical dates and details:

*In some of the historical matters such as are brought out in **Patriarchs and Prophets** and in **Acts of the Apostles**, and in **Great Controversy**, the main outlines were made very clear and plain to her, and when she began to develop these topics, she was left to study the Bible and history to get dates and geographical relations and to perfect her description of details.* [\[81\]](#)

W. C. White also wrote:

Regarding Mother's writings and their use as authority on points of history and chronology, Mother has never wished our brethren to treat them as authority regarding the details of history or historical dates. [\[82\]](#)

In summary, Ellen White did not claim to be above errors in writing on common and business matters which did not involve counsels and messages from the Lord. She recognized that she was not infallible in her personal life, and her son did not feel she should be used as an authority on incidental details in her historical writing. It is true, of course, that she never used the term "infallible" to refer to herself or her writings in any context, but she did claim that the messages she gave were those given her by the Lord. [\[83\]](#)

What about the errors she is said to have made, not only in history, but in science, health, theology, and exegesis? [\[84\]](#)

We can hardly appreciate what times were like more than one hundred years ago when Ellen White wrote in the areas of health, science, and nutrition. [\[85\]](#) When she spoke of *malignancy* in connection with tobacco in 1864, a few health reformers agreed with her, but some physicians were prescribing smoking cigars for lung ailments. How did she know which position to take? When she spoke about the profound effects of prenatal influence in terms closely paralleling the pronouncements of science today, science knew little if anything about the subject. While she was emphasizing exercise and fresh air for invalids, many physicians were prescribing closed rooms and prolonged bedrest. Her counsels regarding air pollution, effect of diet on blood circulation, the use of salt, alcohol, mind-body relationship, and other topics, have been vindicated by modern research. All such statements were considered by some critics as errors when she first wrote them.

Because of difficulties and discrepancies, there are those who oppose the modern prophetic voice. And there also are those who look for "mistakes" in the Bible. Ellen White found a valuable gem of truth on this topic in a sermon by Henry Melvill. Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, she reset that gem and preserved it for us:

All the mistakes will not cause trouble to one soul, or cause any feet to stumble, that would not manufacture difficulties from the plainest revealed truth.[\[86\]](#)

To attempt to prove that all the alleged "errors" in Ellen White's writings are not actually errors, is not a profitable exercise. If a critic charges her with ten errors, and those ten are proven not to be errors, the critic will be ready with fifteen further allegations. Each individual must decide for himself whether the weight of evidence supports or discredits Ellen White's claim to the prophetic gift.

In studying difficult passages either in the Bible or in other writings which the Holy Spirit inspired, it is well to ask the following questions: Do I really understand the context, meaning and importance of the inspired writer's statement? Do I understand fully the evidence that is in apparent conflict with the inspired statement? Can the two sets of data be harmonized? May I reasonably [p. 9] expect a better understanding to be forthcoming from further study, experiment, or divine illumination? Can the issue be left unresolved? To those who listen, the Holy Spirit speaks clearly through inspired writings, regardless of occasional difficulties that may seem to appear.[\[87\]](#)

THE VISIONS

Mrs. White suffered a head injury as a child and bouts with ill-health throughout her life. Could her visions have been related to her injuries or illness? Could they have been caused by hypnosis, mesmerism, or epilepsy?[\[88\]](#)

The attempt to discredit the work of the Holy Spirit by attributing it to natural causes is as old as the Bible itself. After all, the miracles of Pentecost were attributed to drunkenness. Once one rejects belief in a divine source of the visions, it is to be expected that natural explanations will be sought.

Early in her experience Ellen White's visions were thought by some to be the result of mesmerism, an early form of hypnotism. She was just beginning her work as the Lord's messenger, and the next time she felt the power of God come upon her, she began to doubt and resist the vision. She was reprovved and struck dumb for twenty-four hours. In the following vision she was shown her "sin in doubting the power of God," and was told that this was the reason for being struck dumb. "After that," she said, "I dared not doubt, or for a moment resist the power of God, however others might think of me."[\[89\]](#)

Some who questioned her visions, beginning with D. M. Canright in 1887, attributed them to epileptic seizures, noting that there were similarities between the two. As the visions began, she lost her strength; later during the vision she regained it, sometimes exhibiting superhuman strength. During the visions she did not breathe. Her eyes were open, yet she did not recognize others in the vicinity. Because these physical experiences remotely resemble seizures, it has been suggested by critics that her visions were not visions at all.

F. D. Nichol, in his book, *Ellen G. White and Her Critics*, asks the question: "How should a prophet act in vision?" He notes that because prophets are people, they have physical and nervous systems, and as a vision is not a normal state, it should be expected that certain non-normal experiences would take place.[\[90\]](#)

Daniel experienced a loss of strength, then extra strength. He was struck dumb and there was no breath in him (Daniel 10). Balaam fell into a "trance," "having his eyes open" (Numbers 24). The effect on John was that he "fell as dead" (Revelation 1:17). When Saul of Tarsus had his first vision "he fell to the earth," "trembling" (Acts 9). After a vision Zecharias, father of John the Baptist, was "speechless" (Luke 1). At times critics of the Bible have tried to explain visions as being the result of mental illness, too.

One characteristic familiar to continuing seizures is what is called "diminished mental capacity." Simply stated, the mind is weakened with repeated occurrences. It is estimated that Ellen White had about 200 open visions and some 1800 prophetic dreams. The open visions in the earlier years were accompanied by physical phenomena. If these were not visions, but epileptic seizures, we would expect mental deterioration through the years. We find no such evidence. On the contrary, there was observable development of her capabilities. She speaks of better health in later years than in her younger years. Thousands of pages of handwritten material from her pen do not contain any evidence of a progressive decline in her ability.

Furthermore, where is a single example of anyone whose frequent seizures enabled him to guide a church so wisely and counsel a people so helpfully? What is most important, after all, is the message conveyed by the visions, not the specific way in which God conveys that message.

What was the relationship of Ellen White's earliest visions to those of William Foy and Hazen Foss?[91]

William Ellis Foy (1818-1893) and Hazen Little Foss (1819-1893) both received visions prior to the Disappointment of 1844. Both men lived to hear Ellen White relate her early visions and acknowledged that what she described, they had seen, too.

Ellen White, as a young woman, had heard Foy lecture in Portland, Maine, sometime between 1842 and 1844. Not much is known concerning him, although recent research confirms that he was a black reared near Augusta, Maine. He is often confused with Foss, but unlike Foss, Foy did tell of his visions and published the first two in a pamphlet. He never felt he had grieved the Spirit of God, and he continued to work as a Free-Will Baptist minister for many years. A brief personal history was published along with the accounts of his first two visions in 1845 in a pamphlet titled *The Christian Experience of William E. Foy Together with the Two Visions He Received in the Months of Jan. and Feb. 1842*. According to J. N. Loughborough, it was a third vision, in 1844, that Foy could not understand, and which he later heard Ellen White relate. So far as is known, that third vision never was published.

Hazen Foss similarly received a vision prior to the Disappointment, but he refused to relate it. When told that the vision was taken from him, he feared the consequences and called a meeting at which he tried to recall the vision but could not. He heard Ellen White relate the same vision early in 1845, and testified to her of his experience. Although for many years Foss was thought to be a relative of Ellen White's brother-in-law,[92] it was not until about 1960 that the exact relationship became known through genealogical records.[93] Hazen was the younger brother of Samuel Hoyt Foss, who married Ellen White's older sister, Mary, in 1842.

Both Hazen Foss and William Foy recognized the visions given to Ellen White to be the same as those given them, and since the Lord originally intended that one of these men should be His prophetic messenger to the remnant church, there would, of course, be parallels between their

visions and those of Ellen White. Although a few such similarities can be seen between Foy's published visions of heaven and those of Ellen White, there are so many marked differences that *The White Lie's* allegation that her visions were "almost a carbon copy" of Foy's is a substantial exaggeration.

Did Mrs. White promise to answer the questions of Drs. Stewart, Sadler, and others, and then, after she received the questions, "conveniently" have a vision instructing her not to do so?[94]

On March 30, 1906, Mrs. White [p. 10] wrote a testimony addressed "To Those Who Are Perplexed Regarding The Testimonies Relating To The Medical Missionary Work." [95] In it she spoke of being directed by the Lord to request those with perplexities and objections regarding the testimonies to write them out and submit them to those who desired to remove the perplexities.

On June 3, 1906, Mrs. White wrote concerning a vision she had received a few days before, in which she was speaking before a group of people answering questions about her work and writings. She stated:

I was directed by a messenger from heaven not to take up the burden of picking up and answering all the sayings and doubts that are being put into many minds. [96]

These two statements, written about two months apart, are cited as evidence that Mrs. White's "revelations" could often be quite conveniently arranged so as to protect her interests. An examination of the events of that period, however, sheds considerable light upon the apparent reversal of Mrs. White's invitation for questions.

Upon receipt of Mrs. White's testimony, several individuals acted upon her request and sent their questions to her office. A review of Ellen White's correspondence over the next months gives evidence that she indeed took these questions seriously. Questions ranged from the ridiculous and trivial to those deserving a careful, studied response. In a letter to friends written June 15, 1906, she wrote:

Letters, full of questions, are continually crowding in upon us. . . . If I can present to the people the facts in the case, as they exist, it may save some from making shipwreck of faith. I have been sent some of the most frivolous questions in regard to the Testimonies given me by the Lord. [97]

The White Estate files contain more than 30 letters written by Ellen White between April and October, 1906, dealing with questions raised about various phases of her work. In addition to these, articles were published in the *Review and Herald*. [98] Some of the letters and statements made are here listed:

- Letter 170, 1906, June 13, 1906, regarding the words "I," "we," "us," etc., in the testimonies;
- Letter 206, 1906, June 14, 1906, re what is inspired (every word? every letter?);
- Talk (DF #247), June 26, 1906, re the relationship of W. C. White to Ellen White's work;
- Letter of June 28, 1906, re the title "prophet";
- Letter 225, 1906, July 8, 1906, re the writing and sending of the testimonies.

It will be noticed that all of these responses, in fact, 80 percent of those on file, were written after the vision of May 25 in which she was instructed "not to answer all the sayings and doubts."[\[99\]](#) Mrs. White again reviewed the question of the Chicago buildings,[\[100\]](#) even though she had dealt with this matter back in 1903.

Not all questions were answered by Mrs. White. Some were referred to her staff whom she directed to look up past statements on the subjects to meet the criticisms. W. C. White wrote on July 13, 1906:

For several days Brother Crisler has been hunting up what has been written in past years regarding contracts and agreements. I think he will be able to submit to Mother his collection of manuscripts early next week.[\[101\]](#)

This was in full harmony with Mrs. White's original invitation where she asked that "it all be written out, and submitted to *those* who desire to remove the perplexities."[\[102\]](#) (Emphasis supplied.)

Two who sent the greatest number of questions were Elder William S. Sadler and Dr. Charles E. Stewart. Dr. Stewart's questions eventually came into published form under the title, *A Response to An Urgent Testimony from Mrs. Ellen G. White*, later referred to as "The Blue Book." Writing to Dr. Stewart about his set of objections, W. C. White explained the reason why some questions received no personal reply from Mrs. White:

But that portion of the document addressed to her which takes the form of an attack upon her integrity and her work, she will refer to her brethren to answer, because for many years she has been instructed that it is not any part of her legitimate work to answer the numerous and violent attacks which have been made upon her by her critics and the enemies of her work.[\[103\]](#)

That had been Mrs. White's consistent attitude since the earliest days of her ministry.[\[104\]](#) One reason that some issues were never answered by Ellen White's Office is that the General Conference Committee had only recently (May, 1906) published a refutation of charges made by A. T. Jones against the Spirit of Prophecy, detailing answers to many of the same questions.[\[105\]](#)

The fact that Mrs. White engaged in taking up objections *after* receiving the vision of May 25, indicates that that instruction did not cancel her earlier request. What, then, did that second vision mean? Exactly what it says:

*I was directed by a messenger from heaven not to take the burden of picking up and answering **all** the sayings and doubts that are being put into many minds.* (Emphasis supplied.)

Ellen White was not to feel it her duty to endeavor to answer those endless questions from doubters who would accept no answers. Referring to the same divine counsel, she wrote on July 17, 1906:

I am now instructed that I am not to be hindered in my work by those who engage in suppositions regarding its nature, whose minds are struggling with so many intricate problems connected with the supposed work of a prophet. My commission embraces the work of a prophet, but it does not end there. It embraces much more than the minds of those who have been sowing the seeds of unbelief can comprehend.

In response to the enemy's work on human minds, I am to sow the good seed. When questions suggested by Satan arise, I will remove them if I can. But those who are picking at straws had better be educating mind and heart to take hold of the grand and soul-saving truths that God has given through the humble messenger, in the place of becoming channels through whom Satan can communicate doubt and questioning.

To allow images of straw to be created as something to attack, is one of the most unprofitable things that one can engage in. It is possible for one to educate himself to become Satan's agent in passing along his suggestions. As fast as one is cleared away, another will be proffered.

I have been instructed to say, "The Lord would not have my mind thus employed."[\[106\]](#)

Ellen White closed her letter with a statement suggesting that the problems surrounding her work were the result of focusing on the words rather than the message of her writings--the same difficulty regarding the use of inspired writings which is seen in our own day: *More and more I shall present the message to the people in Scripture language. Then if exception be taken by anyone, his contention must be with the Bible.*[\[107\]](#)

[p. 11]

THE SHUT DOOR

For a time the pioneers believed that the door of mercy was shut in 1844. Was Ellen White specifically shown in vision that this was the case?[\[108\]](#)

The shut door era in Adventist history is a fascinating but involved one. To understand it clearly requires a thorough knowledge of the events of 1844 and the years immediately following. The fact that early Adventists at first concluded that probation closed for the world on October 22, 1844, and that Ellen White's first vision seemed to support this view has for more than a hundred years been used against her by people who seek to impair confidence in her work.

Immediately after the passing of the time in 1844, those Adventists who believed prophecy had been fulfilled could only conclude that probation for the world had closed on Oct. 22. The sacrilegious scoffing and sarcasm of worldly people lent credibility to this conclusion. Although the youthful Ellen Harmon at first apparently believed that her visions confirmed the shut door position, she later realized that this was not the case. She did consistently maintain, however, that the door was shut against those individuals who had resisted their honest convictions by rejecting the message of warning. Meanwhile, references in her very first vision to the 144,000 gave a broad hint of a yet future evangelistic thrust.

In 1874, in answering charges made on this point, she declared, "I never had a vision that no more sinners would be converted."[\[109\]](#) Pioneer writers were clear on this as well. For instance, Uriah Smith wrote two years later:

The visions have never taught the end of probation in the past, or the close of the day of salvation for sinners, called by our opponents the shut-door doctrine.[\[110\]](#)

The dawning of the light, in early 1845, on the transfer of the ministry of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary which occurred in 1844 ultimately provided a solution to the problem. The pioneers of

the Seventh-day Adventist Church, seeking light, saw a door that closed and another which was opened as Christ took up His ministry in the Most Holy Place in the sanctuary in heaven. This unfolding truth enabled our forefathers to maintain their confidence in God's leadings in their past experience, even as they grasped the concept of a great mission yet before them.

Ellen White, who passed through the experience, explains this transition of understanding in her 1884 book, *The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 4, in the chapter titled "An Open and a Shut Door" and in *The Great Controversy*, published a few years later, in a chapter titled "In the Holy of Holies." Reading the setting of the experience in chapter 22, "Prophecies Fulfilled," and chapter 23, "What Is the Sanctuary?" provides an illuminating background. Ellen White also gave helpful explanations in 1883 in a document reproduced in *Selected Messages*, book 1, chapter 5, "An Explanation of Early Statements."

THE LITERARY ASSISTANTS

With more than a thousand books in her library at the time of her death, how could Mrs. White have read and borrowed from them all? Didn't her literary assistants do some of the borrowing for her?[\[111\]](#)

The fact is that at this point in research on this project, there are fewer than one hundred books from which there is solid evidence of literary borrowing. In many cases that evidence involves only a single brief passage. *The White Lie* provides or alleges parallels to only about 35 specific sources. Nevertheless, there is simply no reason to assume Ellen White was incapable of reading all the books from which she is alleged to have borrowed. True, she was often very busy, but she made good use of her time.

What is more to the point, there is no evidence that the literary assistants were responsible for bringing material from other authors into Ellen White's writings. "There is one thing that even the most competent editor cannot do," Marian Davis wrote, "and that is to prepare a manuscript before it is written."[\[112\]](#)

It is true that a few sentences from James Wylie appear in the Huss chapter of *The Great Controversy* which are not found in the handwritten rough draft.

Ellen White drew extensively from Wylie in that handwritten draft, but we do not know what further stages of writing she might have done on the chapter. Furthermore, the edited manuscript was sent immediately to Ellen White for her approval.

Ellen White died before *Prophets and Kings* was completed. Would not that book be an example of where literary assistants borrowed for her?

Not at all. In his article, "The Story of *Prophets and Kings*,"[\[113\]](#) Arthur L. White quotes extensively from the correspondence of Clarence Crisler, who provided literary assistance to Ellen White for *Prophets and Kings*. These letters, written at the very time the work was going forward, indicate that on these spiritual matters, Mrs. White's mind remained keen to the end. The last two chapters, which were not quite finished at the time of her death, were filled out, not from other authors, but from manuscripts Mrs. White herself had written earlier and left on file.

Did some of Ellen White's literary assistants turn against her and criticize her?[\[114\]](#)

The one literary assistant to criticize Ellen White was Fannie Bolton. All of the known documents and letters relating to her experience with Ellen White are now published as *The Fannie Bolton Story: A Collection of Source Documents*.

Ellen White was concerned about Miss Bolton's spiritual immaturity from the first time she employed her. In the course of her employment, her experience was very unstable. Fannie criticized Mrs. White, then, on more than a dozen occasions, wrote out "confessions" of her wrong course. Yet, through all this, Mrs. White's patience was so great that she continued to employ Fannie through many of these cycles of criticism and confession, and on the occasions when she did dismiss her from employment, she hired her again. In the end, Fannie left Mrs. White's employment by her own choice.

The allegation that Mrs. White was also criticized by Mary Clough, another of her literary assistants, has no foundation in contemporary documents, but is based only on a memory statement of G. B. Starr recorded many years later. Mary Clough was a niece of Ellen White, but [p. 12] she was not a Seventh-day Adventist. She was separated from Ellen White's work not because of any criticism, but because she chose not to abide by the standards of the home in Sabbath observance.

Marian Davis was one of Mrs. White's most important literary assistants. How did she view these matters?

Marian at one point heard that Fannie Bolton had said that she had been given instruction to "fill out the points" in an Ellen White testimony so that the testimony was virtually Miss Bolton's. Marian responded:

I cannot think that anyone who has been connected with Sr. White's work could make such a statement as this. I cannot think that anyone who is acquainted with Sr. White's manner of writing could possibly believe it. The burden she feels when the case of an individual is presented before her, the intense pressure under which she works, often rising at midnight to write out the warnings given her, and often for days, weeks, or even months, writing again and again concerning it, as if she could not free herself from the feeling of responsibility for that soul,--no one who has known anything of these experiences, could believe that she would entrust to another the writing of a testimony.

For more than twenty years I have been connected with Sister White's work. During this time I have never been asked either to write out a testimony from oral instruction, or to fill out the points in matter already written.[\[115\]](#)

What was the work of the literary assistants? Did they merely correct spelling and punctuation?

W. C. White answered the question in a letter from a woman who wondered if the thoughts and expressions she read in Ellen White's published works were really from Mrs. White:

The secretaries and copyists who prepare Mother's writings for the printer remove repetitions so that the matter may be brought into the allotted space. They correct bad grammar and they fit

the matter for publication. They sometimes carry her best expressions of thought from one paragraph to another but do not introduce their own thoughts into the matter. The thoughts and expressions which you mention are Mother's own thoughts and expressions.[\[116\]](#)

Mrs. White once referred to Marian Davis as "my bookmaker," and then explained:

She does her work in this way: She takes my articles which are published in the papers, and pastes them in blank books. She also has a copy of all the letters I write. In preparing a chapter for a book, Marian remembers that I have written something on that special point, which may make the matter more forcible. She begins to search for this, and if when she finds it, she sees that it will make the chapter more clear, she adds it.

The books are not Marian's productions, but my own, gathered from all my writings.[\[117\]](#)

Contrary to *The White Lie*, Mrs. White was in control of her writings and of what was published in her name. She says:

I read over all that is copied [from her handwritten drafts], to see that everything is as it should be. I read all the book manuscript before it is sent to the printer.[\[118\]](#)

The many personal letters exchanged between the literary assistants, W. C. White, and Ellen White leave no doubt that this was indeed the way Mrs. White's works were prepared for publication.[\[119\]](#)

WHITE ESTATE RESEARCH POLICIES

***The White Lie* is replete with criticism of the restrictive research policies of the Ellen White Estate. What is the White Estate doing to facilitate research, and what restrictions are imposed?**[\[120\]](#)

In 1982, at the time *The White Lie* was published, research in Ellen White's unpublished materials was guided by the "manuscript release" policy. This policy accomplished three purposes:

- It acquainted church leaders with materials going into general circulation.
- It made sure that the letter or portion of a letter which was requested for release was accompanied by enough context to make its meaning clear.
- It protected the privacy of pioneer workers and church members whose mistakes or sins may be revealed in the confidential messages the Lord gave to His messenger to be passed on to them.

Operating under this policy, research in Ellen White's letters and manuscripts was pursued by hundreds of students each year. Every month the White Estate Board of Trustees approved "manuscript releases" at the request of seminary students and others from around the world. Six Ellen G. White-S.D.A. Research Centers were in operation in various parts of the world, encouraging study in Ellen White's unpublished materials.

All through the years since the 1930s when graduate studies were first taken up by Seventh-day Adventist educators, the White Estate staff has encouraged and assisted in research by those

developing their master's theses and doctoral dissertations. Recognition of this may be found in the introductory pages of scores of such documents.

In the years since 1982, six more Ellen G. White-S.D.A. Research Centers have been established in various parts of the world and a third branch office has opened at Oakwood College in Huntsville, Alabama. (The Research Center at Loma Linda University became a branch office in 1985.) To further facilitate research in the unpublished materials, the White Estate is in the process of placing all of Ellen G. White's letters and manuscripts on CD-ROM, as it has done with all of her published works.

Why hasn't Donald McAdams' study of the Huss manuscript been released? What about Ron Graybill's similar study of material Mrs. White wrote on Martin Luther?[121]

Ron Graybill's *Analysis of E. G. White's Luther Manuscript* was advertised in the White Estate's catalogue of *Documents Available* and was published for general distribution well before *The White Lie* was published. Dr. McAdams's study of the Huss chapter in *The Great Controversy* is likewise available. What has not been released for publication are a number of the pages of Ellen White's handwritten draft of the Huss manuscript as transcribed by Dr. McAdams. [p. 13] This material was sent to all E. G. White Research Centers where it might be examined by any responsible researcher. The reason it has not been published is that it was hastily prepared by Ellen White at a time when she was not at all well. The handwritten draft is perhaps the poorest sample of her handwritten documents available. If published, it could give a distorted picture of the quality of her work. Her work on the Luther manuscript is more representative and thus has been published both in facsimile and typed transcript in the Graybill study.

It is alleged that the White Estate and the church have been trying to "cover up" Mrs. White's literary borrowing. Just what has been known in the past about this topic, and what has been shared with the church?

In 1933, W. C. White and D. E. Robinson of the White Estate prepared "Brief Statements Regarding the Writings of Ellen G. White" which spoke quite candidly about Ellen White's use of sources insofar as those sources were known at that time. At the Advanced Bible School in 1935, W. C. White again discussed the topic, mentioning a number of sources. Interestingly, a survey was conducted among the ministers and teachers attending that 1935 session.[122] They were asked which points of criticism then being leveled at Mrs. White seemed most important. Nearly all of them wanted answers to the charge that some of her early writings had been "suppressed,"[123] and just as many were concerned about the 1856 prediction that some then living would be translated.[124] Only half of the group thought it would be important to answer the plagiarism charge. If these attitudes were typical, they indicate that the issue of Ellen White's literary borrowing was not as high a priority question in the church as it is now.

Hundreds of ministers attending the A. L. White classes on Prophetic Guidance in the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary and its extension schools between 1956 and 1971 and by Paul Gordon since that time have heard the subject discussed in the classroom.

More recently the 1933 pamphlet, "Brief Statements," was widely distributed as a supplement to the *Adventist Review* and is currently available from the Ellen G. White Estate, as are W. C. White's lectures at the Advanced Bible School.

Three voluminous chapters on "Literary Borrowings" were published in 1951 in the F. D. Nichol book, *Ellen G. White and Her Critics*. Until recently, however, the extent of literary borrowing was not known by those in the Ellen White Estate. Although the topic was not stressed, from time to time what was known was communicated to the church, and new information will continue to be made available.

THE BASIC ISSUES

How should a person decide whether to believe *The White Lie* or to accept Ellen G. White as a genuine recipient of the prophetic gift?

When the Majesty of the Universe created men and women, He endowed them with the power of choice. What is at stake is, how do they make that choice? The choice should be based, not on a passing display of rhetoric, but on the weight of evidence. In the matter being considered we face, on the one hand, some facts intermingled with many unsupported assertions and accusations. On the other hand, we have the well-documented picture of the development of a church founded on the Word of God and nurtured, guided, and protected by the Holy Spirit through the gift of prophecy manifested in the work of Ellen G. White, one of its founders and pioneers.

Every Seventh-day Adventist, past and present, has at some time had to come to grips with the issue: Did Ellen White really speak for God as she and the church claim? Accepting this claim is not always easy. After all, there are precepts and counsels in the Ellen White books which call for a change in one's way of living and thinking. There are guidelines to good health. There are counsels on how to develop a character that will rightly represent the Christ who has saved us and promised us the transforming power of His Holy Spirit. Sin is pointed out and reproved. It is not easy or pleasant to change our way of life. But have not God's prophets, in communicating His messages, always reproved sin and called His people to a higher standard of living?

As with the Bible, there are things in Ellen White's writings which are "hard to be understood!" But the evidence of Ellen White's inspiration shines through everywhere.

What evidence is there of Ellen White's inspiration?

The Word of God calls for us to examine the claims of one who professes to speak for God, and it sets forth several tests. Among the foremost is, "Ye shall know them by their fruits" (Matthew 7:16). As we look at the fruitage of Ellen White's ministry, what do we see in her life and in the lives of those who have taken her claims seriously? What is the fruit?

We see a people in the early experience of the church given assurance, being stabilized and unified in their understanding of fulfilling prophecy and in doctrinal positions--positions based on the Word of God, but attested to by the Spirit. Through visions the Lord clarified what was truth and pointed out error.

We see a people led to understand the great conflict of the ages between Christ and Satan and to see their place in its closing scenes, and rewarded for their faith in and allegiance to Christ.

We see a church emerging with unified teachings and organization throughout the world, and an accelerating sense of responsibility in publishing, medical, and educational activities, climaxed

with a clear-cut vision of responsibility in the outreach of the gospel and unparalleled financial commitments to carry it out.

We see a people happy in their mature knowledge of the plan of salvation, confident of their acceptance in Christ, and aware of the significance of our Lord and Saviour's ministry in our behalf in the heavenly sanctuary.

What motivated Ellen White to serve as God's messenger? Was it wealth or fame?

No. She lived a self-sacrificing life. While she supported herself and her work on the salary of a minister and from modest royalties on her writings, she did not consider her income to be her own. Whatever was not required for necessities, she put into the cause she served. At her death, she left no great estate. She even mortgaged the potential income from her literary productions in the sum of nearly one hundred thousand dollars to have means to publish her last books and advance the cause of God. Of [p. 14] her experience in finance, at one time she wrote: "The Lord saw that He could trust us with His means. . . . He kept pouring it in and we kept letting it out."[\[125\]](#)

Was it notoriety or fame she sought? No. She found public life difficult. Burdened with the responsibility of presenting personal testimonies of warning and reproof, she declared at one time: "It has been hard for me to give the messages that God has given me for those I love."[\[126\]](#) At another point in her ministry she declared that if given the choice of another vision or the grave, she would choose the grave. She tasted the experience spoken of by the Master that "a prophet is not without honor, save in His own country" (Matthew 13:57).

What then was her motivation? It was to follow the bidding of the Lord in serving as His messenger, regardless of costs or rewards, ever eager for the saving of souls to God's kingdom. It was to hear at last the words, "Well done."

What of Ellen White's literary productions, their quality and fruitage?

They stand on the highest plane. On this point Uriah Smith, an editor and fellow worker, declared:

- 1. They tend to the purest morality. They discountenance every vice, and exhort to the practice of every virtue.*
- 2. They lead to Christ. Like the Bible, they set Him forth as the only hope and Saviour of mankind.*
- 3. They lead us to the Bible. They set forth that Book as the inspired and unalterable Word of God.*
- 4. They have brought comfort and consolation to many hearts. They have strengthened the weak, encouraged the feeble, raised up the despondent. They have brought order out of confusion, made crooked places straight, and thrown light on what was dark and obscure.[\[127\]](#)*

How is it that thousands have been led to the Saviour through reading *The Desire of Ages*, *Steps to Christ*, and *The Great Controversy*? How is it that *The Ministry of Healing*, published in 1905, has never had to be revised while medical books survive but a decade or two?

On Ellen White's death, the staid weekly journal, *The Independent*, published in New York City, traced the high points of Ellen White's experience in an article titled "An American Prophetess." Then speaking of the fruits of her ministry in the Seventh-day Adventist church, the journal stated:

These teachings were based on the strictest doctrine of inspiration of the Scriptures. Seventh-day Adventism could be got in no other way. And the gift of prophecy was to be expected as promised to the "remnant church" who had held fast to the truth. This faith gave great purity of life and incessant zeal. No body of Christians excels them in moral character and religious earnestness. [\[128\]](#)

What of Ellen White's public ministry?

The records show she was a much-sought-after public speaker, both within and without Adventist ranks. She was often the Sabbath morning speaker at General Conference Sessions, addressing thousands as she stood before them without notes, and she was a favorite camp meeting speaker season after season.

At evangelistic meetings in America and overseas she could hold her audiences, often largely non-Adventists, spellbound for an hour or an hour and a half, almost always speaking without notes. In 1876, before the day of electronic public address systems, she addressed some twenty thousand people who gathered at a camp meeting in Groveland, Mass., and made her audience hear. At the close of the meeting, she was invited to go into a nearby city the next evening to address a large temperance gathering in a public hall.

What of Ellen White as a much-sought-after counselor?

Church executives from the local conference president and institutional managers to the General Conference president, either by letter or in personal contact, came to her for counsel and guidance in meeting their responsibilities, and in making important decisions. She had no answer book to turn to. The fields of discussion ranged widely. Never were they disappointed in the results of following the counsel they received from her pen or lips.

After recounting one experience of prosperity which came to the work as the counsels of the Lord given through Ellen White were followed, A. G. Daniells, for many years president of the General Conference, exclaimed:

In all this we see the great value of the Spirit of Prophecy to the people and the cause of God. It gives light and understanding far beyond the comprehension of men. It leads us on to great undertakings from which we would shrink because we do not see the future nor the full importance of what we are called to do. [\[129\]](#)

Elder Daniells, near the close of his life, bore this solemn testimony:

In this present year of our Lord, 1935, Mrs. White has been at rest twenty years, while I have been toiling on. I had twenty-three years of direct observation of her life work. Since her death I have had twenty additional years for thoughtful reflection and study of that life and its fruits.

Now, at an advanced age, with the constraint of expressing only sober, honest truth, I can say that it is my deep conviction that Mrs. White's life far transcends the life of anyone I have ever known or with whom I have been associated. She was uniformly pleasant, cheerful, and courageous. She was never careless, flippant, or in any way cheap in conversation or manner of life. She was the personification of serious earnestness regarding the things of the kingdom. I never once heard her boast of the gracious gift God had bestowed upon her, or of the marvelous results of her endeavors. She did rejoice in the fruitage, but gave all the glory to Him who wrought through her.[\[130\]](#)

THE CHOICE IS OURS

And so, granted by God the power of choice, and with the evidences before us, we as Seventh-day Adventists must make our decision. The Lord gives sufficient evidence for all who desire to know the truth, but He will never compel anyone to believe. We should carefully ponder the words:

God does not propose to remove all occasion for unbelief. He gives evidence, which must be carefully investigated with a humble mind and a teachable spirit, and all should decide from the weight of evidence. God gives sufficient evidence for the candid mind to believe; but he who turns from the weight of evidence because there are a few things which he cannot make plain to his finite understanding will be left in the cold, chilling atmosphere of unbelief and questioning doubts, and will make shipwreck of faith.[\[131\]](#)

George I. Butler summed up the positive influence of Ellen White's visions on the church:

They have always been held in high esteem by the most zealous and humble among our people. They have exerted a leading influence among us from the start. They have first called attention to every important move we have made in advance. Our publishing work, the health and temperance movement, the College, and the cause of advanced education, the missionary enterprise, and many other important points, have owed their efficiency largely to this influence. We have found in a long, varied, and in some instances, sad experience the value of their counsel. When we have heeded them, we have prospered; when we have slighted them, we have suffered a great loss.[\[132\]](#)

NOTES

[\[*\]](#) Formal quotations are set in italics throughout this document.

[\[1\]](#) Des Cummings, Jr. and Roger L. Dudley, "A Comparison of the Christian Attitudes and Behaviors Between Those Adventist Church Members Who Regularly Read Ellen White Books and Those Who Do Not,"

April, 1982. Available from the Ellen G. White Estate.

[\[2\]](#) Walter T. Rea, *The White Lie* (Turlock, Calif.: M & R Publications, 1982), 409 pp.

[\[3\]](#) *Ibid.*, p. 191.

[\[4\]](#) *Ibid.*, p. 32.

[\[5\]](#) *Ibid.*, p. 35.

[\[6\]](#) *Ibid.*, p. 38.

[\[7\]](#) *Ibid.*, p. 45.

[\[8\]](#) See "Ellen G. White Book and Pamphlet Titles," April, 1982. Available from the Ellen G. White Estate.

[\[9\]](#) See Neal C. Wilson, "This I Believe About Ellen G. White," *Adventist Review*, March 20, 1980, pp. 8-10.

[\[10\]](#) *Ministry*, June, 1982, pp. 4-19.

[11] See Robert M. Fowler, "Using Literary Criticism on the Gospels," *The Christian Century*, May 26, 1982, pp. 626-629.

[12] *The White Lie*, p. 136.

[13] *The White Lie*, p. 203, mentions the charge, but not the historical background. See Ron Graybill, "D. M. Canright in Healdsburg: The Genesis of the Plagiarism Charge," *Insight*, Oct. 21, 1980, pp. 7-10.

[14] Regarding Bunyan, see William York Tindall, *John Bunyan: Mechanick Preacher* (New York: Russell & Russell, Inc., 1964), pp. 194ff. Regarding Wesley, see Donald H. Kirkham, "John Wesley's 'Calm Address': The Response of the Critics," *Methodist History*, October, 1975, pp. 13-23.

[15] Quoted in Joseph P. Lash, *Helen and Teacher* (New York: Delacorte Press/Seymour Lawrence, 1980), p. 146.

[16] See George Hatvary, "Notes and Queries," *American Literature*, November, 1966, pp. 365-372.

[17] *The White Lie*, p. 224. See [Uriah Smith], *Review and Herald*, September 6, 1864, p. 120.

[18] See Merwin R. Thurber, "Uriah Smith and the Charge of Plagiarism," *Ministry*, June, 1945, pp. 15, 16.

[19] *The White Lie*, pp. 110, 112.

[20] D. E. Robinson and W. C. White, "Brief Statements Regarding the Writings of Ellen G. White" (St. Helena, Calif., "Elmshaven" Office, August, 1933, reprinted, 1981), p. 11. Reprint available from the Ellen G. White Estate.

[21] Quoted in Francis D. Nichol, *Ellen G. White and Her Critics* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald, 1951), pp. 455-457.

[22] See "Was Ellen G. White A Plagiarist?" a reprint of articles published in the *Adventist*

Review, September 17, 1981. Available from the Ellen G. White Estate. See also note 38 below.

[23] *The White Lie*, pp. 77-81.

[24] *Ibid.*, pp. 147-161.

[25] E. S. Ballenger, ed., *The Gathering Call*, September, 1932, p. 19, 20.

[26] See Ron Graybill, "Did *The Great Controversy* Contain Stolen Illustrations?" Available from the Ellen G. White Estate.

[27] *The White Lie*, pp. 136, 137, 200, 222-224, 363-365, 371-373.

[28] "Brief Statements," p. 7.

[29] Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, p. xii.

[30] Ron Graybill, "Analysis of E. G. White's Luther Manuscript," p. 1. Available from the Ellen G. White Estate.

[31] *The White Lie*, pp. 112, 120, 127, 167, 200.

[32] Ellen G. White, "Testimonials," *Signs of the Times*, February 22, 1883, p. 96.

[33] Ellen G. White, "Holiday Gifts," *Review and Herald*, December 26, 1882, p. 789.

[34] See for example, Ellen G. White, "Proper Education," *The Health Reformer*, July, 1873, p. 221, where she says: *I am delighted to find the following in that invaluable work entitled The Young Lady's Counselor*, by Rev. Daniel Wise, A.M.; *it can be obtained at any Methodist book rooms* [sic].

[35] Letter 7, 1894.

[36] Manuscript 25, 1890.

[37] "Brief Statements," p. 8.

[38] See Vincent L. Ramik, "Memorandum of Law: Literary Property Rights, 1790-1915." pp. 5-7. In *Greene v. Bishop* (1858) the decision of the court stated that *all the authorities . . . affirm the doctrine, that if so much is taken that the value of the original is sensibly and materially diminished, or the labors of the original author are substantially to an injurious extent appropriated by another, that*

such taking or appropriation is sufficient in point of law to maintain the suit. Ramik's full report is available from the Ellen G. White Estate.

[39] *The White Lie*, pp. 50, 70, 115.

[40] Manuscript 7, 1867, see also Ellen G. White, "Questions and Answers," *Review and Herald*, 30 (October 8, 1867), p. 260.

[41] *Ibid.*

[42] Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 67.

[43] Letter 37, 1887.

[44] *The White Lie*, pp. 53, 391.

[45] Ron Graybill, "The 'I Saw' Parallels in Ellen White's Writings," *Adventist Review*, July 29, 1982, pp. 4-6.

[46] Arthur L. White, *Ellen G. White: The Early Elmshaven Years* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald, 1981), p. 301.

[47] *The White Lie*, pp. 46, 139.

[48] See *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, pp. 706, 708; Robert W. Olson, *One Hundred and One Questions on the Sanctuary and on Ellen White*, pp. 105-107.

[49] *The White Lie*, p. 139.

[50] See W. C. White, "*The Great Controversy*--1911 Edition," in Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, book 3, pp. 433-440; Ron Graybill, "How Did Mrs. White Choose and Use Her Historical Sources," *Spectrum*, Summer, 1972, pp. 49-53.

[51] *The White Lie*, pp. 200-204.

[52] Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 39.

[53] Arthur L. White, *The Ellen G. White Writings* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald, 1973), pp. 46, 47; *Comprehensive Index to the Writings of Ellen G. White*, vol. 1 (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press, 1962), p. 182.

[54] *The White Lie*, pp. 200-201.

[55] Uriah Smith, "Personal," *Review and Herald*

Extra, November 22, 1887, p. 15.

[56] *The White Lie*, pp. 33, 66, 133, 200.

[57] Elizabeth Burgeson, "A Comparative Study of the Fall of Man as Treated by John Milton and Ellen G. White" (Master's Thesis, Pacific Union College, 1957). Burgeson notes the similarities between Ellen White and John Milton on extra-Biblical information, and wonders why two authors, living two hundred years apart, would be in such agreement. But unless direct literary dependence is demonstrated it cannot be said that Mrs. White actually read Milton's poem. The ideas of Milton, the great Puritan poet, permeated New England theology for generations. The fact that Mrs. White uses a phrase from Milton in *Education*, p. 150 [as noted by A. L. White, "Supplement to the Reprint Edition: Ellen G. White's Portrayal of the Great Controversy Story," in Ellen G. White, *Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 4 (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald, 1969 reprint), p. 536], does not of itself indicate literary dependence, since memorable lines of Milton were as current in her time as those of Shakespeare.

[58] J. N. and Angeline Andrews to James and Ellen White, Feb. 2, 1862, cited in Ron Graybill, "John Nevins Andrews as a Family Man," p. 16.

[59] J. N. Andrews, "The Labors of Bro. and Sr. White," *Review and Herald*, Mar. 3, 1868, p. 184.

[60] J. N. Andrews, "Our Use of the Visions of Sr. White," *Review and Herald*, Feb. 15, 1870, p. 65.

[61] *The White Lie*, pp. 114, 202.

[62] See "Veteran Chief of Adventist Attacks Foes," and "Acrid Debate Change [sic] Leader," *San Francisco Chronicle*, c. May 23, 1922;

Claude Holmes to A. G. Daniells, May 1, 1922 (an open letter); "An Interview With J. S. Washburn," June 4, 1950, White Estate Document File #242; J. S. Washburn to A. L. White, Oct. 7, 1948; "General Conference Proceedings: Seventeenth Meeting," *Review and Herald*, May 24, 1922, p. 228.

[63] "Parting Interview Between W. C. White and A. G. Daniells," March 20, 1935, White Estate Document File #312-C.

[64] *The White Lie*, pp. 119, 203.

[65] *The Holy Spirit exalts and glorifies the Saviour. It is His office to present Christ. . . . Ellen G. White, Steps to Christ* (Chicago, Ill.: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1892), p. 105, standard edition, p. 91.

[66] *The White Lie*, p. 203, identifies Lacey as a Bible teacher at five Adventist colleges. However, he was not the Bible teacher at Avondale at the time these incidents took place.

[67] H. C. Lacey to Samuel Kaplan, July 24, 1936.

[68] *Ibid.*

[69] *The White Lie*, p. 199.

[70] A statement made by W. C. White before the General Conference Council, October 30, 1911, cited in Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, book 3, p. 437.

[71] *We believe the light given by God to His servants is by the enlightenment of the mind, thus imparting the thoughts, and not (except in rare cases) the very words in which the ideas should be expressed. . . . Review and Herald*, Nov. 27, 1883, p. 741.

[72] W. C. White to L. E. Froom, January 8, 1928, cited in *Selected Messages*, book 3, pp. 454, 455.

[73] *The White Lie*, pp. 124, 34, 59, 96.

[74] Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, pp. v, viii.

[75] *Ibid.*, p. viii.

[76] James White, *A Word to the Little Flock* (1846), p. 13.

[77] Uriah Smith, "Do We Discard the Bible by Endorsing the Visions?" *Review and Herald*, Jan. 13, 1863, p. 52. Smith goes on to prove that the Bible teaches the continuance of the gifts in the last days, obligating us to accept such genuine manifestations if we are truly to stand upon the Bible, and the Bible alone.

[78] Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 38.

[79] Letter 27, 1876.

[80] Ellen G. White, *Sketches from the Life of Paul*, p. 214.

[81] W. C. White as quoted in Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, book 3, p. 462.

[82] W. C. White, *Ibid.*, p. 446

[83] Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, book 3, pp. 48-86.

[84] *The White Lie*, pp. 32, 34, 37, 57, 138, 141, 164, 271.

[85] See The Ellen G. White Estate, *Medical Science and the Spirit of Prophecy* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald, 1971), for further information on this topic.

[86] Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 16; cf. Henry Melvill, *Sermons* (New York: Stanford and Swords, 1844), p. 131.

[87] Ron Graybill, "Ellen G. White's Literary Work: An Update," pp. 31, 32.

[88] *The White Lie*, pp. 170, 208, 211-213.

[89] Ellen G. White, *Life Sketches*, p. 89.

[90] Nichol, *op. cit.*, pp. 57, 58.

[91] *The White Lie*, p. 47.

[92] See W. C. White, "Sketches and Memories of James and Ellen G. White," *Review and Herald*, March 14, 1935, p. 10; A. W. Spalding, *Origin and History of Seventh-day Adventists*, vol. 1 (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald, 1961), p. 78, note 13.

[93] George Thomas Little, *The Descendants of George Little* (Auburn, Me.: The Author, 1882), pp. 290, 291.

[94] *The White Lie*, pp. 60, 170.
 [95] Letter 120, 1906.
 [96] Manuscript 61, 1906.
 [97] Letter 180, 1906.
 [98] See Ellen G. White, "A Messenger," *Review and Herald*, July 26, 1906, pp. 8, 9; "Hold Fast the Beginning of Your Confidence," *Ibid.*, August 9, 1906, p. 8; "Correct Views Concerning the Testimonies," *Ibid.*, August 30, 1906, pp. 8, 9, and September 6, 1906, pp. 7, 8.
 [99] Manuscript 61, 1906.
 [100] Manuscript 33, 1906.
 [101] W. C. White to Elders Daniells, Prescott and Irwin, July 13, 1906.
 [102] Letter 120, 1906.
 [103] W. C. White to C. E. Stewart, June 9, 1907.
 [104] See Ellen G. White, "Our Present Position," *Review and Herald*, Aug. 28, 1883, pp. 1, 2.
 [105] *A Statement Refuting Charges Made by A. T. Jones Against the Spirit of Prophecy and the Plan of Organization of the Seventh-day Adventist Denomination* (Washington, D.C.: General Conference Committee, May, 1906).
 [106] Letter 224, 1906.
 [107] *Ibid.*
 [108] *The White Lie*, pp. 37-43.
 [109] Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 74.
 [110] Uriah Smith, "'Wroth with the Woman.'" Rev. 12:17." *Review and Herald*, Aug. 17, 1876, p. 60.
 [111] *The White Lie*, p. 281.
 [112] Marian Davis to W. C. White, Aug. 9, 1897.
 [113] Arthur L. White, "The Story of Prophets and Kings," *Adventist Review*, June 25, 1981, pp. 10-13.
 [114] *The White Lie*, pp. 116, 201, 202.
 [115] Marian Davis to G. A. Irwin, April 23, 1900.
 [116] W. C. White to Julia Malcolm, Dec. 10, 1894.
 [117] Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, book 3, p. 91.
 [118] *Ibid.*, p. 90.

[119] See "How *The Desire of Ages* was Written," for an extensive collection of such correspondence. Available from the Ellen G. White Estate.
 [120] *The White Lie*, pp. 32, 59, 84, 87, 163, 197, 198, 200, 205, 218.
 [121] *The White Lie*, pp. 84, 85, 164.
 [122] Tim Poirier, "Results of a Survey Conducted at the 1935 Advanced Bible School." Available from the Ellen G. White Estate.
 [123] Suppression charges in the 1930s related particularly to *Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 1, and *A Word to the Little Flock*. Both of these early publications have since been reprinted and are available in Adventist Book Centers.
 [124] Ellen White provides a solution to this difficulty in *Selected Messages*, book 1, pp. 66-69.
 [125] Manuscript 3, 1888.
 [126] Letter 59, 1895.
 [127] Uriah Smith, "The Visions--Objections Answered," *Review and Herald*, June 12, 1866, p. 9.
 [128] *The Independent*, Aug. 23, 1915, pp. 249, 250.
 [129] A. G. Daniells, *The Abiding Gift of Prophecy* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald, 1936), p. 321.
 [130] *Ibid.*, p. 368.
 [131] Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, pp. 675, 676.
 [132] George I. Butler, "The Visions," *Review and Herald Supplement*, Aug. 14, 1883, pp. 11, 12, cited in *Witness of the Pioneers Concerning the Spirit of Prophecy* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald, 1961), p. 48.

FOR FURTHER STUDY

[Note: Documents below marked with a double asterisk (**) were available at the time of this paper's publication in 1981 but are no longer in print. However, they are being

prepared for on-line viewing at this site.]

"Addresses to Faculty and Students at the 1935 Advanced Bible School," by W.C. White. Currently titled, "How Ellen White's Books Were Written." 37 pp. \$1.50

**"Analysis of Ellen G. White's Luther Manuscript," by Ron Graybill. 31pp.

"A Bibliography of E. G. White's Private and Office Libraries." Compiled by Warren H. Johns, Tim Poirier, and Ron Graybill. This bibliography was constructed from the inventories which were made of Ellen White's private and office libraries at the time of her death in 1915. 63 pp. \$2.00

"Brief Statements Regarding the Writings of Ellen G. White," by W. C. White and D. E. Robinson. 16 pp. \$.80

"Common or Uninspired Writings," by Arthur L. White. 6 pp. \$.30

**"A Comparison of Attitudes Between Those Who Read Ellen White and Those Who Do Not," by Roger L. Dudley and Des Cummings, Jr. 45 pp.

**"Did *The Great Controversy* Contain Stolen Illustrations?" by Ron Graybill. 2 pp.

**"Ellen G. White's Literary Work: An Update," by Ron Graybill. An edited and annotated transcript of a tape recording of morning worship talks by Ron Graybill at the General Conference, November 15-19, 1981. (March, 1982, Aspire Tape Club Selection.) 45 pp.

"Ellen G. White and the Shut Door."

a. [A Statement prepared by Arthur L. White.](#) 62 pp. \$2.00

b. Ten *Review and Herald* articles by George I. Butler recounting the beginnings of the Advent Movement. 20 pp. \$1.00

**"Ellen White's Theological and Literary Indebtedness to Calvin Stowe," by David Neff. 22 pp.

**"Ellen G. White's Use of Uninspired Sources," by R. W. Olson. 19 pp.

"The Fannie Bolton Story: A Collection of Source Documents." All of the known letters of Ellen White, Fannie Bolton, and their associates which have a bearing on Fannie Bolton's work for Ellen White, and her attitudes toward that work, are brought together in this comprehensive collection. 128 pp. \$3.50

**"Henry Melvill and Ellen G. White: A Study in Literary and Theological Relationships." An interim report on a cooperative study project undertaken by Ron Graybill, Warren H. Johns, and Tim Poirier, in which Ellen White's selective use of Anglican clergyman Henry Melvill's book of sermons is examined. 107 pp.

**"The History of the Discovery of Literary Borrowing," by Warren H. Johns. 3 pp.

"How *The Desire of Ages* Was Written." A collection of source documents relating to the writing of *The Desire of Ages*. 47 pp. \$1.00

"Inspiration and the Ellen G. White Writings," by Arthur L. White. A reprint of articles published in the *Adventist Review* on the subject of inspiration and Ellen G. White's writing of the "Conflict of the Ages" series. 39 pp. \$1.60

**"The Literary Relationship Between *The Desire of Ages* by Ellen G. White and *The Life of Christ* by William Hanna, Parts I & II," by Raymond F. Cottrell and Walter F. Specht. 85 pp.

**"[Memorandum of Law: Literary Property Rights: 1790-1915.](#)" by Vincent Ramik. Available from the Ellen G. White Estate. 17 pp.

"The 1907 Interview with John Harvey Kellogg," by Tim Poirier. A review of some of the charges made by Dr. Kellogg against the testimonies, including the "Chicago buildings." 11 pp. \$.50

**"The 1919 Bible Conference and Bible and History Teachers' Council," by R. W. Olson. 10 pp.

"One Hundred and One Questions on the Sanctuary and on Ellen White," by R. W. Olson. 112 pp. \$1.00

["The Shut Door Documents."](#) Statements Relating to the Shut Door, by Ellen G. White and other early Adventists. Arranged in a chronological setting from 1844 to 1851. Compiled by Robert W. Olson. 58 pp. \$2.00

"Sources or Aids--Why Did Ellen G. White Borrow?" by Paul Gordon. 14 pp. \$.50

**"To Those Who Are Perplexed..." Ellen White's response to questions raised by her critics, including "The Blue Book." By Tim Poirier. 4 pp.

"Was Ellen G. White a Plagiarist?" A reprint of articles published in the *Adventist Review*, Sept. 17, 1981, featuring an interview with Attorney Vincent L. Ramik. 8 pp. \$.50

Copies of this document can be obtained from the Ellen G. White Estate, 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904

WAS ELLEN G. WHITE A PLAGIARIST?

A Reprint of Articles Published in the
Adventist Review, September 17, 1981,
Featuring an Interview With Attorney Vincent L. Ramik,
Senior Partner of Diller, Ramik & Wight, Ltd., Washington, D.C.

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Ellen White's use of sources

Washington copyright lawyer concludes that Ellen White was not a plagiarist and her work did not constitute copyright infringement.

Ellen G. White is not guilty of copyright infringement or plagiarism. This is the opinion of Vincent L. Ramik, senior partner of Diller, Ramik & Wight, Ltd., a lawyer who practices patent, trademark, and copyright law in Washington, D.C.

Mr. Ramik undertook to research Mrs. White's writings after Warren L. Johns, chief legal officer of the General Conference, retained the services of Diller, Ramik & Wight last April because of allegations made against Mrs. White by Walter Rea, at that time pastor of the Long Beach, California, church.

Ramik, a Roman Catholic, spent more than 300 hours researching about 1,000 relevant cases in American legal history. He concluded his 27-page legal opinion* with an unequivocal declaration: "Based upon our review of the facts and legal precedents . . . Ellen White was not a plagiarist, and her works did not constitute copyright infringement/piracy."

The legal report was delivered to Johns's office late last month. It responds specifically to six questions:

1. Was there a Federal copyright law between the years 1850 (when Ellen White first published) and 1915 (the year of her death) granting literary property rights to authors? If so, what was the essence of such law? Did it substantially differ from copyright law in 1981?

2. Was the payment of royalties by publishers a standard legal and business practice at that time?

3. Were licensing agreements for the use of literary property standard business practice at that time?

4. Was there a standard literary practice to use quotation marks, footnotes, and bibliographical citations in literary works that utilized the literary property of other authors?

5. What case law is available between 1850 and 1915 that might sug-

gest the extent of an author's protection against literary piracy?

6. Is there anything within the published works of Ellen G. White that would suggest literary piracy (Federal copyright infringement) within the standards existing between 1850 and 1915?

Ellen White's literary output reportedly approximated 25 million words during a writing career spanning nearly 70 years. A number of the 90-plus books, including compilations, from her pen in print today have been translated into as many as 100 languages.

The fact that Mrs. White incorporated quotations and paraphrased materials from other authors (principally historians of the Reformation era and contemporary nineteenth-century devotional writers) in her books and articles has itself never been at issue. She, during her lifetime, and church officials, subsequently, have repeatedly acknowledged such use. But Walter Rea undertook the task of identifying the various sources of that literary borrowing. This study demonstrated that Mrs. White had borrowed more extensively than had been estimated previously.

Books not copyrighted

Ramik discovered that many of the books from which Mrs. White borrowed were not in fact copyrighted. But, he continued, even if they had been thus protected by law, her utilization of phraseology and even multiple paragraphs did not in law constitute copyright infringement, nor plagiarism.

"If the issues had been court-tested between 1850 and 1915, Ellen G. White emphatically would not have been convicted of copyright infringement," concluded Ramik.

The law specialist found it ironic that Mrs. White's sternest critics themselves offer "the best evidence available" to support a position of noninfringement.

"Nowhere," Ramik pointed out, "have we found the books of Ellen G. White to

be virtually the 'same plan and character throughout' as those of her predecessors. Nor have we found, or have critics made reference to, any intention of Ellen White to supersede . . . [other authors] in the market with the same class of readers and purchasers." Instead, she invariably introduced considerable new matter to that which she borrowed, going far beyond mere "colorable deviations," and, in effect, created an altogether new literary work.

Furthermore, "the sheer 'compilation' of the works of Ellen G. White necessarily reflects her labor and skill. So long as she did not (and the evidence clearly establishes that she did not) draw from any prior works 'to a substantial degree,' she remains well within the legal bounds of 'fair use.'

"Moreover, so long as the materials were selected from a variety of sources, and were 'arranged and combined with certain passages of the text of the original work, and in a manner showing the exercise of discretion, skill, learning, experience, and judgment,' the use was 'fair.'"

Intent is a chief ingredient that must be demonstrated in plagiarism cases; and Ramik believes he has proved not only from Mrs. White's own published statements but indeed from the admission of some of her critics themselves, that she did not intend to defraud in the borrowing of other literary productions.

"Proceeding with but the highest motivations and intentions," said Ramik, Mrs. White, in fact "modified, exalted, and improved" much of that which others wrote, in a manner entirely ethical, as well as legal.

"It is impossible to imagine that the intention of Ellen G. White, as reflected in her writings and the unquestionably prodigious effort involved therein, was anything other than a sincerely motivated and unselfish effort to place the understandings of Biblical truths in a coherent form for all to see and comprehend.

"Most certainly, the nature and content of her writings had but one hope and intent, namely, the furthering of mankind's understanding of the word of God."

In his summation, Ramik concluded, "Considering all factors necessary in reaching a just conclusion on this issue, it is submitted that the writings of Ellen G. White were conclusively unplagiaristic." □

*The complete document, plus this reprint, may be obtained by sending a request, with \$5.00, to the General Conference Legal Services Office, Dept. RD, Takoma Park, Washington, D.C. 20012.

“There simply is no case”

Interview about Ellen White and her writings with Attorney Vincent L. Ramik, senior partner of Diller, Ramik & Wight, Ltd., specialists in patent, trademark, and copyright cases, Washington, D.C.

REVIEW: Attorney Ramik, how much did you know about Seventh-day Adventists in general, and Ellen White in particular, before you were asked to research the legal questions involved in Mrs. White’s use of literary sources?

Ramik: Actually, my knowledge was quite limited. Our firm had done some work for Seventh-day Adventists, probably 50 years ago, before I became a member of it. And we continued to represent Adventists in various matters through the years. But my knowledge of them as a people was minimal. And I knew scarcely anything of Ellen White other than what I had picked up in newspapers off and on—and, of course, last November in that large half-page story in the *Washington Post* that was not exactly favorable.

REVIEW: Do you recall how you were brought into this present case?

Ramik: Yes. Attorney Warren Johns, of your General Conference Legal Services office, contacted me and asked perhaps a half-dozen questions, in the abstract, about plagiarism, literary piracy, copyright infringement, things like that. But no names were attached. Having read the *Post* article not long before, I asked Mr. Johns, “Does this have anything to do with the Ellen White issue in your church?” He responded that indeed it did. And we went on from there.

REVIEW: Once you were retained on the case, what preparation did you make by way of reading, before researching the law as it relates to literary matters?

Ramik: I obtained a copy of Mrs. White’s *The Great Controversy*, which I read all the way through. I obtained copies of other works by Mrs. White. I contacted Ron Graybill, of your General Conference, and he gave me a lot of material—a book on the life of Christ by Hanna, things like that. He also gave me material by critics all the way from D. M. Canright down to Walter Rea. And he also gave me a number of works by

Adventist authors who attempted to defend Mrs. White. In the report I have listed many works that were consulted.

REVIEW: What was your reaction after digesting all of this material?

Ramik: Well, that’s an interesting question! I started out, I think, basically neutral on the literary charges. But, somehow, as I read one particular Adventist-authored defense of Mrs. White, it left me with the feeling that she was not, in fact, very well defended.

REVIEW: What do you mean by that?

Ramik: Well, I came back thinking that Mrs. White was, if I may use the expression that has been used by others, a literary “borrower.” And that she had borrowed a lot and that she had borrowed with something less than candor and honesty! In other words—and this was before I had delved into her works themselves—I became actually biased *against* her in the sense that I thought she was what some people, such as her latest critic, Walter Rea, had alleged—guilty of plagiarism.

REVIEW: Once you got into her writings themselves, was this negative impression reinforced or altered in any way?

Ramik: I gradually turned 180 degrees in the other direction. I found that the charges simply were not true. But I had to get that from her writings; I did not get that from either the people who said she was a plagiarist, or the people who said she was not. I simply had to read her writings and then rid my mind of the bias I had already built into it—prejudice. And, in the end, she came out quite favorably. But it took more than 300 hours of reading—including case law histories, of course.

REVIEW: So it was reading her writings that changed your mind?

Ramik: It was reading her *messages* in her writings that changed my mind. And I think there’s a distinction—a very salient difference—here.

REVIEW: Would you describe the distinction that you see?

Ramik: I believe that the critics have missed the boat badly by focusing upon Mrs. White’s *writings*, instead of focusing upon the *messages* in Mrs. White’s writings.

REVIEW: What did you find in her messages, Mr. Ramik? How did they affect you?

Ramik: Mrs. White moved me! In all candor, she moved me. I am a Roman Catholic; but, Catholic, Protestant, whatever—she moved me. And I think her writings should move anyone, unless he is permanently biased and is unswayable.

REVIEW: Would you explain what you mean by this?

Ramik: Well, a person can walk this earth doing good deeds and saying to himself (and maybe to others): “I’m a nice person.” And after a time you really come to believe that you are. But when was the last time that you really looked inside yourself and found out what you were *really* like? Now, there are a lot of things that Mrs. White has put down on paper that will, if read seriously, perhaps cause a person to look inwardly, honestly. And if you do, the true self comes out. I think I know a little more today about the real Vince Ramik than I did before I started reading the *message* of Ellen White, not simply her *writings*.

REVIEW: Were you surprised at this reaction?

Ramik: I guess “pleasantly surprised” would be a very mild understatement. But she says some very deep things, quite frankly, even if they sound as if they’ve been said before. Quite honestly, I think I’ve left this task with more than I’ve put into it. And it’s simply her messages. It’s simply what you receive from reading something. It makes you believe a little more firmly in things you may have believed a little bit less in the past. I’m not a religious person; I am not a practicing Roman Catholic. I was born one; but my wife happens to be a Protestant; one child is baptized a Catholic, one is baptized a Protestant. I guess you could say we are an “ecumenical” family! Essentially, my outlook on anything, including this work and in my daily life, is searching for God’s will for me; and then, I hope, having the wisdom and courage to carry it out. I do have a God of my understanding. Mrs. White has made me understand Him a bit better. And for that, I think I’m a better person today than

when I started this project.

REVIEW: And the message?

Ramik: The message is what is crucial. The critic reads a sentence, and receives no meaning from it—he may, and often does, even take it out of context. But read the entire message. What is the author's intent? What is the author really saying—where the *words* come from is really not that important. What is the *message* of this? If you disregard the *message*, then even the Bible itself is not worth being read, in that sense of the word.

REVIEW: Which of Mrs. White's books did you find most helpful?

Ramik: The only one I read all the way through was *The Great Controversy*. But, actually, before I finished my research, I had read a great cross section of her books. I really don't think it makes all that much difference *which* of her books one reads; I think it is whatever work of hers you happen to have before you, for whatever purpose you need it.

REVIEW: And it didn't bother you, worry you, that certain people were saying that she had borrowed heavily from other writers and books?

Ramik: Forty or four hundred—frankly it's quite immaterial. It would not make any difference to me if they were *all* taken from other works.

REVIEW: What about plagiarism, then? Is there really no such thing as plagiarism?

Ramik: There is no such thing, in *law*, as "plagiarism." Literary crimes are those of either piracy or of copyright infringement. Literary theft—piracy—is not such an easy thing to prove. You cannot read someone's writing, and find a word, a phrase, a sentence, and say, "Aha! I find it here. And he took it from an earlier writer. And here's another one."

Let me explain it this way: Last night I reread my memorandum on this case, and I noticed that I had used the adjective "prodigious" in referring to Mrs. White as a writer. Then, by coincidence, I happened to read, also last night, a book loaned me entitled *The Vision Bold*. And it spoke of Mrs. White as a "prodigious" writer. Then, when I walked into this room this afternoon, someone here called her a "prodigious" writer. Well, I did not use the term because it was used by someone else; I used it because it's a natural word for me to use. But the critics jump on that sort of thing and make a mountain out of a molehill.

And another question the critic usually ignores is this: Was the statement that the alleged "borrower" had taken from the earlier author really *original* with the *earlier* author—or did, perhaps, he take it, consciously or otherwise, from someone still earlier?

Now let's take Walter Rea. He reads Ellen White and says: I found a certain phrase here, a certain paragraph there, and it came from this predecessor. Well, that's not proof; that's assumption. And I think the first step in any accurate critique is to go back to the *real* original—it might be Virgil, Homer, the Bible. Because how do you know it was original with the predecessor—how do you know he did not get it from someone else who, in turn, got it from still another earlier someone else? Didn't Solomon say, "There is no new thing under the sun"?

REVIEW: In your legal opinion, Mr. Ramik, you pointed out that many of the works Mrs. White is accused of "stealing" were, in fact, not copyrighted by either author or publisher, and were, therefore, in the public domain—were thus public property. You went on, further, to point out that even

if they had been copyrighted, Ellen White's use of these materials fell well within the carefully prescribed boundaries of "fair use," as defined by the law of her day. One contemporary critic, however, raises the question of ethics and propriety: Was it moral for Ellen White to borrow heavily from other people's literary productions and not, at least, acknowledge the sources? Would you care to respond to the question of ethics here?

Ramik: Well, yes. Walter Rea has publicly said (and I've listened to the cassette recording of one of his presentations and then read the verbatim transcript carefully) that there is nothing "moral" in a purely legal definition of plagiarism. Of course, elsewhere, he attacks Mrs. White on moral grounds, on ethical use of others' materials. Well, first, he's totally wrong in saying there's no element of morality in the charge of plagiarism. H. M. Paull, who wrote *Literary Ethics* about 1928, is still today a recognized authority on the subject. Incidentally, while he never came right out and defined "plagiarism" in his book (because, as I said a moment ago, "plagiarism," per se, is not a crime), he does contrast plagiarism with piracy. The literary pirate does not care whether he gets caught; but the plagiarist worries that he will be found out. (And you say there's no element of morality involved in plagiarism!) Incidentally, to accuse Ellen White of plagiarizing Conybeare & Howson's uncopyrighted *Life of Paul* is absurd, if for no other reason than the fact that she publicly urged her readers to get a copy and read it for themselves.

REVIEW: All right; but, still, would you care to comment upon whether Ellen White encroached in the area of ethics by using materials—quotations, paraphrases, ideas, and so on—of others without publicly stating where she got them?

Ramik: There is no reason why Ellen White could not use the ideas of others in expressing the thoughts she wished to convey. It's not even rational to expect someone writing on a theological subject, for example, to write in the abstract without researching what others who have gone before—or even contemporaries—have said on the subject.

In the middle of the nineteenth century—just when Ellen White was beginning to write for print, 1845—in the legal



Interviewing Attorney Vincent L. Ramik (second from left) for the REVIEW are (left to right) Victor Cooper, General Conference associate communication director; Roger Coon, associate secretary of the Ellen G. White Estate; and Warren L. Johns, of the General Conference Legal Services.



Vincent L. Ramik

case of *Emerson v. Davies*, Massachusetts Circuit Justice Story in effect exonerates a writer who has used other men's words and ideas and woven them into his own composition.

In effect, Judge Story says, Only fools attempt to do that which has been done better in the past; no one really ever builds a language exclusively his own.

In other words, the words themselves have been there for years and years. The crucial issue is how you put them together, and the effect you wish to produce from those words.

Now, if someone in the past, according to Judge Story, has written something that is splendidly written—something that is historical, something that is a common, everyday human experience or occurrence—why should you break your back trying to say it better than someone else has already said it?

For those types of writings, there is absolutely nothing wrong or incongruous. On the contrary, it's the sensible man,



Victor Cooper

the wise man, who makes use of that which was done in the past, when it was done well. Somewhere in one of our legal archives there is an inscription over the door, "Past Is Prologue." I believe that applies to writings, too.

Ellen White used the writings of others; but in the way she used them, she made them uniquely her own, ethically, as well as legally. And, interestingly, she invariably improved that which she "selected"!

REVIEW: Do you have anything you would like to add on this fascinating subject?

Ramik: Yes. I believe it was Warren Johns who shared this analogy with me once when we were discussing this case and point. The situation is something like the builder who wishes to build a house. There are certain basic, essential units of building materials that are available to him—windows, doors, bricks, and so on. There are even certain recognizable kinds of textures and styles that have been created by various combinations of these different materials by earlier builders.

The builder brings together many of these and uses them. Yet the design of the house, the ultimate appearance, the ultimate shape, the size, the feel, are all unique to the immediate, contemporary builder. He individually puts his own stamp upon the final product—and it is uniquely his. (And he doesn't say—or need to say—I got this brick here, that door there, this window there, either!)

I think it was that way with Ellen White's use of words, phrases, clauses, sentences, paragraphs, yes, and even pages, from the writings of those who went before her. She stayed well within the legal boundaries of "fair use," and all the time created something that was substantially greater (and even more beautiful) than the mere sum of the component parts. And I think the ultimate tragedy is that the critics fail to see this.

I have been asked whether I thought Ellen White was "inspired." Well, *inspiration* is a theological word, not a legal word; and I am more at home with legal words than I am with theological words.

I don't know whether she was inspired, in the theological sense. I do believe that she was highly motivated. And if it wasn't God who motivated her, then I don't know who it could have been.

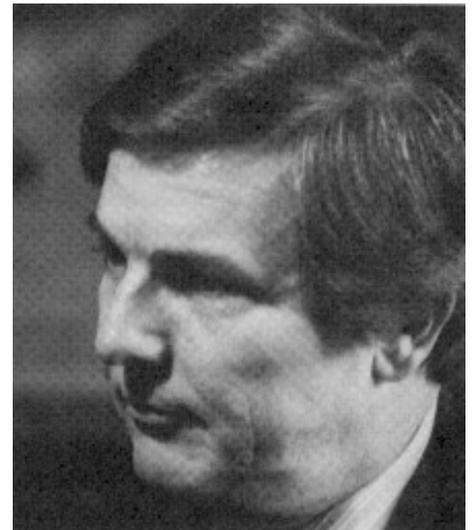
But! get that simply from her writings. I was not there when she wrote, and I

suppose that few of the critics were, either. I have a feeling that unless you had some type of "motivation," you simply could not deliver in words that which I have received from her writings.

Now, I, personally, could not be disturbed by the thought that God may have inspired her to select something from a certain book. And if God inspired her to select something that was written better by someone else than she could have written it herself, so what?

Actually, in the final analysis, I think it all comes down to a question of faith. And, for myself, I have no trouble in accepting what she wrote as a matter of faith.

The bottom line is: What really counts is the *message* of Mrs. White, not merely the mechanical *writings*—words, clauses, sentences—of Mrs. White. Theologians, I am told, distinguish here between verbal inspiration and plenary inspiration. Too many of the critics have missed the boat altogether. And it's too bad, too!



Warren L. Johns

I, personally, have been moved, deeply moved, by those writings. I have been changed by them. I think I am a better man today because of them. And I wish that the critics could discover *that!*

REVIEW: Attorney Ramik, how would you sum up the legal case against Ellen White as far as charges of plagiarism, piracy, and copyright infringement are concerned?

Ramik: If I had to be involved in such a legal case, I would much rather appear as defense counsel than for the prosecution. There simply is no case! □

The story behind this research

An interview with Warren L. Johns, chief counsel of the Office of General Counsel, General Conference of SDA.

REVIEW: Attorney Johns, how and under what circumstances did the Legal Services of the General Conference come to be involved in retaining the firm of Diller, Ramik & Wight, Ltd., to research questions pertaining to Ellen White and her use of literary sources?

Johns: Well, last October an Adventist pastor on the West Coast was featured prominently in the Los Angeles *Times*, and serious allegations of plagiarism were raised against Ellen G. White. The story, carried by a wire service and a news syndicate, appeared in dozens of newspapers across North America. It even found its way into the Manchester *Guardian* in England. Understandably, it raised a lot of questions in the minds of our church members, as well as among non-Adventist readers. Last April—six months later—our office decided that we ought to get to the bottom of the legal aspects and implications of the case. So we retained the services of a highly reputable firm specializing in patent, trademark, and copyright law. And they have now tendered their very comprehensive legal opinion.

REVIEW: Did the General Conference officers or the Ellen G. White Estate request you to proceed in this direction?

Johns: No. We acted entirely on our own initiative. Neither of these groups was involved. On April 21, I told the secretary of the White Estate what we proposed to do; but neither his department nor the GC officers initiated it. Besides, none of us knew either the direction the research was taking or the conclusions reached until the work was finished and the report was in. The cost of this kind of legal research is substantial; but our office felt it was important to get the truth, hence our office is paying the bill for the work that was done.

REVIEW: Why did you choose Diller, Ramik & Wight, Ltd., for this task?

Johns: First of all, our office has only three lawyers to serve the General Con-

ference—and the GC, in financial terms, would probably rank about fiftieth in *Fortune* magazine's well-known list of the top 500 corporations in the United States today. We already were very busy with other work, especially with First Amendment issues and challenges. Then, too, the plagiarism charges present some incredibly deep and complex legal issues. We felt we must have a specialist, and that's what we got. The best firms in this branch of law are here in Washington, and we have worked with Mr. Ramik's office on other cases for the past four or five years. During this time we have found him to be highly professional and superbly competent. Because of his demonstrated ability and undoubted expertise in this field, we have developed great respect for him.

REVIEW: Did the fact that Mr. Ramik, a Roman Catholic, would of necessity have to read *The Great Controversy* in its entirety (which some Catholics find personally offensive) concern you as you contemplated retaining him?

Johns: We recognized that some Adventists might wonder about whether he could be objective. But, on the other hand, if we hired an Adventist lawyer and he came up with a favorable conclusion some perhaps would say, "Oh, well, he had an ax to grind—what else would you expect?" Anyway, we already knew Mr. Ramik to be highly professional and objective; and, most important, we wanted to know the truth—let the chips fall where they might. We felt he would discover the facts, apply the law, and settle the issue for the church once and for all.

REVIEW: Do you feel that his comprehensive, closely reasoned 27-page report settles the issues raised?

Johns: Absolutely!

REVIEW: What do you feel is the significance—the meaning—of this report for our church?

Johns: The charges about plagiarism, literary piracy, copyright infringement, and so on, are shown to be en-

tirely without foundation in law. In Mrs. White's use of literary materials of other authors she clearly was within the legal definition of "fair use." By the definitions established in the law itself she is seen to be operating not only well within the law but in a high, ethical manner, as well. The charges made against her simply do not hold water. She did not operate in an underhanded, devious, unethical manner as charged. She was an honest, honorable Christian woman and author. I also might add that in law there is a legal test of a causal factor that might well be applied to Mrs. White's ministry—we sometimes speak of it as the "but for" test: but for this particular event, or cause, or action, that particular result would not have occurred. And I see Ellen White in that light. But for Ellen G. White there would have been no Seventh-day Adventist Church, as we know it today.

REVIEW: That's interesting! And how do you view the future?

Johns: I tend to agree with Sociologist Irmgard Simon, a doctoral candidate at a university in Münster, Westphalia, Germany, who, in 1965, wrote in her Ph.D. thesis (which dealt with Adventism and Mrs. White): "The Seventh-day Adventists still live on the spirit of Ellen G. White, and only as far as this heritage lives on do the Adventists have a future." Last January 19, *Newsweek's* religion editor, Kenneth L. Woodward, observed in a similar vein: "If it loses its founding mother, the church may find that it has also lost its distinctive visionary soul."

REVIEW: What will be the impact of the Ramik report on the church, and on the critics of Ellen White? Will it silence the critics?

Johns: Well; I am sure it will confirm the faith of those who have been made uneasy by allegations now shown to be without foundation. And it may cause some second thoughts among some of the critics. But, in the final analysis, for those who choose to believe, no proof is necessary; and for those who choose to disbelieve, no proof is possible! □

“This work is of God, or it is not”

For decades friends and critics alike have discussed Ellen White's use of literary sources in her writings. Critics have charged that her “borrowing” amounted to plagiarism and copyright infringement. Friends have said No, her “borrowing” should be classified as “fair use.” So intense was the debate three decades ago that F. D. Nichol in his book *Ellen G. White and Her Critics* devoted 64 pages (pages 403-467) to a discussion of the various issues involved.

Until 1981, however, no thoroughly researched opinion was available from the legal profession. All parties in the debate had been, in one sense, laymen—ministers, educators, physicians. Now, however, for the first time a top-flight attorney has spent about 300 hours reviewing the copyright scene from 1790 to 1915, has studied carefully the definitions of plagiarism, has examined Ellen White's use of sources, and has rendered his opinion: “Ellen G. White was not a plagiarist and her works did not constitute copyright infringement/piracy.”*

We are not so naive as to think that this extraordinarily frank and unequivocal statement will end the discussion. Another attorney with equally respectable credentials might study the question and come to a less firm conclusion or to a different one. Even when arguing from identical data, attorneys often differ. If this were not so there would be no need for courts and judges. Of course, judges also differ sometimes, even the Justices who sit on the U.S. Supreme Court. At times not only a majority decision is rendered but also a minority decision. The supreme law of the land rarely is what all nine Justices say it is; often it is what only five of them say it is.

Mr. Ramik's 27-page opinion quotes heavily from court cases dealing with copyright infringement and plagiarism. We have spent considerable time reading and studying these cases. In the case of *Emerson v. Davies et al.*, Justice Story, who, according to Mr. Ramik, “is recognized as the most influential judge in the area of copyright law in the era in question,” concluded that “the question is not, whether the materials which are used are entirely new, and have never been used before; or even that they have never been used before for the same purpose. The true question is, whether the same plan, arrangement and combination of materials have been used before for the same purpose or for any other purpose. . . [The author] may have gathered hints for his plan and arrangement, or parts of his plan and arrangement, from exist-

ing and known sources. He may have borrowed much of his material from others, but if they are combined in a different manner from what was in use before, and a fortiori, if his plan and arrangement are real improvements upon the existing modes, he is entitled to a copyright in the book embodying such improvement.”

In the case of *Lawrence v. Dana et al.*, Justice Storrow acknowledged: “Few judges have devised safer rules upon the subject than Judge Story. He held that. . . if so much is taken that the value of the original is sensibly diminished, or the labors of the original author are substantially, to an injurious extent, appropriated by another, that is sufficient in point of law to constitute infringement; that, in deciding questions of this sort, courts must “look to the nature and objects of the selections made, the quantity and value of the materials used, and the degree in which the use may prejudice the sale or diminish the profits, or supersede the objects of the original work.””

Attorney Ramik comments: “The manner of taking, the extent of the taking, the intent involved, and the damage done are all factors from which might be determined the existence or nonexistence of plagiarism.”

He quotes from Justice Story in the decision of *Emerson v. Davies et al.*: “I think it may be laid down as the clear result of the authorities in cases of this nature, that the true test of piracy (infringement of copyright) or not is to ascertain whether the defendant has, in fact, used the plan, arrangements and illustrations of the plaintiff, as the model of his own book, with colorable alterations and variations only to disguise the use thereof; or whether his work is the result of his own labor, skill, and use of common materials and common sources of knowledge, open to all men, and the resemblances are either accidental or arising from the nature of the subject. In other words, whether the defendant's book is, *quoad hoc*, a servile or evasive imitation of the plaintiff's work, or a bona fide original compilation from other common or independent sources.”

We have included these statements to point up the fact that even those who are laymen, so far as the legal profession is concerned, by comparing legal standards with the way Ellen White used sources are virtually certain to arrive at identical conclusions with those of Attorney Ramik.

Question of inspiration not addressed

For the editors of the REVIEW, previous or contemporary efforts to label Mrs. White as a plagiarist or copyright infringer have never seemed impressive. Most have grown out of a false or inadequate understanding of the revelation-inspiration process. It is important in this connection to recognize that Mr. Ramik's study does not address the question of Mrs. White's inspiration. Though we may consider settled the question as to whether Mrs. White was a plagiarist or copyright infringer, we still must determine for ourselves whether we believe she was fully inspired of God as were the ancient prophets and apostles.

*See note at bottom of page 2.

Was she inspired? We answer Yes, based on the weight of evidence.

1. We have applied the various Biblical tests of a genuine prophet to Ellen White and we feel that she meets them more than adequately.

2. We have individually and collectively proved the worth of her counsels in our respective ministries on many continents around the world. We have tried them and they work. Mrs. White and her writings pass the test of pragmatism.

3. Her writings feed our own souls as do no others save Scripture itself.

In addition, her writings agree with the Bible; they lift up Jesus Christ as our Saviour, our substitute and example; they are accompanied by a supernatural power to change lives; they contain a self-authenticating quality; and they have been overwhelmingly accepted throughout the decades by the Seventh-day Adventist community.

In our view there is no way a person can take a neutral position in regard to Mrs. White and her writings. Either one

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necessary, and for those who
choose not to, no proof is possible.

accepts her as being sent of God or he rejects her as being an emissary of Satan. Mrs. White herself took this view. For example, she wrote: "If you are thoroughly convinced that God has not spoken by us, why not act in accordance with your faith and have no more to do with a people who are under so great a deception as this people are? If you have been moving according to the dictates of the Spirit of God you are right and we are wrong. God is either teaching His church, reproving their wrongs and strengthening their faith, or He is not. This work is of God, or it is not. God does nothing in partnership with Satan. My work for the past thirty years bears the stamp of God or the stamp of the enemy. There is no halfway work in the matter." —*Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 230.

In writing to "Brother G," Mrs. White said: "If we surrender to God we shall choose the light and reject the darkness. If we desire to maintain the independence of the natural heart, and refuse the correction of God, we shall, as did the Jews, stubbornly carry out our purposes and our ideas in the face of the plainest evidence, and shall be in danger of as great deception as came upon them; and in our blind infatuation we may go to as great lengths as they did, and yet flatter ourselves that we are doing work for God.

"Brother G, you will not long stand where you now are. The path you have started upon is diverging from the true path and separating you from the people whom God is testing in order to purify them for the final victory. You will either come into union with this body, and labor earnestly to answer the

prayer of Christ, or you will become more and more unbelieving. You will question point after point of the established faith of the body, become more self-willed in your opinion, and grow darker and darker in regard to the work of God for this time, until you set light for darkness and darkness for light."—*Ibid.*, p. 231.

In the days of Jesus people rejected God's own dear Son primarily because they stifled the convictions brought to them by the Holy Spirit and looked around to see what the leaders thought of Him. When the Temple policemen were sent to arrest Jesus they returned empty-handed, explaining their failure by saying, "Never man spake like this man" (John 7:46). They felt deeply convicted that He was no ordinary person. But when the ecclesiastical leaders scornfully asked, "Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on him?" (verse 48) they rejected the evidence of reason and their own senses. The test they applied was simply that of source credibility. They seemed to take the position that if a matter is true it will be accepted by the majority, or, at least, by leading people—rulers, priests, scholars, or others. But Mrs. White offers this trenchant observation:

"Those to whom the message of truth is spoken seldom ask, 'Is it true?' but, 'By whom is it advocated?' Multitudes estimate it by the numbers who accept it; and the question is still asked, 'Have any of the learned men or religious leaders believed?' . . . It is not an argument against the truth, that large numbers are not ready to accept it, or that it is not received by the world's great men, or even by the religious leaders."—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 459, 460.

We think again of the personal testimony of Attorney Ramik, a Roman Catholic layman, who declared that he felt the problem of the critics of Ellen White is that they focus upon the writings while missing or neglecting the message of Ellen White. Liberal scholars have long been more concerned with the text of the Bible, the methodology of the prophets, historical and cultural backgrounds, and other factors associated with God's communication to mankind than they have with approaching the Word with awe, listening for God's voice in His Word, and then obeying His commands. Apparently many critics of Ellen White are following this same well-beaten path that has led multitudes ultimately to become skeptics.

The fact that the chief counsel of the General Conference Office of General Counsel asked the firm of Diller, Ramik & Wight to research the legal question as to whether Mrs. White was a plagiarist or a copyright infringer provides further evidence that the church wants truth and will continue to seek it whatever the risks. But let us never forget that faith always will be an essential element for the Christian, whether dealing with the writings of the Bible or those of Ellen White. As Attorney Johns said, "For those who choose to believe, no proof is necessary; and for those who choose to disbelieve, no proof is possible." And how one relates to God's attempt to reach his soul through God's modern messenger may well determine his eternal destiny.

K. H. W.

SELECTED MESSAGES VOL. 1, pp. 15-58

INTRODUCTION

STATEMENTS PENNED BY ELLEN G. WHITE, REGARDING HER WORK AS THE MESSENGER OF THE LORD AND CONCERNING THE PROCESSES BY WHICH GOD COMMUNICATES HIS WILL TO MEMBERS OF THE HUMAN FAMILY, ARE ALWAYS HELPFUL AND INTERESTING. SUCH ARE PRESENTED IN THIS OPENING SECTION OF SELECTED MESSAGES.

ALTHOUGH THE QUESTION OF INSPIRATION WAS TOUCHED ON AT INTERVALS THROUGH HER SEVENTY YEARS OF MINISTRY, THE OUTSTANDING PRESENTATION IS THE AUTHOR'S INTRODUCTION TO THE GREAT CONTROVERSY (NOT APPEARING HERE) WRITTEN IN MAY OF 1888. AN EARLIER STATEMENT, "OBJECTIONS TO THE BIBLE," PENNED IN 1886, IS PUBLISHED HEREIN, AND ANOTHER, "THE INSPIRATION OF THE WORD OF GOD," WRITTEN IN THE AUTUMN OF 1888, IS ALSO PRESENTED HERE. A FOURTH MAJOR STATEMENT, "THE MYSTERIES OF THE BIBLE A PROOF OF ITS INSPIRATION," WAS PUBLISHED IN 1889 AND MAY BE FOUND IN TESTIMONIES, VOLUME 5, PAGES 698-711. VARIOUS EXPLANATIONS ABOUT HER WORK, THE REPUBLICATION OF THE 1913 TRACT "THE WRITING AND SENDING OUT OF THE TESTIMONIES TO THE CHURCH," AND MRS. WHITE'S ANSWERS TO CERTAIN QUESTIONS AND CHARGES CONCERNING HER EARLIER WRITINGS ROUND OUT THE SECTION DEVOTED TO "THE LIGHT ON OUR PATHWAY."--WHITE TRUSTEES.

Chapter 1

The Inspiration of the Prophetic Writers

The Inspiration of the Word of God

15 This is a time when the question with all propriety may be asked, "When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" (Luke 18:8).

Spiritual darkness has covered the earth and gross darkness the people. There are in many churches skepticism and infidelity in the interpretation of the Scriptures. Many, very many, are questioning the verity and truth of the Scriptures. Human reasoning and the imaginings of the human heart are undermining the inspiration of the Word of God, and that which should be received as granted, is surrounded with a cloud of mysticism. Nothing stands out in clear and distinct lines, upon rock bottom. This is one of the marked signs of the last days.

This Holy Book has withstood the assaults of Satan, who has united with evil men to make everything of divine character shrouded in clouds and darkness. But the Lord has preserved this Holy Book by His own miraculous power in its present shape--a chart or guidebook to the human family to show them the way to heaven.

But the oracles of God have been so manifestly neglected that there are but few in our world, even of those **16** who profess to explain it to others, who have the divine knowledge of the Scriptures. There are learned men who have a college education, but these shepherds do not feed the flock of God. They do not consider that the Excellencies of the Scriptures

will be continually unfolding their hidden treasures as precious jewels are discovered by digging for them.

There are men who strive to be original, who are wise above what is written; therefore, their wisdom is foolishness. They discover wonderful things in advance, ideas that reveal that they are far behind in the comprehension of the divine will and purposes of God. In seeking to make plain or to unravel mysteries hid from ages from mortal man, they are like a man floundering about in the mud, unable to extricate himself and yet telling others how to get out of the muddy sea they themselves are in. This is a fit representation of the men who set themselves to correct the errors of the Bible. No man can improve the Bible by suggesting what the Lord meant to say or ought to have said.

Some look to us gravely and say, "Don't you think there might have been some mistake in the copyist or in the translators?" This is all probable, and the mind that is so narrow that it will hesitate and stumble over this possibility or probability would be just as ready to stumble over the mysteries of the Inspired Word, because their feeble minds cannot see through the purposes of God. Yes, they would just as easily stumble over plain facts that the common mind will accept, and discern the Divine, and to which God's utterance is plain and beautiful, full of marrow and fatness. All the mistakes will not cause trouble to one soul, or cause any feet to stumble, that would not manufacture difficulties from the plainest revealed truth.

God committed the preparation of His divinely inspired Word to finite man. This Word, arranged into books, the Old and New Testaments, is the guidebook to the inhabitants of a fallen world, bequeathed to them that, by studying and obeying the directions, not one soul would lose its way to heaven. **17** Those who think to make the supposed difficulties of Scripture plain, in measuring by their finite rule that which is inspired and that which is not inspired, had better cover their faces, as Elijah when the still small voice spoke to him; for they are in the presence of God and holy angels, who for ages have communicated to men light and knowledge, telling them what to do and what not to do, unfolding before them scenes of thrilling interest, waymark by waymark in symbols and signs and illustrations.

And He [God] has not, while presenting the perils clustering about the last days, qualified any finite man to unravel hidden mysteries or inspired one man or any class of men to pronounce judgment as to that which is inspired or is not. When men, in their finite judgment, find it necessary to go into an examination of scriptures to define, that which is inspired, and that which is not, they have stepped before Jesus to show Him a better way than He has led us.

I take the Bible just as it is, as the Inspired Word. I believe its utterances in an entire Bible. Men arise who think they find something to criticize in God's Word. They lay it bare before others as evidence of superior wisdom. These men are, many of them, smart men, learned men, they have eloquence and talent, the whole lifework [of whom] is to unsettle minds in regard to the inspiration of the Scriptures. They influence many to see as they do. And the same work is passed on from one to another, just as Satan designed it should be, until we may see the full meaning of the words of Christ, "When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" (Luke 18:8).

Brethren, let not a mind or hand be engaged in criticizing the Bible. It is a work that Satan delights to have any of you do, but it is not a work the Lord has pointed out for you to do.

Men should let God take care of His own Book, His living oracles, as He has done for ages. They begin to question some parts of revelation, and pick flaws in the apparent inconsistencies of this statement and that statement. **18** Beginning at Genesis, they give up that which they deem questionable, and their minds lead on, for Satan will lead to any length they may follow in their criticism, and they see something to doubt in the whole Scriptures. Their faculties of criticism become sharpened by exercise, and they can rest on nothing with a certainty. You try to reason with these men, but your time is lost. They will exercise their power of ridicule even upon the Bible. They even become mockers, and they would be astonished if you put it to them in that light.

Brethren, cling to your Bible, as it reads, and stop your criticisms in regard to its validity, and obey the Word, and not one of you will be lost. The ingenuity of men has been exercised for ages to measure the Word of God by their finite minds and limited comprehension. If the Lord, the Author of the living oracles, would throw back the curtain and reveal His wisdom and His glory before them, they would shrink into nothingness and exclaim as did Isaiah, "I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of people of unclean lips" (Isaiah 6:5).

Simplicity and plain utterance are comprehended by the illiterate, by the peasant, and the child as well as by the full-grown man or the giant in intellect. If the individual is possessed of large talents of mental powers, he will find in the oracles of God treasures of truth, beautiful and valuable, which he can appropriate. He will also find difficulties, and secrets and wonders that will give him the highest satisfaction to study during a long lifetime, and yet there is infinity beyond.

Men of humble acquirements, possessing but limited capabilities and opportunities to become conversant in the Scriptures, find in the living oracles comfort, guidance, counsel, and the plan of salvation as clear as a sunbeam. No one need be lost for want of knowledge, unless he is willfully blind.

We thank God that the Bible is prepared for the poor man as well as for the learned man. It is fitted for all ages and all classes. --Manuscript 16, 1888 (written at Minneapolis, Minn., in autumn of 1888). **19**

Objections to the Bible

Human minds vary. The minds of different education and thought receive different impressions of the same words, and it is difficult for one mind to give to one of a different temperament, education, and habits of thought by language exactly the same idea as that which is clear and distinct in his own mind. Yet to honest men, right-minded men, he can be so simple and plain as to convey his meaning for all practical purposes. If the man he communicates with is not honest and will not want to see and understand the truth, he will turn his words and language in everything to suit his own purposes. He will misconstrue his words, play upon his imagination, wrest them from their true meaning, and then entrench himself in unbelief, claiming that the sentiments are all wrong.

This is the way my writings are treated by those who wish to misunderstand and pervert them. They turn the truth of God into a lie. In the very same way that they treat the writings in my published articles and in my books, so do skeptics and infidels treat the Bible. They read it according to their desire to pervert, to misapply, to willfully wrest the utterances from their true meaning. They declare that the Bible can prove anything and everything, that every sect proves their doctrines right, and that the most diverse doctrines are proved from the Bible.

The writers of the Bible had to express their ideas in human language. It was written by human men. These men were inspired of the Holy Spirit. Because of the imperfections of human understanding of language, or the perversity of the human mind, ingenious in evading truth, many read and understand the Bible to please themselves. It is not that the difficulty is in the Bible. Opposing politicians argue points of law in the statute book, and take opposite views in their application and in these laws.

The Scriptures were given to men, not in a continuous chain of unbroken utterances, but piece by piece through successive generations, as God in His providence saw a fitting opportunity to impress man at sundry times and **20** divers places. Men wrote as they were moved upon by the Holy Ghost. There is "first the bud, then the blossom, and next the fruit," "first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear." This is exactly what the Bible utterances are to us.

There is not always perfect order or apparent unity in the Scriptures. The miracles of Christ are not given in exact order, but are given just as the circumstances occurred, which called for this divine revealing of the power of Christ. The truths of the Bible are as pearls hidden. They must be searched, dug out by painstaking effort. Those who take only a surface view of the Scriptures will, with their superficial knowledge, which they think is very deep, talk of the contradictions of the Bible, and question the authority of the Scriptures. But those whose hearts are in harmony with truth and duty will search the Scriptures with a heart prepared to receive divine impressions. The illuminated soul sees a spiritual unity, one grand golden thread running through the whole, but it requires patience, thought, and prayer to trace out the precious golden thread. Sharp contentions over the Bible have led to investigation and revealed the precious jewels of truth. Many tears have been shed, many prayers offered, that the Lord would open the understanding to His Word.

The Bible is not given to us in grand superhuman language. Jesus, in order to reach man where he is, took humanity. The Bible must be given in the language of men. Everything that is human is imperfect. Different meanings are expressed by the same word; there is not one word for each distinct idea. The Bible was given for practical purposes.

The stamps of minds are different. All do not understand expressions and statements alike. Some understand the statements of the Scriptures to suit their own particular minds and cases. Prepossessions, prejudices, and passions have a strong influence to darken the understanding and confuse the mind even in reading the words of Holy Writ.

The disciples traveling to Emmaus needed to be disentangled in their interpretation of the Scriptures. Jesus **21** walked with them disguised, and as a man He talked with them. Beginning at Moses and the prophets He taught them in all things concerning Himself, that

His life, His mission, His sufferings, His death were just as the Word of God had foretold. He opened their understanding that they might understand the Scriptures. How quickly He straightened out the tangled ends and showed the unity and divine verity of the Scriptures. How much men in these times need their understanding opened.

The Bible is written by inspired men, but it is not God's mode of thought and expression. It is that of humanity. God, as a writer, is not represented. Men will often say such an expression is not like God. But God has not put Himself in words, in logic, in rhetoric, on trial in the Bible. The writers of the Bible were God's penmen, not His pen. Look at the different writers.

It is not the words of the Bible that are inspired, but the men that were inspired. Inspiration acts not on the man's words or his expressions but on the man himself, who, under the influence of the Holy Ghost, is imbued with thoughts. But the words receive the impress of the individual mind. The divine mind is diffused. The divine mind and will is combined with the human mind and will; thus the utterances of the man are the word of God. Manuscript 24, 1886 (written in Europe in 1886)

Unity in Diversity

There is variety in a tree, there are scarcely two leaves just alike. Yet this variety adds to the perfection of the tree as a whole.

In our Bible, we might ask, why need Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John in the Gospels, why need the Acts of the Apostles, and the variety of writers in the Epistles, go over the same thing?

The Lord gave His word in just the way He wanted it to come. He gave it through different writers, each having his own individuality, though going over the same history. Their testimonies are brought together in one Book, and **22** are like the testimonies in a social meeting. They do not represent things in just the same style. Each has an experience of his own, and this diversity broadens and deepens the knowledge that is brought out to meet the necessities of varied minds. The thoughts expressed have not a set uniformity, as if cast in an iron mold, making the very hearing monotonous. In such uniformity there would be a loss of grace and distinctive beauty . . .

The Creator of all ideas may impress different minds with the same thought, but each may express it in a different way, yet without contradiction. The fact that this difference exists should not perplex or confuse us. It is seldom that two persons will view and express truth in the very same way. Each dwells on particular points that his constitution and education have fitted him to appreciate. The sunlight falling upon the different objects gives those objects a different hue.

Through the inspiration of His Spirit the Lord gave His apostles truth, to be expressed according to the development of their minds by the Holy Spirit. But the mind is not cramped, as if forced into a certain mold. Letter 53, 1900.

The Lord Speaks in Imperfect Speech

The Lord speaks to human beings in imperfect speech, in order that the degenerate senses, the dull, earthly perception, of earthly beings may comprehend His words. Thus is shown God's condescension. He meets fallen human beings where they are. The Bible, perfect as it is in its simplicity, does not answer to the great ideas of God; for infinite ideas cannot be perfectly embodied in finite vehicles of thought. Instead of the expressions of the Bible being exaggerated, as many people suppose, the strong expressions break down before the magnificence of the thought, though the penman selected the most expressive language through which to convey the truths of higher education. Sinful beings can only bear to look upon a shadow of the brightness of heaven's glory.--Letter 121, 1901. **23**

No Man to Pronounce Judgment on God's Word

Both in the [Battle Creek] Tabernacle and in the college the subject of inspiration has been taught, and finite men have taken it upon themselves to say that some things in the Scriptures were inspired and some were not. I was shown that the Lord did not inspire the articles on inspiration published in the Review, [REFERENCE HERE IS TO A SERIES OF ARTICLES THE WRITER OF WHICH ADVOCATED THAT THERE WERE "DIFFERENCES IN DEGREES" OF INSPIRATION. SEE THE REVIEW AND HERALD, JAN. 15, 1884.--COMPILERS.] neither did He approve their endorsement before our youth in the college. When men venture to criticize the Word of God, they venture on sacred, holy ground, and had better fear and tremble and hide their wisdom as foolishness. God sets no man to pronounce judgment on His Word, selecting some things as inspired and discrediting others as uninspired. The testimonies have been treated in the same way; but God is not in this." Letter 22, 1889

Chapter 2: Ellen G. White and Her Writings

24 A Letter to Dr. Paulson St. Helena, California June 14, 1906

Dear Brother:

Your letter came to me while in southern California. For some weeks the consideration of matters connected with the development of our sanitarium work there, and the writing out of the views given me regarding the earthquake and its lessons, have taken my time and strength.

But now I must respond to the letters received from you and others. In your letter you speak of your early training to have implicit faith in the testimonies and say, "I was led to conclude and most firmly believe that every word that you ever spoke in public or private, that every letter you wrote under any and all circumstances, was as inspired as the Ten Commandments."

My brother, you have studied my writings diligently, and you have never found that I have made any such claims, neither will you find that the pioneers in our cause ever made such claims.

In my introduction to The Great Controversy you have no doubt read my statement regarding the Ten Commandments **25** and the Bible, which should have helped you to a correct understanding of the matter under consideration. Here is the statement:

"The Bible points to God as its author; yet it was written by human hands; and in the varied style of its different books it presents the characteristics of the several writers. The truths revealed are all 'given by inspiration of God' (2 Timothy 3:16); yet they are expressed in the words of men. The Infinite One by His Holy Spirit has shed light into the minds and hearts of His servants. He has given dreams and visions, symbols and figures; and those to whom the truth was thus revealed, have themselves embodied the thought in human language.

"The Ten Commandments were spoken by God Himself, and were written by His own hand. They are of divine, and not human composition. But the Bible, with its God-given truths expressed in the language of men, presents a union of the divine and the human. Such a union existed in the nature of Christ, who was the Son of God and the Son of man. Thus it is true of the Bible, as it was of Christ, that 'the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us' (John 1:14).

"Written in different ages, by men who differed widely in rank and occupation, and in mental and spiritual endowments, the books of the Bible present a wide contrast in style, as well as a diversity in the nature of the subjects unfolded. Different forms of expression are employed by different writers; often the same truth is more strikingly presented by one than by another. And as several writers present a subject under varied aspects and relations, there may appear, to the superficial, careless, or prejudiced reader, to be discrepancy or contradiction, where the thoughtful, reverent student, with clearer insight, discerns the underlying harmony.

"As presented through different individuals, the truth is brought out in its varied aspects. One writer is more strongly impressed with one phase of the subject; he grasps those points that harmonize with his experience or with his power of perception and appreciation; another **26** seizes upon a different phase; and each, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, presents what is most forcibly impressed upon his own mind--a different aspect of the truth in each, but a perfect harmony through all. And the truths thus revealed unite to form a perfect whole, adapted to meet the wants of men in all the circumstances and experiences of life.

"God has been pleased to communicate His truth to the world by human agencies, and He Himself, by His Holy Spirit, qualified men and enabled them to do His work. He guided the mind in the selection of what to speak and what to write. The treasure was entrusted to earthen vessels, yet it is, nonetheless, from Heaven. The testimony is conveyed through the imperfect expression of human language, yet it is the testimony of God; and the obedient, believing child of God beholds in it the glory of a divine power, full of grace and truth."

The Integrity of the Testimonies

In perfect harmony with this are my statements found in the article "The Testimonies Slighted," written June 20, 1882, and published in Testimonies for the Church, volume 5, No. 31, pages 62-84. From this I quote for your consideration, several paragraphs:

"Many are looking with self-complacency upon the long years during which they have advocated the truth. They now feel that they are entitled to a reward for their past trials and obedience. But this genuine experience in the things of God in the past, makes them more guilty before Him for not preserving their integrity and going forward to perfection. The faithfulness for the past year will never atone for the neglect of the present year. A man's truthfulness yesterday will not atone for his falsehood today.

"Many excused their disregard of the testimonies by saying, 'Sister White is influenced by her husband; the testimonies are molded by his spirit and judgment.' Others were seeking to gain something from me that they could construe to justify their course or to give them influence. **27** It was then I decided that nothing more should go from my pen until the converting power of God was seen in the church. But the Lord placed the burden upon my soul. I labored for you earnestly. How much this cost both my husband and myself, eternity will tell. Have I not a knowledge of the state of the church, when the Lord has presented their case before me again and again for years? Repeated warnings have been given, yet there has been no decided change . . .

"Yet now when I send you a testimony of warning and reproof, many of you declare it to be merely the opinion of Sister White. You have thereby insulted the Spirit of God. You know how the Lord has manifested Himself through the Spirit of prophecy. Past, present, and future have passed before me. I have been shown faces that I had never seen, and years afterward I knew them when I saw them. I have been aroused from my sleep with a vivid sense of subjects previously presented to my mind and I have written, at midnight, letters that have gone across the continent, and arriving at a crisis, have saved great disaster to the cause of God. This has been my work for many years. A power has impelled me to reprove and rebuke wrongs that I had not thought of. Is this work of the last thirty-six years from above or from beneath? . . .

"When I went to Colorado I was so burdened for you that, in my weakness, I wrote many pages to be read at your camp meeting. Weak and trembling, I arose at three o'clock in the morning to write to you. God was speaking through clay. You might say that this communication was only a letter. Yes, it was a letter, but prompted by the Spirit of God, to bring before your minds things that had been shown me. In these letters that I write, in the testimonies I bear, I am presenting to you that which the Lord has presented to me. I do not write one article in the paper, expressing merely my own ideas. They are what God has opened before me in vision--the precious rays of light shining from the throne . . .

"What voice will you acknowledge as the voice of God? What power has the Lord in reserve to correct your **28** errors and show you your course as it is? What power to work in the church? If you refuse to believe until every shadow of uncertainty and every possibility of doubt is removed, you will never believe. The doubt that demands perfect knowledge will never yield to faith. Faith rests upon evidence, not demonstration. The Lord requires us to

obey the voice of duty, when there are other voices all around us urging us to pursue an opposite course. It requires earnest attention from us to distinguish the voice that speaks from God. We must resist and conquer inclination, and obey the voice of conscience without parleying or compromise, lest its promptings cease, and will and impulse control.

"The word of the Lord comes to us all who have not resisted His Spirit by determining not to hear and obey. This voice is heard in warnings, in counsels, in reproof. It is the Lord's message of light to His people. If we wait for louder calls or better opportunities, the light may be withdrawn, and we left in darkness . . .

"It pains me to say, my brethren, that your sinful neglect to walk in the light has enshrouded you in darkness. You may now be honest in not recognizing and obeying the light; the doubts you have entertained, your neglect to heed the requirements of God, have blinded your perception so that darkness is now to you light, and light is darkness. God has bidden you to go forward to perfection. Christianity is a religion of progress. Light from God is full and ample, waiting our demand upon it. Whatever blessings the Lord may give, He has an infinite supply beyond, an inexhaustible store from which we may draw. Skepticism may treat the sacred claims of the gospel with jests, scoffing, and denial. The spirit of worldliness may contaminate the many and control the few; the cause of God may hold its ground only by great exertion and continual sacrifice, yet it will triumph finally.

"The word is: Go forward; discharge your individual duty, and leave all consequences in the hands of God. If we move forward where Jesus leads the way we shall see His triumph, we shall share His joy. We must share the **29** conflicts if we wear the crown of victory. Like Jesus, we must be made perfect through suffering. Had Christ's life been one of ease, then might we safely yield to sloth. Since His life was marked with continual self-denial, suffering, and self-sacrifice, we shall make no complaint if we are partakers with Him. We can walk safely in the darkest path if we have the Light of the world for our guide....

"When the Lord last presented your case before me, and made known to me that you had not regarded the light which had been given you, I was bidden to speak to you plainly in His name, for His anger was kindled against you. These words were spoken to me: 'Your work is appointed you of God. Many will not hear you, for they refused to hear the Great Teacher; many will not be corrected, for their ways are right in their own eyes. Yet bear to them the reproofs and warnings I shall give you, whether they will hear or forbear.'"

In connection with these quotations, study again the article "The Nature and Influence of the Testimonies," in Testimonies, volume 5, pages 654-691.

The statement that you quote from Testimony No. 31 [volume 5, page 67] is correct: "In these letters which I write, in the testimonies I bear, I am presenting to you that which the Lord has presented to me. I do not write one article in the paper expressing merely my own ideas. They are what God has opened before me in vision --the precious rays of light shining from the throne." It is true concerning the articles in our papers and in the many volumes of my books. I have been instructed in accordance with the Word in the precepts of the law of God. I have been instructed in selecting from the lessons of Christ. Are not the positions taken in my writings in harmony with the teachings of Jesus Christ?

Peril of Deceptive Representations

To some of the questions you have asked, I am not to answer Yes or No. I must not make statements that can be misconstrued. I see and feel the peril of those who, I have been instructed, are endangering their souls at times **30** by listening to deceptive representations regarding the messages that God has given me. Through many twistings and turnings and false reasonings on what I have written, they try to vindicate their personal unbelief. I am sorry for my brethren who have been walking in the mist of suspicion and skepticism and false reasoning. I know that some of them would be blessed by messages of counsel if the clouds obscuring their spiritual vision could be driven back, and they could see aright. But they do not see clearly. Therefore I dare not communicate with them. When the Spirit of God clears away the mysticism, there will be found just as complete comfort and faith and hope in the messages that I have been instructed to give, as were found in them in years past.

Truth will surely bear away the victory. The One who gave His life to ransom man from the delusions of Satan, is not asleep, but watching. When His sheep turn away from following the voice of a stranger, whose sheep they are not, they will rejoice in the voice they have loved to follow.

We can learn precious lessons from the study of the life of Christ. The envious Pharisees misinterpreted the acts and words of Christ, which, if properly received, would have been beneficial to their spiritual understanding. Instead of admiring His goodness, they charged Him, in the presence of His disciples, with impiety--"Why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners?" (Matthew 9:11) Instead of addressing our blessed Saviour Himself, whose answer would at once have convicted them of their malice, they talked with the disciples, and made their charges where, as a leaven of evil, they would do great harm. If Christ had been an impious man, He would have lost His hold upon the hearts of His believing followers. But because of their confidence in Christ, the disciples would not give ear to the insinuations of His wicked accusers.

Desiring to bring censure upon the disciples, these wicked accusers went again and again to Christ with the question: Why do Thy disciples that which is not lawful? And when they judged our Lord to have transgressed, they **31** spoke, not to Himself, but to His disciples, to plant the seeds of unbelief in the hearts of His followers.

Thus they worked to bring in doubt and dissension. Every method was tried to bring doubt into the hearts of the little flock, that it might cause them to watch for something that would check the good and gracious work of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Work of this same character will be brought to bear upon true believers today. The Lord Jesus reads the heart; He discerns the interests and purposes of the thoughts of all men concerning Himself and His believing disciples. He answers their thoughts concerning the faultfinding ones, "They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick" (Matthew 9:12). The insolent Pharisees had an exalted idea of their own piety and holiness, while they were ready to pass censure on the lives of others. Letter 206, 1906

The Lord's Messenger

Last night, in vision, I was standing before an assembly of our people, bearing a decided testimony regarding present truth and present duty. After the discourse, many gathered about me, asking questions. They desired so many explanations about this point, and that point, and another point, that I said, "One at a time, if you please, lest you confuse me."

And then I appealed to them, saying: "For years you have had many evidences that the Lord has given me a work to do. These evidences could scarcely have been greater than they are. Will you brush away all these evidences as a cobweb, at the suggestion of a man's unbelief? That which makes my heart ache is the fact that many who are now perplexed and tempted are those who have had abundance of evidence and opportunity to consider and pray and understand; and yet they do not discern the nature of the sophistries that are presented to influence them to reject the warnings God has given to save them from the delusions of these last days."

Some have stumbled over the fact that I said I did not **32** claim to be a prophet [REFERENCE IS HERE MADE TO A DISCOURSE GIVEN AT BATTLE CREEK, OCTOBER 2, 1904, IN WHICH SHE SAID, "I DO NOT CLAIM TO BE A PROPHETESS."--COMPILERS.] and they have asked: Why is this?

I have had no claims to make, only that I am instructed that I am the Lord's messenger; that He called me in my youth to be His messenger, to receive His word, and to give a clear and decided message in the name of the Lord Jesus.

Early in my youth I was asked several times, Are you a prophet? I have ever responded, I am the Lord's messenger. I know that many have called me a prophet, but I have made no claim to this title. My Saviour declared me to be His messenger. "Your work," He instructed me, "is to bear My word. Strange things will arise, and in your youth I set you apart to bear the message to the erring ones, to carry the word before unbelievers, and with pen and voice to reprove from the Word actions that are not right. Exhort from the Word. I will make My Word open to you. It shall not be as a strange language. In the true eloquence of simplicity, with voice and pen, the messages that I give shall be heard from one who has never learned in the schools. My Spirit and My power shall be with you.

"Be not afraid of man, for My shield shall protect you. It is not you that speaketh: it is the Lord that giveth the messages of warning and reproof. Never deviate from the truth under any circumstances. Give the light I shall give you. The messages for these last days shall be written in books, and shall stand immortalized, to testify against those who have once rejoiced in the light, but who have been led to give it up because of the seductive influences of evil."

Why have I not claimed to be a prophet?--Because in these days many who boldly claim that they are prophets are a reproach to the cause of Christ; and because my work includes much more than the word "prophet" signifies.

When this work was first given me, I begged the Lord to lay the burden on someone else. The work was so large and broad and deep that I feared I could not do it. But by **33** His Holy Spirit the Lord has enabled me to perform the work which He gave me to do.

A Work of Many Features

God has made plain to me the various ways in which He would use me to carry forward a special work. Visions have been given me, with the promise, "If you deliver the messages faithfully and endure to the end, you shall eat of the fruit of the tree of life, and drink of the water of the river of life."

The Lord gave me great light on health reform. In connection with my husband, I was to be a medical missionary worker. I was to set an example to the church by taking the sick to my home and caring for them. This I have done, giving the women and children vigorous treatment. I was also to speak on the subject of Christian temperance, as the Lord's appointed messenger. I engaged heartily in this work, and spoke to large assemblies on temperance in its broadest and truest sense.

I was instructed that I must ever urge upon those who profess to believe the truth, the necessity of practicing the truth. This means sanctification, and sanctification means the culture and training of every capability for the Lord's service.

I was charged not to neglect or pass by those who were being wronged. I was specially charged to protest against any arbitrary or overbearing action toward the ministers of the gospel by those having official authority. Disagreeable though the duty may be, I am to reprove the oppressor, and plead for justice. I am to present the necessity of maintaining justice and equity in all our institutions.

If I see those in positions of trust neglecting aged ministers, I am to present the matter to those whose duty it is to care for them. Ministers who have faithfully done their work are not to be forgotten or neglected when they have become feeble in health. Our conferences are not to disregard the needs of those who have borne the burdens of the work. It was after John had grown old in the service of the Lord that he was exiled to Patmos. And on that **34** lonely isle he received more communications from heaven than he had received during the rest of his lifetime.

After my marriage I was instructed that I must show a special interest in motherless and fatherless children, taking some under my own charge for a time, and then finding homes for them. Thus I would be giving others an example of what they could do.

Although called to travel often, and having much writing to do, I have taken children of three and five years of age, and have cared for them, educated them, and trained them for responsible positions. I have taken into my home from time to time boys from ten to sixteen years of age, giving them motherly care, and a training for service. I have felt it my duty to bring before our people that work for which those in every church should feel a responsibility.

While in Australia I carried on this same line of work, taking into my home orphan children, who were in danger of being exposed to temptations that might cause the loss of their souls.

In Australia we [REFERENCE HERE IS TO HER ASSOCIATE WORKERS. JAMES WHITE DIED IN 1881] also worked as Christian medical missionaries. At times I made my home in Cooranbong an asylum for the sick and afflicted. My secretary, who had received training in the Battle Creek Sanitarium, stood by my side, and did the work of a missionary nurse. No charge was made for her services, and we won the confidence of the people by the interest that we manifested in the sick and suffering. After a time the Health Retreat at Cooranbong was built, and then we were relieved of this burden.

No Boastful Claims

To claim to be a prophetess is something that I have never done. If others call me by that name, I have no controversy with them. But my work has covered so many lines that I cannot call myself other than a messenger, sent to bear a message from the Lord to His people, and to take up work in any line that He points out. **35**

When I was last in Battle Creek, I said before a large congregation that I did not claim to be a prophetess. Twice I referred to this matter, intending each time to make the statement, "I do not claim to be a prophetess." If I spoke otherwise than this, let all now understand that what I had in mind to say was that I do not claim the title of prophet or prophetess.

I understood that some were anxious to know if Mrs. White still held the same views that she did years ago when they had heard her speak in the sanitarium grove, in the Tabernacle, and at the camp meetings held in the suburbs of Battle Creek. I assured them that the message she bears today is the same that she has borne during the sixty years of her public ministry. She has the same service to do for the Master that was laid upon her in her girlhood. She receives lessons from the same Instructor. The directions given her are, "Make known to others what I have revealed to you. Write out the messages that I give you, that the people may have them." This is what she has endeavored to do.

I have written many books, and they have been given a wide circulation. Of myself I could not have brought out the truth in these books, but the Lord has given me the help of His Holy Spirit. These books, giving the instruction that the Lord has given me during the past sixty years, contain light from heaven, and will bear the test of investigation.

At the age of seventy-eight I am still toiling. We are all in the hands of the Lord. I trust in Him; for I know that he will never leave nor forsake those who put their trust in Him. I have committed myself to His keeping.

"And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry" (1 Timothy 1:12). The Review and Herald, July 26, 1906.

The Work of a Prophet and More

During the discourse, I said that I did not claim to be a prophetess. Some were surprised at this statement, and as **36** much is being said in regard to it, I will make an explanation. Others have called me a prophetess, but I have never assumed that title. I have not felt that it was my duty thus to designate myself. Those who boldly assume that they are prophets in this our day are often a reproach to the cause of Christ.

My work includes much more than this name signifies. I regard myself as a messenger, entrusted by the Lord with messages for His people. Letter 55, 1905

I am now instructed that I am not to be hindered in my work by those who engage in suppositions regarding its nature, whose minds are struggling with so many intricate problems connected with the supposed work of a prophet. My commission embraces the work of a prophet, but it does not end there. It embraces much more than the minds of those who have been sowing the seeds of unbelief can comprehend. Letter 244, 1906 (Addressed to elders of Battle Creek church.)

Receiving and Imparting the Light

As inquiries are frequently made as to my state in vision, and after I come out, I would say that when the Lord sees fit to give a vision, I am taken into the presence of Jesus and angels, and am entirely lost to earthly things. I can see no farther than the angel directs me. My attention is often directed to scenes transpiring upon earth.

At times I am carried far ahead into the future and shown what is to take place. Then again I am shown things as they have occurred in the past. After I come out of vision I do not at once remember all that I have seen, and the matter is not so clear before me until I write, then the scene rises before me as was presented in vision, and I can write with freedom. Sometimes the things which I have seen are hid from me after I come out of vision, and I cannot call them to mind until I am brought before a company where that vision applies, then the things which I have seen come to my mind with force. I am just as dependent upon the Spirit of the Lord in relating or writing a vision, as in having the vision. It is impossible for me to **37** call up things that have been shown me unless the Lord brings them before me at the time that He is pleased to have me relate or write them. *Spiritual Gifts* (1860), vol. 2, pp. 292, 293

Although I am as dependent upon the Spirit of the Lord in writing my views as I am in receiving them, yet the words I employ in describing what I have seen are my own, unless they be those spoken to me by an angel, which I always enclose in marks of quotation. *The Review and Herald*, Oct. 8, 1867.

The question is asked, How does Sister White know in regard to the matters of which she speaks so decidedly, as if she had authority to say these things? I speak thus because they flash upon my mind when in perplexity like lightning out of a dark cloud in the fury of a storm. Some scenes presented before me years ago have not been retained in my memory, but when the instruction then given is needed, sometimes even when I am standing before the people, the remembrance comes sharp and clear, like a flash of lightning, bringing to

mind distinctly that particular instruction. At such times I cannot refrain from saying the things that flash into my mind, not because I have had a new vision, but because that which was presented to me perhaps years in the past has been recalled to my mind forcibly. The Writing and Sending Out of the Testimonies, p. 24.

No Claim to Infallibility

We have many lessons to learn, and many, many to unlearn. God and heaven alone are infallible. Those who think that they will never have to give up a cherished view, never have occasion to change an opinion, will be disappointed. As long as we hold to our own ideas and opinions with determined persistency, we cannot have the unity for which Christ prayed. The Review and Herald, July 26, 1892.

In regard to infallibility, I never claimed it; God alone is infallible. His word is true, and in Him is no variableness, or shadow of turning. Letter 10, 1895.

The Sacred and the Common

38 Sanitarium, California March 5, 1909

I am troubled in regard to Brother A, who for some years has been a worker in southern California. He has made some strange statements, and I am pained to see him denying the testimonies as a whole because of what seems to him an inconsistency--a statement made by me in regard to the number of rooms in the Paradise Valley Sanitarium. Brother A says that in a letter written to one of the brethren in southern California, the statement was made by me that the sanitarium contained forty rooms, when there were really only thirty-eight. This, Brother A gives to me as the reason why he has lost confidence in the testimonies . . .

The information given concerning the number of rooms in the Paradise Valley Sanitarium was given, not as a revelation from the Lord, but simply as a human opinion. There has never been revealed to me the exact number of rooms in any of our sanitariums; and the knowledge I have obtained of such things I have gained by inquiring of those who were supposed to know. In my words, when speaking upon these common subjects, there is nothing to lead minds to believe that I receive my knowledge in a vision from the Lord and am stating it as such . . .

When the Holy Spirit reveals anything regarding the institutions connected with the Lord's work, or concerning the work of God upon human hearts and minds, as He has revealed these things through me in the past, the message given is to be regarded as light given of God for those who need it. But for one to mix the sacred with the common is a great mistake. In a tendency to do this we may see the working of the enemy to destroy souls.

To every soul whom God has created He has given capabilities to serve Him, but Satan seeks to make this work of service hard by his constant temptation to mislead souls. He works to dim the spiritual perceptions that men may not distinguish between that which is common and that **39** which is holy. I have been made to know this distinction through a life's service for my Lord and Master....

The message came to me, Dedicate yourself to the highest work ever committed to mortals. I will give you high aspirations and powers and a true sense of the work of Christ. You are not your own, for you are bought with a price, by the life and death of the Son of God. God calls for your child's heart and service under the sanctification of the Holy Spirit.

I gave myself, my whole being, to God, to obey His call in everything, and since that time my life has been spent in giving the message, with my pen and in speaking before large congregations. It is not I who controls my words and actions at such times.

But there are times when common things must be stated, common thoughts must occupy the mind, common letters must be written and information given that has passed from one to another of the workers. Such words, such information, are not given under the special inspiration of the Spirit of God. Questions are asked at times that are not upon religious subjects at all, and these questions must be answered. We converse about houses and lands, trades to be made, and locations for our institutions, their advantages and disadvantages.

I receive letters asking for advice on many strange subjects, and I advise according to the light that has been given me. Men have again and again opposed the counsel that I have been instructed to give because they did not want to receive the light given, and such experiences have led me to seek the Lord most earnestly.--Manuscript 107, 1909. 16

Chapter 3

Attitudes Toward the Testimonies An Early Statement

I saw the state of some who stood on present truth, but disregarded the visions--the way God had chosen to teach in some cases, those who erred from Bible truth. I saw that in striking against the visions they did not strike against the worm--the feeble instrument that God spake through--but against the Holy Ghost. I saw it was a small thing to speak against the instrument, but it was dangerous to slight the words of God. I saw if they were in error and God chose to show them their errors through visions, and they disregarded the teachings of God through visions, they would be left to take their own way, and run in the way of error, and think they were right, until they would find it out too late. Then in the time of trouble I heard them cry to God in agony, "Why didst Thou not show us our wrong, that we might have got right and been ready for this time?" Then an angel pointed to them and said, "My Father taught, but you would not be taught. He spoke through visions, but you disregarded His voice, and He gave you up to your own ways, to be filled with your own doings." Broadside, To Those Who Are Receiving the Seal of the Living God, Jan. 31, 1849

41

Safe Instruction for Closing Days

A wealth of moral influence has been brought to us in the last half century. Through His Holy Spirit the voice of God has come to us continually in warning and instruction, to confirm the faith of the believers in the Spirit of prophecy. Repeatedly the word has come,

Write the things that I have given you to confirm the faith of My people in the position they have taken. Time and trial have not made void the instruction given, but through years of suffering and self-sacrifice have established the truth of the testimony given. The instruction that was given in the early days of the message is to be held as safe instruction to follow in these its closing days. Those who are indifferent to this light and instruction must not expect to escape the snares which we have been plainly told will cause the rejecters of light to stumble, and fall, and be snared, and be taken. If we study carefully the second chapter of Hebrews, we shall learn how important it is that we hold steadfastly to every principle of truth that has been given.--The Review and Herald, July 18, 1907.

Varying Attitudes Enumerated

Soon every possible effort will be made to discount and pervert the truth of the testimonies of God's Spirit. We must have in readiness the clear, straight messages that since 1846 have been coming to God's people.

There will be those once united with us in the faith who will search for new, strange doctrines, for something odd and sensational to present to the people. They will bring in all conceivable fallacies, and will present them as coming from Mrs. White, that they may beguile souls...

Those who have treated the light that the Lord has given as a common thing will not be benefited by the instruction presented.

There are those who will misinterpret the messages that God has given, in accordance with their spiritual blindness.

Some will yield their faith, and will deny the truth of the messages, pointing to them as falsehoods. **42**

Some will hold them up to ridicule, working against the light that God has been giving for years, and some who are weak in the faith will thus be led astray.

But others will be greatly helped by the messages. Though not personally addressed, they will be corrected, and will be led to shun the evils specified.... The Spirit of the Lord will be in the instruction, and doubts existing in many minds will be swept away. The testimonies themselves will be the key that will explain the messages given, as scripture is explained by scripture. Many will read with eagerness the messages reproving wrong, that they may learn what they may do to be saved. . . . Light will dawn upon the understanding, and the Spirit will make an impression on minds, as Bible truth is clearly and simply presented in the messages that since 1846 God has been sending His people. These messages are to find their place in hearts, and transformations will take place.-- Letter 73, 1903.

Perils of Dissecting Inspired Messages

Some sit in judgment on the Scriptures, declaring that this or that passage is not inspired, because it does not strike their minds favorably. They cannot harmonize it with their ideas of philosophy and science, "falsely so called" (1 Timothy 6:20). Others for different reasons question portions of the Word of God. Thus many walk blindly where the enemy prepares

the way. Now, it is not the province of any man to pronounce sentence upon the Scriptures, to judge or condemn any portion of God's Word. When one presumes to do this, Satan will create an atmosphere for him to breathe which will dwarf spiritual growth. When a man feels so very wise that he dares to dissect God's Word, his wisdom is, with God, counted foolishness. When he knows more, he will feel that he has everything to learn. And his very first lesson is to become teachable. "Learn of me," says the Great Teacher; "for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls" (Matthew 11:29).

You who have been educating yourselves and others **43** in a spirit of criticism and accusing, remember that you are imitating the example of Satan. When it suits your purpose, you treat the Testimonies as if you believed them, quoting from them to strengthen any statement you wish to have prevail. But how is it when light is given to correct your errors? Do you then accept the light? When the Testimonies speak contrary to your ideas, you treat them very lightly.

It does not become anyone to drop a word of doubt here and there that shall work like poison in other minds, shaking their confidence in the messages which God has given, which have aided in laying the foundation of this work, and have attended it to the present day, in reproofs, warnings, corrections, and encouragements. To all who have stood in the way of the Testimonies, I would say, God has given a message to His people, and His voice will be heard, whether you hear or forbear. Your opposition has not injured me; but you must give an account to the God of heaven, who has sent these warnings and instructions to keep His people in the right way. You will have to answer to Him for your blindness, for being a stumbling block in the way of sinners.

"To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them" (Isaiah 8:20). Even the work of the Holy Spirit upon the heart is to be tested by the Word of God. The Spirit which inspired the Scriptures, always leads to the Scriptures.--General Conference Daily Bulletin, April 13, 1891.

Inspired Messages Wrongly Applied

One man, B by name, came all the way from Michigan with a special message for Sister White. He said that Sister White had been appointed by God to occupy the position occupied by Moses, and that he, B, was to occupy the position of Joshua. Thus the work was to be carried forward. Sister White's work was to be united with his work, and we were to proclaim the truth with power.

This man took the liberty, as many others have done, to mingle a great deal of Scripture with his message, **44** quoting passages that he applied to Seventh-day Adventists. During my connection with the work many such men have arisen. They have selected and arranged scriptures which they made applicable to the people of God. Mr. B read with a loud, strong voice the passages he had selected, declaring them to be applicable to us as a people. He said that I must see that he was right; for was it not the Bible he was reading.

"Yes," I said, "you have selected and put these scriptures together, but like many who have arisen as you have, you are wresting the Scriptures, interpreting them to mean thus and so, when I know they do not apply as you have applied them.

"You, or any other deluded person, could arrange and have arranged certain scriptures of great force, and applied them according to your own ideas. Any man could misinterpret and misapply God's Word, denouncing people and things, and then take the position that those who refused to receive his message had rejected the message of God, and decided their destiny for eternity." . . .

From the various letters which have come to me, I see that when such men as B, claiming to be sent by God, go to those who are more or less isolated from our people, these souls are ready to grasp anything that purports to be of heavenly origin. Letters come to me entreating an answer; I know that many men take the testimonies the Lord has given, and apply them as they suppose they should be applied, picking out a sentence here and there, taking it from its proper connection, and applying it according to their idea. Thus poor souls become bewildered, when could they read in order all that has been given, they would see the true application, and would not become confused. Much that purports to be a message from Sister White, serves the purpose of misrepresenting Sister White, making her testify in favor of things that are not in accordance with her mind or judgment. This makes her work very trying. Reports fly from one to another regarding what Sister White has said. Each time the report is repeated, it grows larger. If Sister White has anything to **45** say, leave her to say it. No one is called upon to be a mouthpiece for Sister White. . . . Please let Sister White bear her own message. It will come with a better grace from her than from the one who reports her.--Manuscript 21, 1901.

Doubting the Testimonies

EXTRACT FROM A SERMON AT THE GENERAL CONFERENCE OF 1883, APPEARING IN NOTEBOOK LEAFLETS, THE CHURCH, NO. 6.

When you find men questioning the testimonies, finding fault with them, and seeking to draw away the people from their influence, be assured that God is not at work through them. It is another spirit. Doubt and unbelief are cherished by those who do not walk circumspectly. They have a painful consciousness that their life will not abide the test of the Spirit of God, whether speaking through His Word or through the testimonies of His Spirit that would bring them to His Word. Instead of beginning with their own hearts, and coming into harmony with the pure principles of the gospel, they find fault, and condemn the very means that God has chosen to fit up a people to stand in the day of the Lord.

Let some skeptical one come along, who is not willing to square his life by the Bible rule, who is seeking to gain the favor of all, and how soon the class that are not in harmony with the work of God are called out. Those who are converted, and grounded in the truth, will find nothing pleasing or profitable in the influence or teaching of such a one. But those who are defective in character, whose hands are not pure, whose hearts are not holy, whose habits of life are loose, who are unkind at home, or untrustworthy in deal--all these will be sure to enjoy the new sentiments presented. All may see, if they will, the true measure of the man, the nature of his teaching, from the character of his followers.

Those who have most to say against the testimonies are generally those who have not read them, just as those who boast of their disbelief of the Bible are those who have **46** little

knowledge of its teachings. They know that it condemns them, and their rejection of it gives them a feeling of security in their sinful course.

Error's Bewitching Power

There is in error and unbelief that which bewilders and bewitches the mind. To question and doubt and cherish unbelief in order to excuse ourselves in stepping aside from the straight path is a far easier matter than to purify the soul through a belief of the truth, and obedience thereto. But when better influences lead one to desire to return, he finds himself entangled in such a network of Satan, like a fly in a spider's web that it seems a hopeless task to him, and he seldom recovers himself from the snare laid for him by the wily foe.

When once men have admitted doubt and unbelief of the testimonies of the Spirit of God, they are strongly tempted to adhere to the opinions which they have avowed before others. Their theories and notions fix themselves like a gloomy cloud over the mind, shutting out every ray of evidence in favor of the truth. The doubts indulged through ignorance, pride, or love of sinful practices, rivet upon the soul fetters that are seldom broken. Christ, and He alone, can give the needed power to break them

The testimonies of the Spirit of God are given to direct men to His Word, which has been neglected. Now if their messages are not heeded, the Holy Spirit is shut away from the soul. What further means has God in reserve to reach the erring ones, and show them their true condition?

The churches that have cherished influences which lessen faith in the testimonies, are weak and tottering. Some ministers are working to attract the people to themselves. When an effort is made to correct any wrong in these ministers, they stand back in independence and say, "My church accepts my labors."

Jesus said, "Every one that doeth evil, hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved." There are many today pursuing a similar course. **47** In the testimonies are specified the very sins of which they are guilty; hence they have no desire to read them. There are those who from their youth up have received warning and reproofs through the testimonies; but have they walked in the light and reformed?--Not at all. They still indulge the same sins; they have the same defects of character. These evils mar the work of God, and make their impress upon the churches. The work the Lord would do to set the churches in order is not done, because the individual members--and especially the leaders of the flock--would not be corrected.

Many a man professes to accept the testimonies, while they have no influence upon his life or character. His faults become stronger by indulgence until, having been often reproved and not heeding the reproof, he loses the power of self-control, and becomes hardened in a course of wrongdoing. If he is overworked, if weakness comes upon him, he has not moral power to rise above the infirmities of character that he did not overcome; they become his strongest points, and he is overborne by them. Then bring him to the test and ask, "Did not God reprove this phase in your character by the testimonies years ago?" He will answer, "Yes, I received a written testimony saying that I was wrong in these things." "Why, then, did you not correct these wrong habits?" "I thought the reprover must have made a

mistake; that which I could see, I accepted; that which I could not see, I said was the mind of the one who gave the message. I did not accept the reproof."

In some cases the very faults of character which God would have His servants see and correct, but which they refuse to see, have cost these men their life. They might have lived to be channels of light. God wanted them to live, and sent them instruction in righteousness, that they might preserve their physical and mental powers to do acceptable service for Him; and had they received the counsel of God, and become altogether such as He would have them, they would have been able workmen for the advancement of the truth, men who would have stood high in the affections and confidence of our people. But they are sleeping **48** in the grave, because they did not see that God knew them better than they knew themselves. His thoughts were not their thoughts, nor His ways, their ways. These one-sided men have molded the work wherever they have labored. The churches under their management have been greatly weakened.

God reproves men because He loves them. He wants them to be strong in His strength, to have well-balanced minds and symmetrical characters; then they will be examples to the flock of God, leading them by precept and example nearer to heaven. Then they will build up a holy temple for God. Manuscript 1, 1883

Searching the Testimonies for an Excuse

Some who are not willing to receive the light, but who prefer to walk in ways of their own choosing, will search the testimonies to find something in them to encourage the spirit of unbelief and disobedience. Thus a spirit of disunion will be brought in; for the spirit that leads them to criticize the testimonies will also lead them to watch their brethren to find in them something to condemn. Manuscript 73, 1908

The Last Deception of Satan

Satan is . . . constantly pressing in the spurious--to lead away from the truth. The very last deception of Satan will be to make of none effect the testimony of the Spirit of God. "Where there is no vision, the people perish" (Proverbs 29:18). Satan will work ingeniously, in different ways and through different agencies, to unsettle the confidence of God's remnant people in the true testimony.-- Letter 12, 1890.

There will be a hatred kindled against the testimonies that is satanic. The workings of Satan will be to unsettle the faith of the churches in them, for this reason: Satan cannot have so clear a track to bring in his deceptions and bind up souls in his delusions if the warnings and reproofs and counsels of the Spirit of God are heeded.-- Letter 40, 1890.

Chapter 4

The Writing and Sending Out of the Testimonies to the Church

[THE MATERIAL COMPRISING THIS CHAPTER APPEARED IN A LEAFLET IN 1913.]

A Review of the Work

Sanitarium, California July 8, 1906

Dear Brother:

There are some who think they are able to measure the character and to estimate the importance of the work the Lord has given me to do. Their own mind and judgment is the standard by which they would weigh the testimonies.

My Instructor said to me, Tell these men that God has not committed to them the work of measuring, classifying, and defining the character of the testimonies. Those who attempt this are sure to err in their conclusions. The Lord would have men adhere to their appointed work. If they will keep the way of the Lord, they will be able to discern clearly that the work which He has appointed me to do is not a work of human devising.

Those who carefully read the testimonies as they have appeared from the early days, need not be perplexed as to **50** their origin. The many books, written by the help of the Spirit of God, bear a living witness to the character of the testimonies.

In the early days of our experience in the message, the Spirit of God often came upon a few of us as we were assembled, and I was taken away in vision. The Lord gave such light and evidence, such comfort and hope and joy, that His praises were upon our lips.

Assisted by Literary Helpers

While my husband lived, he acted as a helper and counselor in the sending out of the messages that were given to me. We traveled extensively. Sometimes light would be given to me in the night season, sometimes in the daytime before large congregations. The instruction I received in vision was faithfully written out by me, as I had time and strength for the work. Afterward we examined the matter together, my husband correcting grammatical errors and eliminating needless repetition. Then it was carefully copied for the persons addressed, or for the printer.

As the work grew, others assisted me in the preparation of matter for publication. After my husband's death, faithful helpers joined me, who labored untiringly in the work of copying the testimonies and preparing articles for publication.

But the reports that are circulated, that any of my helpers are permitted to add matter or change the meaning of the messages I write out, are not true.

While we were in Australia the Lord instructed me that W. C. White should be relieved from the many burdens his brethren would lay upon him, that he might be more free to assist me

in the work the Lord has laid upon me. The promise had been given, "I will put My Spirit upon him, and give him wisdom."

Since my return to America I have several times received instruction that the Lord has given me W. C. White to be my helper, and that in this work the Lord will give him of His Spirit. **51**

Proper Time and Manner of Presentation

It requires much wisdom and sound judgment, quickened by the Spirit of God, to know the proper time and manner to present the instruction that has been given. When the minds of persons reproved are under a strong deception, they naturally resist the testimony; and having taken an attitude of resistance, it is difficult for them afterward to acknowledge that they have been wrong.

In the early days of this cause, if some of the leading brethren were present when messages from the Lord were given, we would consult with them as to the best manner of bringing the instruction before the people. Sometimes it was decided that certain portions would better not be read before a congregation. Sometimes those whose course was reproved would request that the matters pointing out their wrongs and dangers should be read before others, that they, too, might be benefited.

Often after testimonies of reproof were read, hearty confessions were made. Then we would unite in a season of prayer, and the Lord would manifest His pardoning grace to those who had confessed their sins. The acceptance of the testimonies brought the rich blessing of God into our assemblies.

Faithfully I endeavor to write out that which is given me from time to time by the divine Counselor. Some portions of that which I write are sent out immediately to meet the present necessities of the work. Other portions are held until the development of circumstances makes it evident to me that the time has come for their use. Sometimes in ministers and physicians bearing responsibilities there has developed a disposition to discard the testimonies, and I have been instructed not to place testimonies in their hands; for having yielded to the spirit that tempted and overcame Adam and Eve, they have opened mind and heart to the control of the enemy. Being on a false track, and laboring under deceptive imaginings, they will read into the testimonies things that are not there, but which are in agreement with the false statements **52** that they have listened to. By reading the testimonies in the light of their own kindling, they are deceived, and will deceive others.

Sometimes, after very clear-cut, decided reproofs have been written out, they are held for a time until by personal correspondence I have endeavored to change the spirit of those to whom they are addressed. If these efforts are unsuccessful, the messages, with all their strength of rebuke or reproof, are sent to them, whether they will hear, or whether they will deny the truthfulness of the message.

If those whose errors are pointed out make confession of their wrongdoing, the spell of the enemy may be broken. If they will repent and forsake their sins, God is faithful and just to forgive their sins, and to cleanse them from all unrighteousness. Christ, the sin-pardoning

Redeemer, will remove the filthy garments from them, give them change of raiment, and set a fair miter upon their head. But so long as they refuse to turn from iniquity they cannot develop a character that will stand in the great day of judgment.

Often concealed wrongs in the life of individuals are opened before me, and I am bidden to bear a message of reproof and warning.

I have been told that many who give heed to the false science of the enemy would denounce my work as that of a false prophet, and would place upon the testimony such interpretations as tend to change the truth of God into a lie. Satan is on the alert; and some who in the past have been used by the Lord in doing His work, but who have permitted themselves to be deceived, will be stirred up to make an improper use of the messages given. Because they do not wish to listen to the words of reproof, because they will not hear counsel, and improve their course of action, and do their appointed work, they will misconstrue the messages to the church, and confuse many minds.

Nevertheless, I am to bear the message that is given me to bear, so long as the Lord shall choose. He has not given me the work of settling all the misunderstandings that are cherished in hearts of unbelief. Just as long as a **53** door is open to receive the tempter's suggestions, difficulties will multiply. The hearts of those who will not come to the light are open to unbelief. If my time and strength are consumed upon such matters, this serves Satan's purposes. The Lord has said to me: "Bear the testimonies. Your work is not to settle difficulties; your work is to reprove, and to present the righteousness of Christ."

An Incident

At one time in the early days of the message, Father Butler and Elder Hart became confused in regard to the testimonies. In great distress they groaned and wept, but for some time they would not give the reasons for their perplexity. However, being pressed to give a reason for their faithless speech and manner, Elder Hart referred to a small pamphlet that had been published as the visions of Sister White, and said that to his certain knowledge, some visions were not included. Before a large audience, these brethren both talked strongly about their losing confidence in the work.

My husband handed the little pamphlet to Elder Hart, and requested him to read what was printed on the title page. "A Sketch of the Christian Experience and Views of Mrs. E. G. White," he read.

For a moment there was silence, and then my husband explained that we had been very short of means, and were able to print at first only a small pamphlet, and he promised the brethren that when sufficient means was raised, the visions should be published more fully in book form.

Elder Butler was deeply moved, and after the explanation had been made, he said, "Let us bow before God." Prayers, weeping, and confessions followed, such as we have seldom heard.

Father Butler said: "Brother White, forgive me; I was afraid you were concealing from us some of the light we ought to have. Forgive me, Sister White." Then the power of God came

into the meeting in a wonderful manner.--The Writing and Sending Out of the Testimonies to the Church, pp. 3-9.

54

The Work and the Helpers

Sanitarium, California October 23, 1907

Dear Brother [F. M.] Wilcox:

I received and read your recent letter. Regarding the sister who thinks that she has been chosen to fill the position that Sister White has occupied, I have this to say: She may be honest, but she is certainly deceived.

About a year after the death of my husband, I was very feeble, and it was feared that I might live but a short time. At the Healdsburg camp meeting, I was taken into the tent where there was a large gathering of our people. I asked to be raised up from the lounged on which I was lying, and assisted to the speaker's platform, that I might say a few words of farewell to the people. As I tried to speak, the power of God came upon me, and thrilled me through and through. Many in the congregation observed that I was weak, and that my face and hands seemed bloodless; but as I began speaking they saw the color coming into my lips and face, and knew that a miracle was being wrought in my behalf. I stood before the people healed, and spoke with freedom.

After this experience, light was given me that the Lord had raised me up to bear testimony for Him in many countries, and that He would give me grace and strength for the work. It was also shown me that my son, W. C. White, should be my helper and counselor, and that the Lord would place on him the spirit of wisdom and of a sound mind. I was shown that the Lord would guide him, and that he would not be led away, because he would recognize the leadings and guidance of the Holy Spirit.

The assurance was given me: "You are not alone in the work the Lord has chosen you to do. You will be taught of God how to bring the truth in its simplicity before the people. The God of truth will sustain you, and convincing proof will be given that He is leading you. God will give you of His Holy Spirit, and His grace and wisdom and keeping power will be with you. . . 55

"The Lord will be your instructor. You will meet with deceptive influences; they will come in many forms, in pantheism and other forms of infidelity; but follow where I shall guide you, and you will be safe. I will put My Spirit upon your son, and will strengthen him to do his work. He has the grace of humility. The Lord has selected him to act an important part in His work. For this purpose was he born."

This word was given me in 1882, and since that time I have been assured that the grace of wisdom was given to him. More recently, in a time of perplexity, the Lord said: "I have given you My servant, W. C. White, and I will give him judgment to be your helper. I will give him skill and understanding to manage wisely."

The Lord has given me other faithful helpers in my work. Many of my discourses have been reported, and have been put before the people in printed form. Through nearly the whole of my long experience I have endeavored, day by day, to write out that which was revealed to me in visions of the night. Many messages of counsel and reproof and encouragement have been sent out to individuals, and much of the instruction that I have received for the church has been published in periodicals and books, and circulated in many lands....

The work is constantly moving forward. We are making earnest efforts to place my writings before the people. We hope that several new books will go to press shortly. If I am incapacitated for labor, my faithful workers are prepared to carry forward the work.

My Writings Will Constantly Speak

Abundant light has been given to our people in these last days. Whether or not my life is spared, my writings will constantly speak, and their work will go forward as long as time shall last. My writings are kept on file in the office, and even though I should not live, these words that have been given to me by the Lord will still have life and will speak to the people. But my strength is yet spared, and I hope to continue to do much useful work. I may live until **56** the coming of the Lord; but if I should not, I trust it may be said of me, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them" (Revelation 14:13)....

I thank God for the assurance of His love, and that I have daily His leading and guidance. I am very busy with my writing. Early and late, I am writing out the matters that the Lord opens before me. The burden of my work is to prepare a people to stand in the day of the Lord. The promise of Christ is sure. The time is not long. We must work and watch and wait for the Lord Jesus. We are called upon to be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord. All our hopes have their foundation in Christ.

Are our people reviewing the past and the present and the future, as it is unfolding before the world? Are they heeding the messages of warning given them? Is it our greatest concern today that our lives shall be refined and purified, and that we shall reflect the similitude of the divine? This must be the experience of all who join that company who are washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb. They must be arrayed in the righteousness of Christ. His name must be written in their foreheads. They must rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. Christ has engraved the names of His people on the palms of His hands. He will never lose His interest in any dependent soul.

Say to the church members that there is need of thorough consecration to God. Let all understand that they must make a covenant with God by sacrifice. We need the blessings of the gospel every day and every hour. Every proof of the Lord's power, His presence, and His love, is to be recognized with grateful thanks. Happiness is to be achieved by the right action of the soul toward God. I thank the Lord for this precious thought. Let Him be glorified by the sentiments expressed and by the actions performed. . . . Never have testimonies been more clearly brought before the people than those that have recently **57** been traced by my pen. God bids me urge upon the attention of our people the importance of their study. Let this work begin now. Then, whether I am permitted to labor or am laid away to rest until Jesus comes, these messages are immortalized.

To my brethren I now say: Speak words that will draw souls to Christ. Bring forth fruit in good works. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life" (John 3:36). Every conceivable thing will be brought in to deceive, if possible, the very elect; but the Lord will certainly take care of His work.--The Writing and Sending Out of the Testimonies to the Church, pp. 10-16.

The Use of the Testimonies

Time and Place to be considered

Regarding the testimonies, nothing is ignored; nothing is cast aside; but time and place must be considered. Nothing must be done untimely. Some matters must be withheld because some persons would make an improper use of the light given. Every jot and tittle is essential and must appear at an opportune time. In the past, the testimonies were carefully prepared before they were sent out for publication. And all matter is still carefully studied after the first writing.

Tell them to eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of God. Place His Word before them. There will be those who will misinterpret and misrepresent. Their eyes have been blinded, and they set forth the figures and interpretations that Satan has worked out for them, and an entirely wrong meaning will be placed upon the words that Sister White has spoken. Satan is just as verily claiming to be Christ's child as did Judas, who was on the accusing side. They have educated themselves in Satan's school of misstating. A description of them is given in the third chapter of Zechariah. Nothing in the world is so dear to God as His church. Satan has worked upon human minds, and will continue to betray sacred trust in a spurious way. **58**

The Publishing of Compilations

I can see plainly that should every one who thinks he is qualified to write books, follow his imagination and have his productions published, insisting that they be recommended by our publishing houses, there would be plenty of tares sown broadcast in our world. Many from among our own people are writing to me, asking with earnest determination the privilege of using my writings to give force to certain subjects that they wish to present to the people in such a way as to leave a deep impression upon them.

It is true that there is a reason why some of these matters should be presented: but I would not venture to give my approval in using the testimonies in this way, or to sanction the placing of matter which is good in itself in the way which they propose.

The persons who make these propositions, for aught I know, may be able to conduct the enterprise of which they write in a wise manner; but nevertheless I dare not give the least license for using my writings in the manner which they propose. In taking account of such an enterprise, there are many things that must come into consideration; for in using the testimonies to bolster up some subject which may impress the mind of the author, the extracts may give a different impression than that which they would were they read in

their original connection.-- The Writing and Sending Out of the Testimonies to the Church, pp. 25, 26.

Introduction to the Conflict Series

Introduction

Before the entrance of sin, Adam enjoyed open communion with his Maker; but since man separated himself from God by transgression, the human race has been cut off from this high privilege. By the plan of redemption, however, a way has been opened whereby the inhabitants of the earth may still have connection with heaven. God has communicated with men by His Spirit, and divine light has been imparted to the world by revelations to His chosen servants. "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." 2 Peter 1:21

During the first twenty-five hundred years of human history, there was no written revelation. Those who had been taught of God, communicated their knowledge to others, and it was handed down from father to son, through successive generations. The preparation of the written word began in the time of Moses. Inspired revelations were then embodied in an inspired book. This work continued during the long period of sixteen hundred years--from Moses, the historian of creation and the law, to John, the recorder of the most sublime truths of the gospel.

The Bible points to God as its author; yet it was written by human hands; and in the varied style of its different books it presents the characteristics of the several writers. The truths revealed are all "given by inspiration of God" (2 Timothy 3:16); yet they are expressed in the words of men. The Infinite One by His Holy Spirit has shed light into the minds and hearts of His servants. He has given dreams and visions, symbols and figures; and those to whom the truth was thus revealed have themselves embodied the thought in human language.

The Ten Commandments were spoken by God Himself, and were written by His own hand. They are of divine, **vi** and not of human composition. But the Bible, with its God-given truths expressed in the language of men, presents a union of the divine and the human. Such a union existed in the nature of Christ, who was the Son of God and the Son of man. Thus it is true of the Bible, as it was of Christ, that "the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." John 1:14

Written in different ages, by men who differed widely in rank and occupation, and in mental and spiritual endowments, the books of the Bible present a wide contrast in style, as well as a diversity in the nature of the subjects unfolded. Different forms of expression are employed by different writers; often the same truth is more strikingly presented by one than by another. And as several writers present a subject under varied aspects and relations, there may appear, to the superficial, careless, or prejudiced reader, to be discrepancy or contradiction, where the thoughtful, reverent student, with clearer insight, discerns the underlying harmony.

As presented through different individuals, the truth is brought out in its varied aspects. One writer is more strongly impressed with one phase of the subject; he grasps those points that harmonize with his experience or with his power of perception and appreciation; another seizes upon a different phase; and each, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, presents what is most forcibly impressed upon his own mind--a different aspect of the truth in each, but a perfect harmony through all. And the truths thus revealed unite to form a perfect whole, adapted to meet the wants of men in all the circumstances and experiences of life.

God has been pleased to communicate His truth to the world by human agencies, and He Himself, by His Holy Spirit, qualified men and enabled them to do this work. He guided the mind in the selection of what to speak and what to write. The treasure was entrusted to earthen vessels, yet it is, nonetheless, from Heaven. The testimony is **vii** conveyed through the imperfect expression of human language, yet it is the testimony of God; and the obedient, believing child of God beholds in it the glory of a divine power, full of grace and truth.

In His word, God has committed to men the knowledge necessary for salvation. The Holy Scriptures are to be accepted as an authoritative, infallible revelation of His will. They are the standard of character, the revealer of doctrines, and the test of experience. "Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness; that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work." 2 Timothy 3:16, 17, R.V.

Yet the fact that God has revealed His will to men through His word, has not rendered needless the continued presence and guiding of the Holy Spirit. On the contrary, the Spirit was promised by our Savior, to open the word to His servants, to illuminate and apply its teachings. And since it was the Spirit of God that inspired the Bible, it is impossible that the teaching of the Spirit should ever be contrary to that of the word.

The Spirit was not given--nor can it ever be bestowed--to supersede the Bible; for the Scriptures explicitly state that the word of God is the standard by which all teaching and experience must be tested. Says the apostle John, "Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world." 1 John 4:1. And Isaiah declares, "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." Isaiah 8:20

Great reproach has been cast upon the work of the Holy Spirit by the errors of a class that, claiming its enlightenment, profess to have no further need of guidance from the word of God. They are governed by impressions that they regard as the voice of God in the soul. But the spirit that controls them is not the Spirit of God. This following of **viii** impressions, to the neglect of the Scriptures, can lead only to confusion, to deception and ruin. It serves only to further the designs of the evil one. Since the ministry of the Holy Spirit is of vital importance to the church of Christ, it is one of the devices of Satan, through the errors of extremists and fanatics, to cast contempt upon the work of the Spirit and cause the people of God to neglect this source of strength that our Lord Himself has provided.

In harmony with the word of God, His Spirit was to continue its work throughout the period of the gospel dispensation. During the ages while the Scriptures of both the Old and the New Testament were being given, the Holy Spirit did not cease to communicate light to individual minds, apart from the revelations to be embodied in the Sacred Canon. The Bible itself relates how, through the Holy Spirit, men received warning, reproof, counsel, and instruction, in matters in no way relating to the giving of the Scriptures. And mention is made of prophets in different ages, of whose utterances nothing is recorded. In like manner, after the close of the canon of the Scripture, the Holy Spirit was still to continue its work, to enlighten, warn, and comfort the children of God.

Jesus promised His disciples, "The Comforter which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." "When He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth: . . . and He will show you things to come." John 14:26; 16:13 Scripture plainly teaches that these promises, so far from being limited to apostolic days, extend to the church of Christ in all ages. The Saviour assures His followers, "I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." Matthew 28:20 And Paul declares that the gifts and manifestations of the Spirit were set in the church "for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and **ix** of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." Ephesians 4:12, 13

For the believers at Ephesus the apostle prayed, "That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him: the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of His calling, and . . . what is the exceeding greatness of His power to usward who believe." Ephesians 1:17-19 The ministry of the divine Spirit in enlightening the understanding and opening to the mind the deep things of God's holy word, was the blessing which Paul thus besought for the Ephesian church.

After the wonderful manifestation of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost, Peter exhorted the people to repentance and baptism in the name of Christ, for the remission of their sins; and he said: "Ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." Acts 2:38, 39

In immediate connection with the scenes of the great day of God, the Lord by the prophet Joel has promised a special manifestation of His Spirit. Joel 2:28. This prophecy received a partial fulfillment in the outpouring of the Spirit on the Day of Pentecost; but it will reach its full accomplishment in the manifestation of divine grace which will attend the closing work of the gospel.

The great controversy between good and evil will increase in intensity to the very close of time. In all ages the wrath of Satan has been manifested against the church of Christ; and God has bestowed His grace and Spirit upon His people to strengthen them to stand against the power of the evil one. When the apostles of Christ were to bear His gospel to the world and to record it for all future ages, they were especially endowed with the enlightenment of

the Spirit. But as the **X** church approaches her final deliverance, Satan is to work with greater power. He comes down "having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time." Revelation 12:12. He will work "with all power and signs and lying wonders." 2 Thessalonians 2:9. For six thousand years that mastermind that once was highest among the angels of God has been wholly bent to the work of deception and ruin. And all the depths of satanic skill and subtlety acquired, all the cruelty developed, during these struggles of the ages, will be brought to bear against God's people in the final conflict. And in this time of peril the followers of Christ are to bear to the world the warning of the Lord's second advent; and a people are to be prepared to stand before Him at His coming, "without spot, and blameless" 2 Peter 3:14. At this time the special endowment of divine grace and power is not less needful to the church than in apostolic days.

Through the illumination of the Holy Spirit, the scenes of the long-continued conflict between good and evil have been opened to the writer of these pages. From time to time I have been permitted to behold the working, in different ages, of the great controversy between Christ, the Prince of life, the Author of our salvation, and Satan, the prince of evil, the author of sin, the first transgressor of God's holy law. Satan's enmity against Christ has been manifested against His followers. The same hatred of the principles of God's law, the same policy of deception, by which error is made to appear as truth, by which human laws are substituted for the law of God, and men are led to worship the creature rather than the Creator, may be traced in all the history of the past. Satan's efforts to misrepresent the character of God, to cause men to cherish a false conception of the Creator, and thus to regard Him with fear and hate rather than with love; his endeavors to set aside the divine law, leading the people to think themselves free from its requirements; and his persecution of those who dare to resist his deceptions, have been steadfastly pursued in all ages. They may be traced **Xi** in the history of patriarchs, prophets, and apostles, of martyrs and reformers.

In the great final conflict, Satan will employ the same policy, manifest the same spirit, and work for the same end as in all preceding ages. That which has been, will be, except that the coming struggle will be marked with a terrible intensity such as the world has never witnessed. Satan's deceptions will be more subtle, his assaults more determined. If it were possible, he would lead astray the elect. Mark 13:22, R.V.

As the Spirit of God has opened to my mind the great truths of His word, and the scenes of the past and the future, I have been bidden to make known to others that which has thus been revealed--to trace the history of the controversy in past ages, and especially so to present it as to shed a light on the fast-approaching struggle of the future. In pursuance of this purpose, I have endeavored to select and group together events in the history of the church in such a manner as to trace the unfolding of the great testing truths that at different periods have been given to the world, that have excited the wrath of Satan, and the enmity of a world-loving church, and that have been maintained by the witness of those who "loved not their lives unto the death."

In these records we may see a foreshadowing of the conflict before us. Regarding them in the light of God's word, and by the illumination of His Spirit, we may see unveiled the

devices of the wicked one, and the dangers which they must shun who would be found "without fault" before the Lord at His coming.

The great events which have marked the progress of reform in past ages are matters of history, well known and universally acknowledged by the Protestant world; they are facts which none can gainsay. This history I have presented briefly, in accordance with the scope of the book, and the brevity which must necessarily be observed, the facts having been condensed into as little space as seemed consistent with **xii** a proper understanding of their application. In some cases where a historian has so grouped together events as to afford, in brief, a comprehensive view of the subject, or has summarized details in a convenient manner, his words have been quoted; but in some instances no specific credit has been given, since the quotations are not given for the purpose of citing that writer as authority, but because his statement affords a ready and forcible presentation of the subject. In narrating the experience and views of those carrying forward the work of reform in our own time, similar use has been made of their published works.

It is not so much the object of this book to present new truths concerning the struggles of former times, as to bring out facts and principles which have a bearing on coming events. Yet viewed as a part of the controversy between the forces of light and darkness, all these records of the past are seen to have a new significance; and through them a light is cast upon the future, illumining the pathway of those who, like the reformers of past ages, will be called, even at the peril of all earthly good, to witness "for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ."

To unfold the scenes of the great controversy between truth and error; to reveal the wiles of Satan, and the means by which he may be successfully resisted; to present a satisfactory solution of the great problem of evil, shedding such a light upon the origin and the final disposition of sin as to make fully manifest the justice and benevolence of God in all His dealings with His creatures; and to show the holy, unchanging nature of His law, is the object of this book. That through its influence souls may be delivered from the power of darkness, and become "partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light," to the praise of Him who loved us, and gave Himself for us, is the earnest prayer of the writer.

From Selected Messages, Volume 3

Chapter 4

The Primacy of the Word

INTRODUCTION OUR CONFIDENCE IN THAT WHICH COMES TO US AS MESSAGES INSPIRED BY GOD IS BASED ON OUR FAITH IN GOD AND HIS WORD, AS WELL AS UPON THE CONVICTING WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT ON OUR HEARTS. IT IS ALSO BASED UPON THE OBSERVATION OF FULFILLED AND FULFILLING PROPHECY AND THE FRUITAGE OF THESE MESSAGES IN OUR OWN LIVES AND IN THE LIVES OF OTHERS. THE INFLUENCE OF THE COUNSELS ON THE DEVELOPMENT AND WORK OF THE CHURCH PROVIDES ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE OF THEIR SUPERNATURAL ORIGIN.

A KNOWLEDGE OF SOME OF THE FACETS OF INSPIRATION AND REVELATION HELPS TO SUSTAIN SUCH CONFIDENCE. THESE MAY BE FOUND IN EXPRESSIONS--OFTEN INCIDENTAL--EMPLOYED BY THE INSPIRED WRITERS THEMSELVES. THESE WORDS MAINTAINING OUR CONFIDENCE APPEAR IN THE BIBLE, AS WELL AS IN THE WRITINGS OF ELLEN G. WHITE. THE AUTHOR'S INTRODUCTION TO THE GREAT CONTROVERSY HAS CONTRIBUTED MUCH TO OUR UNDERSTANDING OF HER INSPIRATION.

FROM TIME TO TIME THE WHITE ESTATE HAS BROUGHT OUT ELLEN WHITE STATEMENTS FROM HER PUBLISHED AS WELL AS FROM HER UNPUBLISHED WRITINGS RELATING TO THE QUESTION OF REVELATION AND INSPIRATION. THESE OFTEN-USED STATEMENTS, TOGETHER WITH MATERIAL HERETOFORE UNPUBLISHED, ARE NOW BROUGHT TOGETHER IN THIS SECTION ENTITLED "PRINCIPLES OF INSPIRATION."

AS IN THE CASE OF THE BIBLE WRITERS, ELLEN WHITE MAKES ONLY INCIDENTAL REFERENCE TO HER VISIONS. SHE EXPLAINS ONLY BRIEFLY HOW THE LIGHT CAME TO HER, AND HOW THE MESSAGES WERE DELIVERED. THESE INCIDENTAL REFERENCES, APPEARING IN DIFFERENT SOURCES, AND OFTEN CONSISTING OF ONLY A FEW LINES, ARE NOW FOR THE FIRST TIME BROUGHT TOGETHER IN THIS VOLUME.--WHITE TRUSTEES.

Relation of E. G. White Writings to the Bible Recognized in First Book

I recommend to you, dear reader, the Word of God as the rule of your faith and practice. By that Word we are to be judged. God has, in that Word, promised to give visions in the "last days"; not for a new rule of faith, but for the comfort of His people, and to correct those who err from Bible truth. Thus God dealt with Peter when He was about to send him to preach to the Gentiles.--A Sketch of the Christian Experience and Views of Ellen G. White, p. 64 (1851). (Reprinted in Early Writings, p. 78.)

Not to Take the Place of the Word.--The Lord desires you to study your Bibles. He has not given any additional light to take the place of His Word. This light is to bring confused minds to His Word, which, if eaten and digested, is as the lifeblood of the soul. Then good works will be seen as light shining in darkness.-- Letter 130, 1901.

Get Proofs From the Bible

In public labor do not make prominent, and quote that which Sister White has written, as authority to sustain your positions. To do this will not increase faith in the testimonies. Bring your evidences, clear and plain, from the Word of God. A **30** "Thus saith the Lord" is the strongest testimony you can possibly present to the people. Let none be educated to look to Sister White, but to the mighty God, who gives instruction to Sister White.--Letter 11, 1894.

Bible Principles First, Then the Testimonies

It is my first duty to present Bible principles. Then, unless there is a decided, conscientious reform made by those whose cases have been presented before me, I must appeal to them personally.--Letter 69, 1896.

E. G. White Work Not Unlike That of Bible Prophets

In ancient times God spoke to men by the mouth of prophets and apostles. In these days He speaks to them by the testimonies of His Spirit. There was never a time when God instructed His people more earnestly than He instructs them now concerning His will and the course that He would have them pursue.-- Testimonies, vol. 5, p. 661.

Scripture and Spirit of Prophecy Have Same Author

The Holy Ghost is the author of the Scriptures and of the Spirit of Prophecy. These are not to be twisted and turned to mean what man may want them to mean, to carry out man's ideas and sentiments, to carry forward man's schemes at all hazards.--Letter 92, 1900.

Ellen White Calls Her Writings a Lesser Light

Little heed is given to the Bible, and the Lord has given a lesser light to lead men and women to the greater light.--The Review and Herald, Jan. 20, 1903. (Quoted in Colporteur Ministry, p. 125.)

Tested by the Bible

The Spirit was not given--nor can it ever be bestowed--to supersede the Bible; for the Scriptures explicitly state that the Word of God is the standard by which all teaching and experience must be tested. . . . Isaiah declares, "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them" (Isaiah 8:20).--The Great Controversy, Introduction, p. vii.

Not for the Purpose of Giving New Light

Brother J would confuse the mind by seeking to make it **31** appear that the light God has given through the Testimonies is an addition to the Word of God, but in this he presents the matter in a false light. God has seen fit in this manner to bring the minds of His people to His Word, to give them a clearer understanding of it.

The Word of God is sufficient to enlighten the most beclouded mind, and may be understood by those who have any desire to understand it. But notwithstanding all this, some who profess to make the Word of God their study are found living in direct opposition to its plainest teachings. Then, to leave men and women without excuse, God gives plain and pointed testimonies, bringing them back to the Word that they have neglected to follow.

The Word of God abounds in general principles for the formation of correct habits of living, and the testimonies, general and personal, have been calculated to call their attention more especially to these principles.-- Testimonies, vol. 5, pp. 663, 664.

Testimonies to Bring Plain Lessons From the Word

In the Scriptures God has set forth practical lessons to govern the life and conduct of all; but though He has given minute particulars in regard to our character, conversation, and conduct, yet in a large measure, His lessons are disregarded and ignored. Besides the instruction in His Word, the Lord has given special testimonies to His people, not as a new revelation, but that He may set before us the plain lessons of His Word, that errors may be corrected, that the right way may be pointed out, that every soul may be without excuse.-- Letter 63, 1893. (See Testimonies, vol. 5, p. 665.)

Ellen White Enabled to Clearly Define Truth and Error

At that time [after the 1844 disappointment] one error after another pressed in upon us; ministers and doctors brought in new doctrines. We would search the Scriptures with much prayer, and the Holy Spirit would bring the truth to our minds. Sometimes whole nights would be devoted to searching the Scriptures and earnestly asking God for guidance. Companies of devoted **32** men and women assembled for this purpose. The power of God would come upon me, and I was enabled clearly to define what is truth and what is error.

As the points of our faith were thus established, our feet were placed upon a solid foundation. We accepted the truth point by point, under the demonstration of the Holy Spirit. I would be taken off in vision, and explanations would be given me. I was given illustrations of heavenly things, and of the sanctuary, so that we were placed where light was shining on us in clear, distinct rays.--Gospel Works, p. 302.

To Correct Error and Specify Truth

I have much written in the diary [WHILE MRS. WHITE KEPT FROM TIME TO TIME A DAILY DIARY OF HER EXPERIENCE, YET THIS IS NOT WHAT SHE REFERRED TO PRIMARILY IN USING THE TERM "DIARY." HER WRITING WAS OFTEN DONE IN RULED BLANK BOOKS, MORE THAN A SCORE OF WHICH ARE NOW IN THE WHITE ESTATE VAULT, AND MANY OF THE MANUSCRIPTS THAT APPEAR IN THE FILE ARE FOUND TO HAVE BEEN WRITTEN FIRST IN THESE BOOKS. SOME MANUSCRIPTS ON FILE BEAR THE GENERAL HEADING "DIARY," USED IN THIS PARTICULAR SENSE. IT WILL BE REMEMBERED THAT THIS TERM IS USED BY HER IN THE TESTIMONIES IN REFERRING TO HER WRITINGS IN MANUSCRIPT FORM. (SEE TESTIMONIES, VOL. 8, P. 206, WHERE SHE SAYS, "IN MY DIARY I FIND THE FOLLOWING WRITTEN ONE YEAR AGO," AND IT IS PLAIN FROM WHAT FOLLOWS THAT SHE IS REFERRING TO TESTIMONY MATTER.)] I have kept in all my journeys that should come before the people if essential, even if I did not write another line. I want that which is deemed worthy to appear, for the Lord has given me much light that I want the people to have; for there is instruction that the Lord has given me for His people. It is light that they should have, line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little. This is now to come before the people, because it has been given to correct specious errors and to specify what is truth. The Lord has revealed many things pointing out the truth, thus saying, "This is the way, walk ye in it."--Letter 127, 1910.

Testimonies Never Contradict the Bible

The Bible must be your counselor. Study it and the testimonies God has given; for they never contradict His Word.--Letter 106, 1907.

If the Testimonies speak not according to the word of God, reject them. Christ and Belial cannot be **33** united.--Testimonies, vol. 5, p. 691.

On Quoting Sister White

How can the Lord bless those who manifest a spirit of "I don't care," a spirit which leads them to walk contrary to the light which the Lord has given them? But I do not ask you to take my words. Lay Sister White to one side. Do not quote my words again as long as you live until you can obey the Bible. [ELLEN WHITE WAS MEETING THE LEADERS OF THE CHURCH AS A GROUP FOR THE FIRST TIME IN TEN YEARS. SITUATIONS IN BOTH THE GENERAL CONFERENCE AND IN OUR BATTLE CREEK-BASED INSTITUTIONS HAD IN MANY CASES REACHED A LOW EBB. TESTIMONIES CALLING FOR A RETURN TO BIBLE PRINCIPLES HAD BEEN RECEIVED, THEORETICALLY, BUT NO REAL IMPROVEMENT HAD TAKEN PLACE. MOST DELEGATES COMING TO THE GENERAL CONFERENCE SESSION, WHICH WOULD OPEN THE NEXT MORNING, SENSED THAT THERE MUST BE CHANGES. ELLEN WHITE WOULD IN THE OPENING MEETING REBUKE INSTITUTIONAL LEADERS AND CALL FOR A REORGANIZATION OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE. IT WAS HER BURDEN THAT THE CHANGES THAT NEEDED TO BE MADE WOULD BE BASED ON BIBLE PRINCIPLES AND NOT JUST ON THE WORD OF ELLEN WHITE. IN THIS ADDRESS SHE DECLARED:

"GOD HAS TOLD ME THAT MY TESTIMONY MUST BE BORNE TO THIS CONFERENCE, AND THAT I MUST NOT TRY TO MAKE MEN BELIEVE IT. MY WORK IS TO LEAVE THE TRUTH WITH THE PEOPLE, AND THOSE WHO APPRECIATE THE LIGHT FROM HEAVEN WILL ACCEPT THE TRUTH."-- MANUSCRIPT 43, 1901. COUNSEL WOULD COME THROUGH HER AS THE MESSENGER OF THE LORD AND THIS COUNSEL SHOULD BE HEHEDED, BUT WORK IN DEPTH MUST BE DONE, WORK BASED ON THE PRINCIPLES SET FORTH IN GOD'S WORD.--COMPILERS.] When you make the Bible your food, your meat, and your drink, when you make its principles the elements of your character, you will know better how to receive counsel from God. I exalt the precious Word before you today. Do not repeat what I have said, saying, "Sister White said this," and "Sister White said that." Find out what the Lord God of Israel says, and then do what He commands.--Manuscript 43, 1901. (From an address to church leaders the night before the opening of the General Conference session of 1901.)

Chapter 5

Experiences in Receiving the Visions

First Vision

While I was praying at the family altar, the Holy Ghost fell upon me.--Early Writings, p. 14.

Five of us, all women, were kneeling quietly at the family altar. While we were praying, the power of God came upon me as I had never felt it before. I seemed to be surrounded with

light, and to be rising higher and higher from the earth. At this time I had a view of the experience of the Advent believers, the coming of Christ, and the reward to be given to the faithful.-- Testimonies, vol. 5, pp. 654, 655.

The Experience Recounted

When the gleams of the glory of God came to me first, they thought that I was dead, and there they watched and cried and prayed so long, but to me it was heaven, it was life, and then the world was spread out before me and I saw darkness like the pall of death.

What did it mean? I could see no light. Then I saw a little glimmer of light and then another, and these lights increased and grew brighter, and multiplied and grew stronger and stronger till they were the light of the world. These were the believers in Jesus Christ. . . .

I never thought that I should come to the world **35** again. When my breath came again to my body, I could not hear anything. Everything was dark. The light and glory that my eyes had rested upon had eclipsed the light and thus it was for many hours. Then gradually I began to recognize the light, and I asked where I was.

"You are right here in my house," said the owner of the house.

"What, here? I here? Do you not know about it?" Then it all came back to me. Is this to be my home? Have I come here again? Oh, the weight and the burden which came upon my soul.--Manuscript 16, 1894.

Entirely Lost to Earthly Things.--When the Lord sees fit to give a vision, I am taken into the presence of Jesus and angels, and am entirely lost to earthly things. [THIS ACCOUNTS FOR THE FACT THAT ELLEN WHITE RARELY SPEAKS OF THE PHYSICAL PHENOMENON THAT ACCOMPANIED MANY OF THE VISIONS. SHE HERSELF HAD TO DEPEND ON THE TESTIMONY OF EYEWITNESSES FOR A KNOWLEDGE OF THESE MANIFESTATIONS AS SHE DID IN 1906 WHEN SHE REFERRED TO EVIDENCES OF HER CALL AND WORK. SEE THE ITEM CLOSING THIS CHAPTER.] I can see no farther than the angel directs me. My attention is often directed to scenes transpiring upon earth.

At times I am carried far ahead into the future and shown what is to take place. Then again I am shown things as they have occurred in the past.--Spiritual Gifts, vol. 2, p. 292 (1860). {3SM 35.4}

At Times Visions Received While Conscious

Friday, March 20, I arose early, about half past three o'clock in the morning. While writing upon the fifteenth chapter of John suddenly a wonderful peace came upon me. The whole room seemed to be filled with the atmosphere of heaven. A holy, sacred presence seemed to be in my room. I laid down my pen and was in a waiting attitude to see what the Spirit would say unto me. I saw no person. I heard no audible voice, but a heavenly watcher seemed close beside me; I felt that I was in the presence of Jesus.

The sweet peace and light that seemed to be in my room it is impossible for me to explain or describe. A **36** sacred, holy atmosphere surrounded me, and there were presented to my mind and understanding matters of intense interest and importance. A line of action was laid out before me as if the unseen presence was speaking with me. The matter I had been writing upon seemed to be lost to my mind and another matter distinctly opened before me. A great awe seemed to be upon me as matters were imprinted upon my mind.--Manuscript 12c, 1896.

Another Vision While Writing

I arose early Thursday morning, about two o'clock, and was writing busily upon the True Vine, when I felt a presence in my room, as I have many times before, and I lost all recollection of what I was about. I seemed to be in the presence of Jesus. He was communicating to me that in which I was to be instructed. Everything was so plain that I could not misunderstand.

I was to help one whom I thought I should never be called upon to be troubled with again. I could not understand what it meant, but at once decided not to try to reason about this, but follow the directions. Not an audible word was spoken to my ear, but to my mind. I said, "Lord, I will do as Thou has commanded."--Letter 36, 1896.

Wonderful Representation While Writing and Speaking

Not only when I am standing before large congregations is special help bestowed upon me; but when I am using my pen, wonderful representations are given me of past, present, and future.--Letter 86, 1906.

Ellen White Could Not Control the Visions

It is utterly false that I have ever intimated I could have a vision when I pleased. There is not a shade of truth in this. I have never said I could throw myself into visions when I pleased, for this is simply impossible. I have felt for years that if I could have my choice and please God as well, I would rather die than have a vision, for every vision places me under great responsibility to bear testimonies of reproof and of warning, which has ever been **37** against my feelings, causing me affliction of soul that is inexpressible. Never have I coveted my position, and yet I dare not resist the Spirit of God and seek an easier position.

The Spirit of God has come upon me at different times, in different places, and under various circumstances. [ELDER J. N. LOUGHBOROUGH REPORTS THAT THE LAST VISION ACCOMPANIED BY PHYSICAL PHENOMENA WAS ON THE CAMPGROUND AT PORTLAND, OREGON, IN 1884. HE WAS PRESENT AND HE MADE MENTION OF THIS IN A TALK HE GAVE ON JANUARY 20, 1893, ON "THE STUDY OF THE TESTIMONIES," AT THE GENERAL CONFERENCE SESSION, HELD IN BATTLE CREEK. SEE GENERAL CONFERENCE BULLETIN, 1893, PP. 19, 20.--COMPILERS.] My husband has had no control of these manifestations of the Spirit of God. Many times he has been far away when I have had visions.--Letter 2, 1874.

Dared Not Doubt

In the confusion I was sometimes tempted to doubt my own experience. While at family prayers one morning, the power of God began to rest upon me, and the thought rushed into my mind that it was mesmerism, and I resisted it. Immediately I was struck dumb. . . . After that I dared not doubt or for a moment resist the power of God, however others might think of me.--Early Writings, pp. 22, 23.

Ellen White Recounts Evidences of Her Call and Work

There is in our world a spirit of belief and also a spirit of unbelief. In the latter days some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils. We expect that those who refuse to harmonize with Christ will develop into a warring element; but we should not think that this will do us harm. We must remember that they that are for us are more than they that can be against us. This is my hope and strength and power. I believe in God. I know in whom I believe. I believe the messages that God has given to His remnant church. From childhood I have had many, many experiences that have strengthened my faith in the work that God has given me to do.

Enabled to Write

Early in my public labors I was bidden by the Lord, "Write, write the things that are revealed to you." At the time this message came to me, I **38** could not hold my hand steady. My physical condition made it impossible for me to write. But again came the word, "Write the things that are revealed to you." I obeyed; and as the result it was not long before I could write page after page with comparative ease. Who told me what to write? Who steadied my right hand, and made it possible for me to use a pen? It was the Lord.

When we come into right relation with Him, and give ourselves wholly to Him, we shall see the miracle-working power of God in word and deed.

The Visions Confirmed Conclusions From Bible Study

In the early days of the message, when our numbers were few, we studied diligently to understand the meaning of many Scriptures. At times it seemed as if no explanation could be given. My mind seemed to be locked to an understanding of the Word; but when our brethren who had assembled for study came to a point where they could go no farther, and had recourse to earnest prayer, the Spirit of God would rest upon me, and I would be taken off in vision, and be instructed in regard to the relation of Scripture to Scripture. These experiences were repeated over and over again. Thus many truths of the third angel's message were established, point by point.

Think you that my faith in this message will ever waver? Think you that I can remain silent, when I see an effort being made to sweep away the foundation pillars of our faith? I am as thoroughly established in these truths as it is possible for a person to be. I can never forget

the experience I have passed through. God has confirmed my belief by many evidences of His power.

The light that I have received, I have written out, and much of it is now shining forth from the printed page. There is, throughout my printed works, a harmony with my present teaching.

While in Vision She Did Not Breathe

Some of the instruction found in these pages was given under circumstances so remarkable as to evidence the wonder-working power of God in behalf of His truth. **39** Sometimes while I was in vision, my friends would approach me, and exclaim, "Why, she does not breathe!" Placing a mirror before my lips, they found that no moisture gathered on the glass. It was while there was no sign of any breathing that I kept talking of the things that were being presented before me. These messages were thus given to substantiate the faith of all, that in these last days we might have confidence in the Spirit of Prophecy.

Voice Miraculously Preserved

I thank God that He has preserved my voice, which in my early youth physicians and friends declared would be silent within three months. The God of heaven saw that I needed to pass through a trying experience in order to be prepared for the work He had for me to do.

For the past half century my faith in the ultimate triumph of the third angel's message and everything connected with it, has been substantiated by the wonderful experiences through which I have passed. This is why I am anxious to have my books published and circulated in many languages. I know that the light contained in these books is the light of heaven.

Study the Instruction

I ask you to study the instruction that is written in these books. To John, the aged apostle, came the message, "Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter." The Lord has bidden me write that which had been revealed to me. This I have done, and it is now in printed form....

Amid the error that is overspreading the whole earth, let us strive to stand firm on the platform of eternal truth. Let us put on the whole armor of God; for we are told that in this time Satan himself will work miracles before the people; and as we see these things, we must be prepared to withstand their deceptive influence. Whatever is presented by the enemy as truth, ought not to influence us; for we should be under the instruction of the great Author of all truth.--The Review and Herald, June 14, 1906.

Chapter 6

Glimpses of How the Light Came to Ellen White

In the First Vision--Seemingly Present, Participating in Events

While I was praying at the family altar, the Holy Ghost fell upon me, and I seemed to be rising higher and higher, far above the dark world. I turned to look for the Advent people in the world, but could not find them, when a voice said to me, "Look again, and look a little higher." At this I raised my eyes, and saw a straight and narrow path, cast up high above the world. On this path the Adventist people were traveling to the city, which was at the farther end of the path.--Early Writings, p. 14.

Broad Panoramic Views

Through the illumination of the Holy Spirit, the scenes of the long-continued conflict between good and evil have been opened to the writer of these pages. From time to time I have been permitted to behold the working, in different ages, of the great controversy between Christ, the Prince of Life, the Author of our salvation, and Satan, the prince of evil, the author of sin, the first transgressor of God's holy law.--The Great Controversy, Introduction, pp. x, xi.

An Angel Explains the Significance

While at Loma Linda, California, April 16, 1906, there passed **41** before me a most wonderful representation. During a vision of the night, I stood on an eminence, from which I could see houses shaken like a reed in the wind. Buildings, great and small, were falling to the ground. Pleasure resorts, theaters, hotels, and the homes of the wealthy were shaken and shattered. Many lives were blotted out of existence, and the air was filled with the shrieks of the injured and the terrified. . . . The awfulness of the scenes that passed before me I cannot find words to describe. It seemed that the forbearance of God was exhausted, and that the judgment day had come.

Terrible as was the representation that passed before me, that which impressed itself most vividly upon my mind was the instruction given in connection with it. The angel that stood by my side declared that God's supreme rulership and the sacredness of His law must be revealed to those who persistently refuse to render obedience to the King of kings. Those who choose to remain disloyal must be visited in mercy with judgments, in order that, if possible, they may be aroused to a realization of the sinfulness of their course.--Testimonies, vol. 9, pp. 92, 93.

A Vivid View Relating to a Family

The angel of God said, "Follow me." I seemed to be in a room in a rude building, and there were several young men playing cards. They seemed to be very intent upon the amusement in which they were engaged and were so engrossed that they did not seem to notice that anyone had entered the room. There were young girls present observing the players, and words were spoken not of the most refined order. There was a spirit and influence that were sensibly felt in that room that was not of a character calculated to purify and uplift the

mind and ennoble the character. . . . {3SM 41.2} I inquired, "Who are these and what does this scene represent?"

The word was spoken, "Wait." . . .

I had another representation. There was the imbibing **42** of the liquid poison, and the words and actions under its influence were anything but favorable for serious thoughts, clear perception in business lines, pure morals, and the uplifting of the participants. . . .

I asked again, "Who are these?"

The answer came, "A portion of the family where you are visiting. The adversary of souls, the great enemy of God and man, the head of principalities and powers, and the ruler of the darkness of this world is presiding here tonight. Satan and his angels are leading on with his temptations these poor souls to their own ruin.--Letter 1, 1893.

As If the Whole Thing Were Transacting

Now I have light, mostly in the night season, just as if the whole thing were transacting, and I viewing it, and as [if] I am listening to the conversation. I am moved to get up and meet it.-Manuscript 105, 1907.

Symbolic Representations

You were represented to me as a general, mounted, on a horse, and carrying a banner. One came and took out of your hand the banner bearing the words, "The commandments of God and the faith of Jesus," and it was trampled in the dust. I saw you surrounded by men who were linking you up with the world.--Letter 239, 1903.

Some of the work that has been done [for outcasts] is represented as being like men rolling large stones up a hill with great effort. When nearly at the top of the hill, the stones rolled again to the bottom. The men only succeeded in taking a few to the top. In the work done for the degraded--what effort it has taken to reach them, what expense, and then to lead them to stand against appetite and base passions!--Letter 232, 1899.

Enabled to Comprehend Symbolic Visions

My mind and perceptions are still clear. That which the Lord presents to me in figure, He enables me to understand.-- Letter 28, 1907.

Warned of Peril Threatening a Physician

In a vision last night I saw you writing. One looked over your shoulder and said, "You, my friend, are in danger." . . . **43**

Let me tell you of a scene that I witnessed while in Oakland. Angels clothed with beautiful garments, like angels of light, were escorting Dr. A from place to place, and inspiring him to speak words of pompous boasting that were offensive to God.

Soon after the Oakland conference, in the night season the Lord portrayed before me a scene, in which Satan, clothed in a most attractive disguise, was earnestly pressing close to the side of Dr. A. I saw and heard much. Night after night I was bowed down in agony of soul as I saw this personage talking with our brother.--Letter 220, 1903.

Revealed in a Flash of Light

The question is asked, How does Sister White know in regard to the matters of which she speaks so decidedly, as if she had authority to say these things? I speak thus because they flash upon my mind when in perplexity like lightning out of a dark cloud in the fury of a storm. Some scenes presented before me years ago have not been retained in my memory, but when the instruction then given is needed, sometimes even when I am standing before the people, the remembrance comes sharp and clear, like a flash of lightning, [COMMENTING ON THE MANNER LIGHT OFTEN CAME TO ELLEN WHITE, W. C. WHITE, HER SON, IN A STATEMENT SHE FULLY ENDORSED, DECLARED: "THE THINGS WHICH SHE HAS WRITTEN OUT, ARE DESCRIPTIONS OF FLASHLIGHT PICTURES AND OTHER REPRESENTATIONS GIVEN HER REGARDING THE ACTIONS OF MEN, AND THE INFLUENCE OF THESE ACTIONS UPON THE WORK OF GOD FOR THE SALVATION OF MEN, WITH VIEWS OF PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE HISTORY IN ITS RELATION TO THIS WORK" (WCW OCT. 30, 1911, BEFORE GC COUNCIL; SEE APPENDIX A).--COMPILERS.] bringing to mind distinctly that particular instruction. At such times I cannot refrain from saying the things that flash into my mind, not because I have had a new vision, but because that which was presented to me, perhaps years in the past, has been recalled to my mind forcibly.--Manuscript 33, 1911.

Scenes in a Sanitarium Lobby

In my dreams I was at ----, and I was told by my Guide to mark everything I heard and to observe everything I saw. I was in a retired place, where I could not be seen, but could see all that went on in the room. Persons were settling **44** accounts with you, and I heard them remonstrating with you in regard to the large sum charged for board and room and treatment. I heard you with firm, decided voice refuse to lower the charge. I was astonished to see that the charge was so high.

You seemed to be the controlling power. I saw that the impression made by your course on the minds of those who were settling their bills was unfavorable to the institution. I heard some of your brethren pleading with you, telling you that your course was unwise and unjust, but you were as firm as a rock in your adherence to your course. You claimed that in what you were doing, you were working for the good of the institution. But I saw persons go from ---- anything but satisfied.--Letter 30, 1887.

Scenes of Familiarity and Adultery

While in Europe the things that transpired in ---- were opened before me. A voice said, "Follow me, and I will show you the sins that are practiced by those who stand in responsible positions." I went through the rooms, and I saw you, a watchman upon the walls of Zion, were very intimate with another man's wife, betraying sacred trusts,

crucifying your Lord afresh. Did you consider that there was a Watcher, the Holy One, who was witnessing your evil work, seeing your actions and hearing your words, and these are also registered in the books of heaven? {3SM 44.2} She was sitting on your lap; you were kissing her, and she was kissing you. Other scenes of fondness, sensual looks and deportment, were presented before me, which sent a thrill of horror through my soul. Your arm encircled her waist, and the fondness expressed was having a bewitching influence. Then a curtain was lifted, and I was shown you in bed with -----. My Guide said, "Iniquity, adultery."--Letter 16, 1888.

The Message Represented as Fruit Being Given Out

Your work has been represented to me in figures. You were passing round to a company a vessel filled with most beautiful fruit. But as you offered them this fruit, **45** you spoke words so harsh, and your attitude was so forbidding, that no one would accept it. Then Another came to the same company, and offered them the same fruit. And so courteous and pleasant were His words and manner as He spoke of the desirability of the fruit, that the vessel was emptied.--Letter 164, 1902.

One of Authority Counsels Regarding Locating a Sanitarium

In the night season I was in a council meeting where the brethren were discussing the matter of the sanitarium in Los Angeles. One of the brethren presented the advantages of establishing the sanitarium in the city of Los Angeles. Then One of Authority arose and presented the matter with clearness and force.-- Letter 40, 1902.

Contrasting Scenes; Illustrating Missionary Fervor

I seemed to be in a large gathering. One of authority was addressing the company, before whom was spread out a map of the world. He said that the map pictured God's vineyard, which must be cultivated. As light from heaven shone upon anyone, that one was to reflect the light to others. Lights were to be kindled in many places, and from these lights still other lights were to be kindled. . . .

I saw jets of light shining from cities and villages, and from the high places and the low places of the earth. God's word was obeyed, and as a result there were memorials for Him in every city and village. His truth was proclaimed throughout the world.

Then this map was removed and another put in its place. On it light was shining from a few places only. The rest of the world was in darkness, with only a glimmer of light here and there. Our Instructor said: "This darkness is the result of men's following their own course. They have cherished hereditary and cultivated tendencies to evil. They have made questioning and faultfinding and accusing the chief business of their lives. Their hearts are not right with God. They have hidden their light under a bushel."--Testimonies, vol. 9, pp. 28, 29. **46**

The Study of the Word and Special Knowledge

With the light communicated through the study of His Word, with the special knowledge given of individual cases among His people under all circumstances and in every phase of experience, can I now be in the same ignorance, the same mental uncertainty and spiritual blindness, as at the beginning of this experience? Will my brethren say that Sister White has been so dull a scholar that her judgment in this direction is no better than before she entered Christ's school, to be trained and disciplined for a special work? Am I no more intelligent in regard to the duties and perils of God's people than are those before whom these things have never been presented?--Testimonies, vol. 5, p. 686.

Holy Spirit Impressed Ellen White's Mind and Heart

God has given me a marked, solemn experience in connection with His work; and you may be assured that so long as my life is spared, I shall not cease to lift a warning voice as I am impressed by the Spirit of God, whether men will hear or whether they will forbear. I have no special wisdom in myself; I am only an instrument in the Lord's hands to do the work He has set for me to do. The instructions that I have given by pen or voice have been an expression of the light that God has given me. I have tried to place before you the principles that the Spirit of God has for years been impressing upon my mind and writing on my heart.

And now, brethren, I entreat you not to interpose between me and the people, and turn away the light which God would have come to them. Do not by your criticisms take out all the force, all the point and power, from the Testimonies. Do not feel that you can dissect them to suit your own ideas, claiming that God has given you ability to discern what is light from heaven and what is the expression of mere human wisdom. If the Testimonies speak not according to the Word of God, reject them.--Testimonies, vol. 5, p. 691.

Illustrated in the Location of a Food Factory

In the visions of the night, these principles were **47** presented to me in connection with the proposal for the establishment of a bakery [NOTE: PLANS CALLED FOR ITS LOCATION ABOUT ONE HUNDRED YARDS FROM THE MAIN SANITARIUM BUILDING.] at Loma Linda. I was shown a large building where many foods were made. There were also some smaller buildings near the bakery. As I stood by, I heard loud voices in dispute over the work that was being done. There was a lack of harmony among the workers, and confusion had come in.

Then I saw Brother Burden approach. His countenance bore a look of anxiety and distress as he endeavored to reason with the workmen, and bring them into harmony. The scene was repeated, and Brother Burden was often drawn away from his legitimate work as manager of the sanitarium, to settle variances. . . .

I then saw patients standing on the beautiful sanitarium grounds. They had heard the disputes between the workmen. The patients did not see me, but I could see them and hear them, and their remarks were brought to my ears. They were expressing words of regret

that a food factory should be established on these beautiful grounds, in such close proximity to an institution for the care of the sick. Some were disgusted. . . .

Then One appeared on the scene, and said: "All this has been caused to pass before you as an object lesson, that you might see the result of carrying out certain plans. . . .

Then, lo, the whole scene changed. The bakery building was not where we had planned it, but at a distance from the sanitarium buildings, on the road toward the railway. It was a humble building, and a small work was carried on there. The commercial idea was lost sight of, and, in its stead, a strong spiritual influence pervaded the place.--Letter 140, 1906.

Chapter 7

Presenting the Divinely Revealed Message

Instruction to Ellen White

As the Spirit of God has opened to my mind the great truths of His Word, and the scenes of the past and the future, I have been bidden to make known to others that which has thus been revealed.--The Great Controversy, p. xi.

From the beginning of my work . . . I have been called upon to bear a plain, pointed testimony, to reprove wrongs, and to spare not.--Testimonies, vol. 5, p. 678.

Bearing Testimony--Aided by the Spirit of God

After I come out of vision I do not at once remember all that I have seen, and the matter is not so clear before me until I write, then the scene rises before me as was presented in vision, and I can write with freedom. Sometimes the things which I have seen are hid from me after I come out of vision, and I cannot call them to mind until I am brought before a company where the vision applies, then the things which I have seen come to my mind with force.

I am just as dependent upon the Spirit of the Lord in relating or writing the vision as in having the vision. It is impossible for me to call up things which have been shown me unless the Lord brings them before me at the **49** time He is pleased to have me relate or write them.--Spiritual Gifts, vol. 2, pp. 292, 293.

Must Be Impressed by the Holy Spirit

I cannot at my own impulse take up a work and launch out into it. I have to be impressed by the Spirit of God. I cannot write unless the Holy Spirit helps me. Sometimes I cannot write at all. Then again I am aroused at eleven, twelve, and one o'clock; and I can write as fast as my hand can move over the paper.--Letter 11, 1903.

When Pen Taken in Hand

As soon as I take my pen in hand I am not in darkness as to what to write. It is as plain and clear as a voice speaking to me, "I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou

shalt go." "In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct [make plain] thy paths."--Manuscript 89, 1900.

I am very busy with my writing. Early and late, I am writing out the matters that the Lord opens before me. The burden of my work is to prepare a people to stand in the day of the Lord.--Letter 371, 1907. (Published in *Writing and Sending Out of the Testimonies to the Church*, p. 15.)

The Integrity of Her Message

I speak that which I have seen, and which I know to be true.--Letter 4, 1896.

In the line of my work I speak the things the Lord gives me. And in my words to you I would . . . [not] dare to say that the Lord did not move me to make the remarks which I made in that talk all the way through.--Letter 18d, 1890.

I write all that the Lord gives me to write.--Letter 52, 1906.

Testimony Expressed in Her Own Words

Although I am as dependent upon the Spirit of the Lord in writing my views as I am in receiving them, yet the words I employ in describing what I have seen are my own, unless they be those spoken to me by an angel, which I always enclose in remarks of quotation. [GENERAL CONFERENCE SESSION ACTION ON INSPIRATION: "WE BELIEVE THE LIGHT GIVEN BY GOD TO HIS SERVANTS IS BY THE ENLIGHTENMENT OF THE MIND, THUS IMPARTING THE THOUGHTS, AND NOT (EXCEPT IN RARE CASES) THE VERY WORDS IN WHICH THE IDEAS SHOULD BE EXPRESSED."--GENERAL CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS, REVIEW AND HERALD, NOV. 27, 1883.]—Review **50** and Herald, Oct. 8, 1867.

I Must Write These Things Over and Over

I have faithfully written out the warnings that God has given me. They have been printed in books, yet I cannot forbear. I must write these same things over and over. I ask not to be relieved. As long as the Lord spares my life, I must continue to bear these earnest messages.--Manuscript 21, 1910.

Ellen G. White's Understanding of Her Writings

a. **The Testimonies**: Those who carefully read the testimonies as they have appeared from the early days, need not be perplexed as to their origin. The many books, written by the help of the Spirit of God, bear a living witness to the character of the testimonies.-- Letter 225, 1906. (Published in *Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 49.)

b. **The Conflict of the Ages Books**: Sister White is not the originator of these books. They contain the instruction that during her lifework God has been giving her. They contain the precious, comforting light that God has graciously given His servant to be given to the world.--Colporteur Ministry, p. 125.

c. **The Articles:** I do not write one article in the paper expressing merely my own ideas. They are what God has opened before me in vision--the precious rays of light shining from the throne.--Testimonies, vol. 5, p. 67.

d. **The Letters** (testimonies): Weak and trembling, I arose at three o'clock in the morning to write to you. God was speaking through clay. You may say that this communication was only a letter. Yes, it was a letter, but prompted by the Spirit of God, to bring before your minds things that had been shown me. In these letters which I write, in the testimonies I bear, I am presenting to you that which the Lord has presented to me.--Testimonies, vol. 5, p. 67. **51**

e. **The Interviews:** He [Elder G. A. Irwin] has with him a little notebook in which he has noted down perplexing questions which he brings before me, and if I have any light upon these points, I write it out for the benefit of our people, not only in America but in this country [Australia].--Letter 96, 1899.

f. **When There Was No Light:** I have no light on the subject [as to just who would constitute the 144,000]. . . . Please tell my brethren that I have nothing presented before me regarding the circumstances concerning which they write, and I can set before them only that which has been presented to me.--Quoted in a letter by C. C. Crisler to E. E. Andross, Dec. 8, 1914. (In White Estate Document File, Number 164.)

I am not at liberty to write to our brethren concerning your future work.... I have received no instruction regarding the place where you should locate.... If the Lord gives me definite instruction concerning you, I will give it you; but I cannot take upon myself responsibilities that the Lord does not give me to bear.--Letter 96, 1909.

God-given Representations Reproduced as Vividly as Possible

I want every jot and tittle of my strength to reproduce the representations the Lord has given me, and to make them as vivid as possible while I can do so.--Letter 325, 1905.

Holy Spirit Gives Appropriate Words

The goodness of the Lord to me is very great. I praise His name that my mind is clear on Bible subjects. The Spirit of God works upon my mind and gives me appropriate words with which to express the truth. I am also greatly strengthened when I stand before large congregations.-- Letter 90, 1907.

The Spirit's Help in Choice of Appropriate Words

I am trying to catch the very words and expressions that were made in reference to this matter, and as my pen hesitates a moment, the appropriate words come to my mind. Letter 123, 1904.

When writing these precious books, if I hesitated, **52** the very word I wanted to express the idea was given me.--Letter 265, 1907.

Choosing Words Carefully

I am exceedingly anxious to use words that will not give anyone a chance to sustain erroneous sentiments. I must use words that will not be misconstrued and made to mean the opposite of that which they were designed to mean.--Manuscript 126, 1905.

Not One Heretical Sentence

I am now looking over my diaries [SEE FOOTNOTE, P. 32.] and copies of letters written for several years back. . . . I have the most precious matter to reproduce and place before the people in testimony form. While I am able to do this work, the people must have things to revive past history, that they may see that there is one straight chain of truth, without one heretical sentence, in that which I have written. This, I am instructed, is to be a living letter to all in regard to my faith.--Letter 329a, 1905.

First a General Presentation, Then Specific Application

I was carried from one sickroom to another where Dr. B. was the physician. In some cases I was made sad to see a great inefficiency. He did not have sufficient knowledge to understand what the case demanded and what was essential to be done to baffle disease.

The one of authority that has often instructed me, said, "Young man, you are not a close student. You skim the surface. You must make close study, make use of your opportunities, learn more; and what lessons you learn, learn thoroughly. You go too lightly loaded. It is a solemn thing to have human life in your hands, where any mistake you may make, any neglect of deep insight on your part, may cut short the existence of those who might live. This danger would be lessened, if the physician had more thorough intelligence how to treat the sick."

I never have written this to you, but I have presented all, in a general manner, without applying it to your 53 case. I feel now that you should know these things, that the light which has been given to the workers at the sanitarium, in some things meant you. I tell you in the spirit of love for your soul, and with an interest in your success as a medical practitioner, you must drink deeper at the fountain of knowledge, before you are prepared to be first or alone in an institution for the sick.--Letter 7, 1887.

Case Not Varnished Over

In the last vision given me your case was presented before me.... From what has been shown me you are a transgressor of the seventh commandment. How then can your mind be in harmony with the precious Word of God, truths which cut you at every turn? If you had been betrayed into this folly unwittingly it would be more excusable, but you have not. You have been warned. You have been reprov'd and counseled. . . .

My soul is stirred within me. . . . I will not varnish over your case. You are in a fearful state and you need to be entirely transformed.--Letter 52, 1876.

Not Always a Special Vision

I write this for I dare not withhold it. You are far from doing the will of God, far from Jesus, far from heaven. It is no marvel to me that God has not blessed your labors. You may say, "God has not given Sister White a vision in my case, why, then, does she write as she does?"

I have seen the cases of others who like you are neglecting their duties. I have seen many things in your case in your past experience. And when I enter a family and see a course pursued that God has reproved and condemned, I am in grief and distress, whether the special sins have been shown me or the sins of another who has neglected similar duties. I know whereof I speak, I feel deeply over the matter. I say, then, for Christ's sake make haste to come on the right ground, and harness up for the battle.--Letter 52, 1886.

Testimony Counsel Based on Many Visions

God has given me a testimony of reproof for parents who treat their children as you do your little one.--Letter 1, 1877. **54**

This matter has been brought before my mind in other cases where individuals have claimed to have messages for the Seventh-day Adventist Church, of a similar character, and the word has been given me, "Believe them not."--Letter 16, 1893. (Quoted in Selected Messages, book 2, pp. 63, 64.)

Bearing Testimony Unexpectedly

Sabbath morning early, I went into meeting and the Lord gave me a testimony directly to them, all unexpected to me. I poured it out upon them, showing them that the Lord sent His ministers with a message and the message they brought was the very means God had ordained to reach them, but they felt at liberty to pick it in pieces and make of none effect the Word of God. . . . I can tell you there was great astonishment and marveling that I dared to speak to them thus.--Letter 19, 1884.

Bearing Reproofs an Unpleasant Task for Ellen White

Were I to go to the [General] Conference [session], I should be compelled to take positions that would cut some to the quick. It greatly hurts me to do this, and it is a long time before I recover from the strain that such an experience brings on me.--Letter 17, 1903.

Work Made Sure by Both Oral and Written Messages

The messages that God has given me have been communicated to His people both by word of mouth and in printed form. Thus my work has been made doubly sure.

I am instructed that the Lord, by His infinite power, has preserved the right hand of His messenger for more than half a century, in order that the truth may be written out as He bids me write it for publication in periodicals and books.--Letter 136, 1906.

Whether Past or Future She Could Not Say

I have been urged by the Spirit of the Lord to fully warn our people in regard to the undue familiarity of married men with women, and women with men. This lovesick sentimentalism existed in the [city] mission at ___ before you were connected with it. I was shown you with others manifesting the same; whether this was in the **55** past or the future I cannot say, for often things are presented to me long before the circumstances take place.--Letter 17, 1891.

Shown as If Work Was Done

I have been thinking of how, after we began sanitarium work in Battle Creek, sanitarium buildings all ready for occupation were shown to me in vision. The Lord instructed me as to the way in which the work in these buildings should be conducted in order for it to exert a saving influence on the patients.

All this seemed very real to me, but when I awoke I found that the work was yet to be done, that there were no buildings erected.

Another time I was shown a large building going up on the site on which the Battle Creek Sanitarium was afterward erected. The brethren were in great perplexity as to who should take charge of the work. I wept sorely. One of authority stood up among us, and said, "Not yet. You are not ready to invest means in that building, or to plan for its future management." {3SM 55.3} At this time the foundation of the sanitarium had been laid. But we needed to learn the lesson of waiting. --Letter 135, 1903.

Paul Shown in Advance Dangers That Would Arise

Paul was an inspired apostle, yet the Lord did not reveal to him at all times just the condition of His people. Those who were interested in the prosperity of the church, and saw evils creeping in, presented the matter before him, and from the light which he had previously received he was prepared to judge of the true character of these developments. Because the Lord had not given him a new revelation for that special time, those who were really seeking light did not cast his message aside as only a common letter. No, indeed. The Lord had shown him the difficulties and dangers which would arise in the churches, that when they should develop he might know just how to treat them.-- Testimonies, vol. 5, p. 65.

Ellen White Could Now Speak

This morning **56** I attended a meeting where a select few were called together to consider some questions that were presented to them by a letter soliciting consideration and advice on these subjects. Of some of these subjects I could speak, because at sundry times and in divers places many things have been presented to me. . . . As my brethren read the selections from letters, I knew what to say to them; for this matter has been presented to me again and again in regard to the southern field. I have not felt at liberty to write out the matter until now. . . . The light that the Lord has given me at different times has been that the southern field, where the greatest share of the population of the colored race is, cannot

be worked after the same methods as other fields.--Letter 73, 1895. (Published in The Southern Work, p. 72.)

When the Time Is Fully Come

I must not write more now, although there is much more that I shall write when I know that the time has fully come.--Letter 124, 1902.

Deferred for a Year

The Lord did help and bless me in a signal manner during the conference in Melbourne. I labored, before I entered it, very hard, giving personal testimonies which I had written out one year before, but could not feel clear to send them. I thought of the words of Christ, "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now" (John 16:12). When I enclosed the communication all ready to mail, it seemed that a voice spoke to me saying, "Not yet, not yet, they will not receive your testimony."--Letter 39, 1893.

Visions Not Always First Understood

On one occasion when we were talking together about your experience in your work, you asked me, "Have you told me all?" I could not say more at that time. Often representations are given me which at first I do not understand, but after a time they are made plain by a repeated presentation of those things that I did not at first comprehend, and in ways that make their meaning clear and unmistakable.--Letter 329, 1904. 57

What I Wrote Seemed New

In the night I am aroused from my sleep, and I write in my diary many things that appear as new to me when read, as to any who hear them. If I did not see the matter in my own handwriting I should not think my pen had traced it.--Letter 118, 1898.

Former Writings Timely

I have a large amount of precious matter, written at Cooranbong [Australia], and dated December 20, 1896, which is just what is needed at this time. I will have it copied today, and if it is possible get it off in the evening mail. I had lost all trace of these manuscripts, but this morning a pile of copies attracted my attention, which on looking over, I found to my surprise to be just what I wanted.--Letter 262, 1907.

Minds Must Be Prepared Spiritually

I have tried to not shun to give to our people the whole counsel of God, but have sometimes deferred matters with the injunction, "They cannot bear them now." Even truth cannot be presented in its fullness before minds that are in no preparation spiritually to receive it. I have many things to say, but persons to whom the messages apply cannot in their present unconsecrated state bear them.--Letter 55, 1894.

Why Paul Could Not Tell All

The great apostle had many visions. The Lord showed him many things that it is not lawful for a man to utter. Why could he not tell the believers what he had seen? Because they would have made a misapplication of the great truths presented. They would not have been able to comprehend these truths. And yet all that was shown to Paul molded the messages that God gave him to bear to the churches.--Letter 161, 1903.

No Claim for Special Light for Biographical Writings

In preparing the following pages [Spiritual Gifts, vol. 2, which is an autobiographical account], I have labored under great disadvantages, as I have had to depend in many instances on memory, having kept no journal till within a few years. In several instances I have **58** sent the manuscripts to friends who were present when the circumstances related occurred, for their examination before they were put in print. I have taken great care, and have spent much time, in endeavoring to state the simple facts as correctly as possible.

I have, however, been much assisted in arriving at dates by the many letters which I wrote.-
-Preface to Spiritual Gifts, vol. 2.

A special request is made that if any find incorrect statements in this book they will immediately inform me. The edition will be completed about the first of October; therefore send before that time.--Ibid., Appendix in first 400 copies.

Distinction Between Common and Religious Subjects

There are times when common things must be stated, common thoughts must occupy the mind, common letters must be written and information given that has passed from one to another of the workers. Such words, such information, are not given under the special inspiration of the Spirit of God. Questions are asked at times that are not upon religious subjects at all, and these questions must be answered. We converse about houses and lands, trades to be made, and locations for our institutions, their advantages and disadvantages.-- Manuscript 107, 1909. (Published in Selected Messages, book 1, p. 39.)

The Point Illustrated

I have not been given the message, Send for Brother C to come to Australia. No; therefore I do not say, I know that this is the place for you. But it is my privilege to express my wishes, even though I say, I speak not by commandment.

But I do not want you to come because of any persuasion of mine. I want you to seek the Lord most earnestly, and then follow where He shall lead you, I want you to come when God says, Come, not one moment before.

Nevertheless, it is my privilege to present the wants of the work of God in Australia. Australia is not my country only as it is the Lord's province. The country is **59** God's; the people are His. A work is to be done here, and if you are not the one to do it, I shall feel perfectly resigned to hear that you have gone to some other locality.--Letter 129, 1897.

(From a letter concerning the need for a sanitarium in Australia and the possibility of this man coming to Australia to launch such an enterprise.)

Information Gained From Those Who Should Know

The information given concerning the number of rooms in the Paradise Valley Sanitarium was given, not as a revelation from the Lord, but simply as a human opinion. There has never been revealed to me the exact number of rooms in any of our sanitariums; and the knowledge I have obtained of such things I have gained by inquiring of those who were supposed to know. In my words, when speaking upon these common subjects, there is nothing to lead minds to believe that I receive my knowledge in a vision from the Lord and am stating it as such.--Manuscript 107, 1909. (Quoted in Selected Messages, book 1, p. 38.)

Two Kinds of Letters

Dear Children [Edson and Emma]: I have had many matters to write out, and I have been hard at work. My heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord. We are in no case to be doubtful, but hopeful.

This morning I found your letter under my door. I was glad to hear from you. Yesterday I wrote you a letter on common, everyday topics. [See next quotation.] This letter will be sent today. I have written a long letter on the subject spoken of in your letter, and have given it out to be copied. This will be sent to you soon. . . .

From the instruction that the Lord has given me from time to time, I know that there should be workers who make medical evangelistic tours among the towns and villages. Those who do this work will gather a rich harvest of souls, both from the higher and the lower classes.--Letter 202, 1903.

The Letter Dealing With Common Matters

Dear Children Edson and Emma:

It has been a long time since I have written to you. I should be very much **60** pleased to visit you in your own home. Willie writes me that he is much pleased with your situation. I have not heard from you for a long time. I should be so glad to get a letter from you, even if it is only a few lines. And remember that if at any time you wish to pay us a visit, to counsel about your work and about the books that we are trying to get out, I shall be more than glad to see you.

It seems a long time since Willie left us. He went away the last of June, and it is now the tenth of September. He will not be home for a week yet. . . .--Letter 201, 1903.

Sister White's Judgment

You have evidenced your opinion of your own judgment--that it was more reliable than Sister White's. Did you consider that Sister White has been dealing with just such cases during her life of service for the Master, that cases similar to your own and many varieties

of cases have passed before her that should make her know what is right and what is wrong in these things? Is a judgment that has been under the training of God for more than fifty years of no preference to those who have not had this discipline and education? Please consider these things.--Letter 115, 1895.

Dared Not Speak When There Was No Special Light

I find myself frequently placed where I dare give neither assent nor dissent to propositions that are submitted to me; for there is danger that any words I may speak shall be reported as something that the Lord has given me. It is not always safe for me to express my own judgment; for sometimes when someone wishes to carry out his own purpose, he will regard any favorable word I may speak as special light from the Lord. I shall be cautious in all my movements.--Letter 162, 1907, p. 2.

NOTE: EXCEPT FOR THAT WHICH IS IN THE NATURE OF EVERYDAY MATTERS OR BIOGRAPHICAL, THAT WHICH MRS. WHITE SET BEFORE THE PEOPLE WAS BASED UPON THE VISIONS GIVEN TO HER, WHETHER OR NOT SHE USED THE TERM "I SAW." SHE, IN HER DAY, AND WE TODAY, DRAW THE LINE, NOT BETWEEN BOOKS AND LETTERS, ET CETERA, BUT 61 BETWEEN THE SACRED AND THE COMMON. NO ONE NEED BE CONFUSED. {3SM 60.4} MRS. WHITE, IN BOOKS INTENDED FOR THE READING OF THE GENERAL PUBLIC, DESIGNEDLY LEFT OUT ALL EXPRESSIONS SUCH AS "I SAW" AND "I WAS SHOWN," LEST THE READERS, BEING UNFAMILIAR WITH HER EXPERIENCE, SHOULD HAVE THEIR MINDS DIVERTED FROM THE MESSAGE ITSELF. ONE LOOKS IN VAIN THROUGH THE FIVE VOLUMES OF THE CONFLICT SERIES FOR ONE SUCH EXPRESSION, YET IN HER INTRODUCTION TO THE GREAT CONTROVERSY, THE FIRST OF THE SERIES THAT APPEARED IN 1888, AND ELSEWHERE, SHE MAKES IT KNOWN THAT SHE WITNESSED EVENTS TAKE PLACE AND WAS "BIDDEN TO MAKE KNOWN TO OTHERS THAT WHICH HAS BEEN REVEALED" (P. XI). SEE ALSO STEPS TO CHRIST, THOUGHTS FROM THE MOUNT OF BLESSING, CHRIST'S OBJECT LESSONS, EDUCATION, AND THE MINISTRY OF HEALING. "SISTER WHITE IS NOT THE ORIGINATOR OF THESE BOOKS," SHE WROTE.

Chapter 8

The Question of Influence

Who Has Told Sister White?

Those who have disregarded the messages of warning have lost their bearings. Some, in their self-confidence, have dared to turn from that which they knew to be truth, with the words, "Who has told Sister White?" These words show the measure of their faith and confidence in the work that the Lord has given me to do. They have before them the result of the work that the Lord has laid upon me, and if this does not convince them, no arguments, no future revelations, would affect them. The result will be that God will speak again in judgment as He has spoken heretofore.--Review and Herald, May 19, 1903, p. 8.

Did Anyone Tell Her These Things?--Some are ready to inquire: "Who told Sister White these things?" They have even put the question to me: "Did anyone tell you these things?" I

could answer them: "Yes; yes, the angel of God has spoken to me." But what they mean is: "Have the brethren and sisters been exposing their faults?" For the future, I shall not belittle the testimonies that God has given me, to make explanations to try to satisfy such narrow minds, but shall treat all such questions as an insult to the Spirit of God. God has seen fit to thrust me into positions in which He has not placed **63** any other one in our ranks. He has laid upon me burdens of reproof that He has not given to any other one.-- Testimonies, vol. 3, pp. 314, 315.

Someone Has Told Sister White

Even now unbelief is expressed by the words, "Who has written these things to Sister White?" But I know of no one who knows them as they are, and no one who could write that which he does not suppose has an existence. Someone has told me--He who does not falsify, misjudge, or exaggerate any case.--Special Instruction Relating to the Review and Herald Office and the Work in Battle Creek, p. 16.

Untrustworthy if Influenced

You think individuals have prejudiced my mind. If I am in this state, I am not fitted to be entrusted with the work of God.-- Letter 16, 1893.

Mrs. White Did Not Read Certain Letters or Articles

You may blame me for not reading your package of writings. I did not read them, neither did I read the letters that Dr. Kellogg sent. I had a message of stern rebuke for the publishing house, and I knew that if I read the communications sent to me, later on, when the testimony came out, you and Dr. Kellogg would be tempted to say, "I gave her that inspiration."--Letter 301, 1905. {3SM 63.3} I have not been in the habit of reading any doctrinal articles in the paper [the Review and Herald], that my mind should not have any understanding of anyone's ideas and views, and that not a mold of any man's theories should have any connection with that which I write.--Letter 37, 1887.

A Question Raised in Early Ministry

What if you had said ever so much, would that affect the visions that God gives me? If so, then the visions are nothing. . . . What you or anyone else has said is nothing at all. God has taken the matter in hand. . . . What you have said, Sister D, influenced me not at all. My opinion has nothing to do with what God has shown me in vision.-- Letter 6, 1851.

Reproof Not From Hearsay

I received your letter **64** and will endeavor to answer it. You say that you received the testimonies, but the portion in regard to deception you do not receive. Nevertheless, my brother, it is true, and hearsay has nothing to do with this case of reproof.--Letter 28, 1888.

An Attempt to Guide Mrs. White

Brother E suggests that it would please the people if I speak less about duty and more in regard to the love of Jesus. But I wish to speak as the Spirit of the Lord shall impress me. The Lord knows best what this people needs. I spoke in the forenoon [Sabbath, October 17] from Isaiah 58. I did not round the corners at all.--Manuscript 26, 1885.

Manipulated by One Mighty in Counsel

There are those who say, "Someone manipulates her writings." I acknowledge the charge. It is One who is mighty in counsel, One who presents before me the condition of things.--Letter 52, 1906.

Why Inquiries Were at Times Made

I am told by one who made a confession to me that doubts and unbelief had been cherished by them against the testimonies because of the words spoken to them by Sister F. One thing mentioned was that the testimonies to individuals had been told me by others and I gave them, purporting to be a message from God. Does my sister know that in this she is making me a hypocrite and a liar? . . .

One case was mentioned by Sister F, that she had told me all about the case of Brother G's family, and the next thing she heard I was relating the very things she had told me as what the Lord had shown me.

Let me explain. I am often shown families and individuals and when I have an opportunity with those who are acquainted with them, I make inquiry how that family is standing for the purpose of ascertaining if ministers or people have any knowledge of the existing evils.

This was the fact in the case concerning Brother G's family. I wished to see if the testimony was substantiated by facts. But that information given did not **65** originate the testimony, although shortsighted, tempted souls may thus interpret it.--Letter 17, 1887.

Who Told Paul and Sister White

When a testimony from the Lord is borne to the erring there is often a question asked: Who told Sister White? This must have been the case in the days of Paul, for someone must have [had] the interest of the church at heart to present before the apostle, God's appointed minister, the dangers of the members of the church which threatened its prosperity. There is a time to speak and a time to keep silence. Of course, something must be done, and the Lord's appointed minister must not fail in his work to correct these evils. Now these evils were existing, and Paul had a work to do to counteract them. . . .

We know that Paul had presented before him the state of the churches. God has given him light and knowledge in regard to the order that should be maintained in the churches, the evils that would arise, and which would have to be corrected and firmly dealt with corresponding to their aggravated character. The Lord had revealed to Paul the purity, the

devotion and piety that should be maintained in the church, and things arising contrary to this he knew must be reprov'd according to the light given him of God.

Why Inquiries Are Made

When matters are brought before my mind in regard to a church, sometimes there flashes, as it were, a light from heaven revealing particulars that God had presented before me of that case, and when the burden is bearing upon my mind in reference to special churches, families or individuals, I frequently inquire the condition of things in the church, and the matter is all written out before I come to that church.

But I want facts to substantiate the testimonies, and I am burdened to know in what manner I should bring out the light God has given me. If the errors have been manifestly affecting the church, the examples of a character to mislead the church, weaken it in faith and strengthen unbelief, then the work to be done must not **66** be confined to families privately or to individuals alone, but must come before the whole church to stay the evil and flash light into the minds of those who have been deceived by deceptive works and misinterpretations.

Again, when before the people, there flashes upon me light that God has given me in the past in reference to the faces which were before me, and I have been impelled by the Spirit of the Lord to speak. This is the way I have been used, viewing many cases, and before I bring these cases out, I wish to know whether the case is known by others; whether their influence is calculated to injure the church generally. Questions are sometimes asked and sometimes it determines the manner of treating these cases, whether before many or few, or before the persons themselves.

If the case is such that it can be dealt with privately, and others need not know, I greatly desire to do all possible to correct and not give publicity to the matter.-- Letter 17, 1887.

I Stand Alone, Severely Alone

I have a statement to make. When the Lord presents before me any matter and instruction and I have a message to bear concerning the said matter, then I shall, to the best of my God-given ability, make known the matter, presenting the mind and will of God just as clearly as my human capabilities, guided and controlled by the Holy Spirit, shall bring all the matter before me to present to others. In regard to the serious matters given me I have not given anyone--man or woman--any right to have the least control over my work the Lord has given me to do. {3SM 66.3} Since twenty-one years ago, when I was deprived of my husband by death, I have not had the slightest idea of ever marrying again. Why? Not because God forbade it. No. But to stand alone was the best for me, that no one should suffer with me in carrying forward my work entrusted to me of God. And no one should have a right to influence me in any way in reference to my responsibility and my work in bearing my testimony of **67** encouragement and reproof.

My husband never stood in my way to do this, although I had help and encouragement from him and oft his pity. His sympathy and prayers and tears I have missed so much, so very much. No one can understand this as myself. But my work has to be done. No human power

should give the least supposition that I would be influenced in the work God has given me to do in bearing my testimony to those for whom He has given me reproof or encouragement.

I have been alone in this matter, severely alone with all the difficulties and all the trials connected with the work. God alone could help me. The last work that is to be done by me in this world will soon be finished. I must express myself plainly, in a manner, if possible, not to be misunderstood.

I have not one person in the world who shall put any message in my mind or lay one duty upon me. I am now to say to you, Brother F, when the Lord gives me a burden for you or for anyone, you shall have it in the way and manner the Lord gives it to me.--Manuscript 227, 1902.

Chapter 9

Defining Sister White's Judgment and the Word of the Lord

Sister White's Opinion? The Position of Part Human, Part Divine

Many times in my experience I have been called upon to meet the attitude of a certain class, who acknowledged that the testimonies were from God, but took the position that this matter and that matter were Sister White's opinion and judgment. This suits those who do not love reproof and correction, and who, if their ideas are crossed, have occasion to explain the difference between the human and the divine.

If the preconceived opinions or particular ideas of some are crossed in being reproved by testimonies, they have a burden at once to make plain their position to discriminate between the testimonies, defining what is Sister White's human judgment, and what is the word of the Lord. Everything that sustains their cherished ideas is divine, and the testimonies to correct their errors are human--Sister White's opinions. They make of none effect the counsel of God by their tradition.-- Manuscript 16, 1889.

Virtually Rejecting the Testimonies

You have talked over matters as you viewed them, that the **69** communications from Sister White are not all from the Lord, but a portion is her own mind, her own judgment, which is no better than anybody else's judgment and ideas. This is one of Satan's hooks to hang your doubts upon to deceive your soul and the souls of others who will dare to draw the line in this matter and say, this portion which pleases me is from God, but that portion which points out and condemns my course of conduct is from Sister White alone, and bears not the holy signet. You have in this way virtually rejected the whole of the messages, which God in His tender, pitying love has sent to you to save you from moral ruin. . . .

There is One back of me which is the Lord, who has prompted the message which you now reject and disregard and dishonor. By tempting God you have unnerved yourselves, and confusion and blindness of mind has been the result.--Letter 16, 1888.

This Is Not My Opinion

After I wrote you the long letter which has been belittled by Elder H as merely an expression of my own opinion, while at the Southern California Camp Meeting, the Lord partially removed the restriction, and I write what I do. I dare not say more now, lest I go beyond what the Spirit of the Lord has permitted me.

When Professor I came, I put to him a few pointed questions, more to learn how he regarded the condition of things, than to obtain information. I felt that the crisis had come. Had Elder H, and those united with him, been standing in the light, they would have recognized the voice of warning and reproof; but he calls it a human work, and casts it aside. The work he is doing he will wish undone ere long. He is weaving a net around himself that he cannot easily break. This is not my opinion.

What voice will you acknowledge as the voice of God? What power has the Lord in reserve to correct your errors, and show you your course as it is? What power to work in the church? You have, by your own course, closed every avenue whereby the Lord would reach you. **70** Will He raise one from the dead to speak to you? . . .

In the testimonies sent to Battle Creek, I have given you the light God has given to me. In no case have I given my own judgment or opinion. I have enough to write of what has been shown me, without falling back on my own opinions. You are doing as the children of Israel did again and again. Instead of repenting before God, you reject His words, and attribute all the warnings and reproof to the messenger whom the Lord sends.--Testimony for the Battle Creek Church, pp. 50-58 (1882).

Permit me to express my mind, and yet not my mind, but the word of the Lord.--Letter 89, 1899. (Quoted in Counsels to Writers and Editors, p. 112.)

Satan Will Help Those Who Feel They Must Discriminate

I have my work to do, to meet the misconceptions of those who suppose themselves able to say what is testimony from God and what is human production. If those who have done this work continue in this course, satanic agencies will choose for them. . . .

Those who have helped souls to feel at liberty to specify what is of God in the Testimonies and what are the uninspired words of Sister White, will find that they were helping the devil in his work of deception. Please read Testimony No. 33, page 211 [Testimonies, vol. 5, p. 682], "How to Receive Reproof."--Letter 28, 1906.

How Can God Reach Them?

What reserve power has the Lord with which to reach those who have cast aside His warnings and reproofs, and have accredited the testimonies of the Spirit of God to no higher source than human wisdom? In the judgment, what can you who have done this, offer to God as an excuse for turning from the evidences He has given you that God was in the work?--Testimonies to Ministers, p. 466.

Chapter 10

On Being an Inspired Messenger

Experiences as God's Messenger Recounted

For half a century I have been the Lord's messenger, and as long as my life shall last I shall continue to bear the messages that God gives me for His people. I take no glory to myself. In my youth the Lord made me His messenger, to communicate to His people testimonies of encouragement, warning, and reproof. For sixty years I have been in communication with heavenly messengers, and I have been constantly learning in reference to divine things, and in reference to the way in which God is constantly working to bring souls from the error of their ways to the light in God's light.

Many souls have been helped because they have believed that the messages given me were sent in mercy to the erring. When I have seen those who needed a different phase of Christian experience, I have told them so, for their present and eternal good. And so long as the Lord spares my life, I will do my work faithfully, whether or not men and women shall hear and receive and obey. My work is clearly given me to do, and I shall receive grace in being obedient.

I love God. I love Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and I feel an intense interest in every soul who claims to be a child of God. I am determined to be a faithful steward so **72** long as the Lord shall spare my life. I will not fail nor be discouraged.

But for months my soul has been passing through intense agony on account of those who have received the sophistries of Satan and are communicating the same to others, [REFERENCE TO PANTHEISTIC TEACHINGS.] making every conceivable interpretation in various ways to destroy confidence in the gospel message for this last generation, and in the special work which God has given me to do. I know that the Lord has given me this work, and I have no excuse to make for what I have done.

In my experience I am constantly receiving evidence of the sustaining miracle-working power of God upon my body and my soul, which I have dedicated to the Lord. I am not my own; I have been bought with a price and I have such assurance of the Lord's working in my behalf that I must acknowledge His abundant grace. . . .

Why should I complain? So many times has the Lord raised me up from sickness, so wonderfully has He sustained me, that I can never doubt. I have so many unmistakable evidences of His special blessings, that I could not possibly doubt. He gives me freedom to speak His truth before large numbers of people. Not only when I am standing before large congregations is special help bestowed upon me, but when I am using my pen, wonderful representations are given me of past, present, and future.--Letter 86, 1906.

Given Tongue and Utterance

Of all the precious assurances God has given me regarding my work, none has been more precious to me than this, that He would give me tongue and utterance wherever I should go. In places where there was the greatest opposition, every tongue was silenced. I have

spoken the plain message to our own people and to the multitude, and my words have been accepted as coming from the Lord.-- Letter 84, 1909. 73

Ellen G. White Message Consistent Through the Years

The meeting on Sunday afternoon was attended by many of the citizens of Battle Creek. They paid the best of attention. At this meeting I had opportunity to state decidedly that my views have not changed. The blessing of the Lord rested upon many of those who heard the words spoken. I said: "You may be anxious to know what Mrs. White believes. You have heard her speak many times. . . . She has the same service to do for the Master that she had when she addressed the people of Battle Creek years ago. She receives lessons from the same Instructor. The directions given her are, 'Write the messages that I give you, that the people may have them.' These messages have been written as God has given them to me."-- Letter 39, 1905.

E. G. White's Confidence in the Divine Source of Her Revelations

What a battle I am obliged to fight! My brethren seem to judge me as taking positions that are not necessary. They do not see that God in His own wisdom has made revelations to me which cannot successfully be contradicted or disputed. Nothing can rub out that which has been presented to me and imprinted on the tablets of my soul. All the oppositions or gain-saying to make my testimony of none effect only compels from me, by the urgency of the Spirit of God, a more decided repetition, and to stand on the light revealed with all the force of the strength God has given me.-- Manuscript 25, 1890.

Meet the Danger Positively

Satan will continue to bring in his erroneous theories and to claim that his sentiments are true. Seducing spirits are at work. I am to meet the danger positively, denying the right of anyone to use my writings to serve the devil's purpose to allure and deceive the people of God. [ADVOCATES OF PANTHEISTIC TEACHINGS USED E. G. WHITE WRITINGS TO BOLSTER THEIR ERRONEOUS VIEWS.] God has spared my life that I may present the testimonies given me, to vindicate 74 that which God vindicates, and to denounce every vestige of Satan's sophistry. One thing will follow another in spiritual sophistry, to deceive if possible the very elect.--Manuscript 126, 1905.

Unmoved by Opposition

The greatest tirade may be made against me, but it will not change in the least my mission or my work. We have had this to meet again and again. The Lord gave me the message when I was only 17 years old. . . . The message the Lord has given me to bear has been in a straight line from light to light, upward and onward from truth to advanced truth.-- Manuscript 29, 1897.

No Claim to the Title "Prophetess"

During the discourse [at Battle Creek, October 2, 1904], I said that I did not claim to be a prophetess. Some were surprised at this statement, and as much is being said in regard to

it, I will make an explanation. Others have called me a prophetess, but I have never assumed that title. I have not felt that it was my duty thus to designate myself. Those who boldly assume that they are prophets in this our day are often a reproach to the cause of Christ.

My work includes much more than this name signifies. I regard myself as a messenger, entrusted by the Lord with messages for His people.--Letter 55, 1905. (In Selected Messages, book 1, pp. 35, 36.)

The Work of a Prophet and More

I am now instructed that I am not to be hindered in my work by those who engage in suppositions regarding its nature, whose minds are struggling with so many intricate problems connected with the supposed work of a prophet. My commission embraces the work of a prophet, but it does not end there. It embraces much more than the minds of those who have been sowing the seeds of unbelief can comprehend.--Letter 244, 1906. (Addressed to elders of the Battle Creek church; See Selected Messages, book 1, pp. 34-36.)

No Self-vindication

My heart feels very sad that Brethren J and K have taken the position which they have. . . . You may inquire, "What effect does this have **75** upon you?" Sorrow only, sorrow of soul, but peace and perfect rest and trust in Jesus. To vindicate myself, my position, or my mission, I would not utter ten words. I would not seek to give evidence of my work. "By their fruits ye shall know them" (Matthew 7:20).--Letter 14, 1897.

Leaving Consequences With God

I am sometimes greatly burdened in the night season. I rise from my bed, and walk the room, praying to the Lord to help me bear the burden, and say nothing to make the people believe that the message He has given me is truth. When I can lay this burden on the Lord, I am free indeed. I enjoy a peace that I cannot express. I feel lifted up, as if borne by the everlasting arms, and peace and joy fill my soul.

I am again and again reminded that I am not to try to clear away the confusion and contradiction of faith and feeling and unbelief that is expressed. I am not to be depressed, but am to speak the words of the Lord with authority, and then leave with Him all the consequences.

I am instructed by the Great Physician to speak the word that the Lord gives me, whether men will hear or whether they will forebear. I am told that I have nothing to do with the consequences, that God, even the Lord Jehovah, will keep me in perfect peace if I will rest in His love and do the work He has given me.--Letter 146, 1902.

Will Not Confess the Sins Known Only to Those Involved

Your brethren, or many of them, do not know that which you yourself and the Lord know. . . . I have determined that I will not confess the sins of those who profess to believe the truth, but leave these things for them to confess.--Letter 113, 1893.

E. G. White Benefited by the Message Given

I long to speak to large congregations, knowing that the message is not of myself but that which the Lord impresses upon my mind to utter. I am never left alone when I stand before the people with a message. When **76** before the people there seems to be presented before me the most precious things of the gospel and I participate in the gospel message and feed upon the Word as much as any of the hearers. The sermons do me good, for I have new representations every time I open my lips to speak to the people.

I can never doubt my mission, for I am a participant in the privileges and am nourished and vivified, knowing that I am called unto the grace of Christ. Every time I set forth the truth to the people, and call their attention to eternal life which Christ has made possible for us to obtain, I am as much benefited as they with most gracious discoveries of the grace and love and the power of God in behalf of His people, in justification and reconciliation with God.--Manuscript 174, 1903.

The Privilege of Being God's Messenger

I am very thankful that the Lord has given me the privilege of being His messenger to communicate precious truth to others.--Letter 80, 1911.

After Ellen White's Death E. G. White's Writings to Continue to Witness

I am to trace this testimony on paper, that should I fall asleep in Jesus, the witness to the truth might still be borne.--Letter 116, 1905.

To Speak to the End

Abundant light has been given to our people in these last days. Whether or not my life is spared, my writings will constantly speak, and their work will go forward as long as time shall last. My writings are kept on file in the office, and even though I should not live, these words that have been given to me by the Lord will still have life and will speak to the people.--Letter 371, 1907. (Published in Selected Messages, book 1, p. 55.)

Messages to Be of Greater Force After Prophet's Death.--Physically, I have always been as a broken vessel; and yet in my old age the Lord continues to move upon me by His Holy Spirit to write the most important books that have ever come before the churches and the **77** world. The Lord is evidencing what He can do through weak vessels. The life that He spares I will use to His glory. And, when He may see fit to let me rest, His messages shall be of even more vital force than when the frail instrumentality through whom they were delivered, was living.--Manuscript 122, 1903.

Chapter 11

The Reception of the Messages

Messages of Encouragement, Warning, and Reproof

For half a century I have been the Lord's messenger, and as long as my life shall last I shall continue to bear the messages that God gives me for His people. I take no glory to myself; in my youth the Lord made me His messenger, to communicate to His people testimonies of encouragement, warning, and reproof. For sixty years I have been in communication with heavenly messengers, and I have been constantly learning in reference to divine things, and in reference to the way in which God is constantly working to bring souls from the error of their ways to the light in God's light.--Letter 86, 1906.

Some Receive, Some Reject

I have a work to do for those who will be helped, even if the light given does not harmonize with their ideas. They will recognize the light from God, because they have the fruits of the work which the Lord has been pleased to do through His humble instrument in the last forty-five years. They acknowledge this work to be of God, and are therefore willing to be corrected in their ideas and to change their course of action.

But those who will maintain and retain their own **79** ideas, and because they are corrected, conclude that Sister White is influenced to take a certain course of action which is not in harmony with their ideas . . . could not be benefited. I would not consider such friends to be of any value in a hard place, especially in a crisis. Now you have my mind. I do not want to do the work of God in a bungling manner. I want to know what duty is and move in harmony with the Spirit of God.--Letter 3, 1889.

Ellen White's Letter a Message From God

You ask if the Lord gave me that letter to give to you. I say He did. That Holy God of Israel will not serve with your sins. That message was given of God. If you have had, since that message was given, a new sense of what constitutes sin, if you have become truly converted, a child of God in place of being a transgressor of His law, then there is no one who will be more pleased than myself.--Letter 95, 1893.

Truthfulness of Testimonies Publicly Acknowledged

I spoke to the people [in Bloomfield, California] in the forenoon in regard to the necessity of having the defects in their characters removed, that they may stand before the Son of God blameless when He shall appear. There was deep feeling in the meeting. I addressed several personally, pointing out the wrongs I had been shown in their cases. They all responded and many with weeping confessed their sins and the truthfulness of the testimony.--Letter 7, 1873.

Interpreted in Light of Preconceived Positions

There are many who interpret that which I write in the light of their own preconceived opinions. You know what this means. A division in understanding and diverse opinions is the sure result.

How to write in a way to be understood by those to whom I address important matter, is a problem I cannot solve. But I will endeavor to write much less. Owing to the influence of mind upon mind, those who misunderstand can lead others to misunderstand, by the interpretation they place upon the subjects from my pen. One **80** understands them as he thinks they should be, in accordance with his ideas. Another puts his construction upon the written matter, and confusion is the sure result.-- Letter 96, 1899.

Partial Acceptance

For many months, excepting for a few nights, I have not been able to sleep past one o'clock. I find myself sitting in conversation with you, and others, pleading with you as a mother would plead with her son. . . .

You are doubtless surprised, as I expected you would be, that I write to you in so plain and decided a manner. But this I must do, for I am made a steward of the grace of Christ, and I must do this errand for the Lord. You may feel well satisfied with yourself. You may deny the representation given me of your case. Some are doing this today. . . .

This is the reason that men and women do not always see their errors and mistakes, even when these are pointed out to them. They claim to believe the testimonies that come to them, until the message comes that they must change their plans and methods, that their character-building must be altogether different, else the storm and tempest will sweep it from its foundation. Then the enemy tempts them to justify themselves.

After reading this message, you will doubtless be tempted to say, "This is not so. I am not as I am represented here. Someone has filled Sister White's mind with a mass of trash about me." But I tell you in the name of the Lord that the words of this writing are from God. If you choose thus to dispose of the matter, you show the measure of your faith in the work that the Lord has given His servant to do.--Letter 13, 1902.

The Portions Condemning Favorite Indulgences

There are some professed believers who accept certain portions of the testimonies as the message of God, while they reject those portions which condemn their favorite indulgences. Such persons are working contrary to their own welfare and the welfare of the **81** church. It is essential that we walk in the light while we have the light.--Manuscript 71, 1908.

Trifling With the Messages

Frequently I do not anticipate saying the things I do say when I am speaking before the people. God may give me words of reproof, of warning, or encouragement as He sees fit, for

the benefit of souls. I shall speak these words, and they may cut across the track of my brethren, whom I sincerely love and respect in the truth.

I expect to have these words distorted, misapprehended by unbelievers, and it is no surprise to me. But to have my brethren, who are acquainted with my mission and my work, trifle with the message that God gives me to bear, grieves His Spirit.

It is discouraging to me to have them pick out portions in the testimonies that please them which they construe to justify their own course of action and give the impression that that portion they accept as the voice of God, and then when other testimonies come that bring rebuke upon their course, when words are spoken that do not coincide with their opinions and judgment, they dishonor God's work by saying, "Oh, this we do not accept--it is only Sister White's opinion, and it is no better than my opinion or that of anyone else."--Letter 3, 1889.

Watching for Words on Which Human Interpretation Is Placed

I am sensible of the fact that I am mortal, and that I must guard my physical, mental, and moral powers. The constant changing from place to place necessitated by travel, and the taking hold of public labor wherever I have gone, have been too much for me, in addition to the writings that I have been preparing day and night as the Lord has worked my mind by His Holy Spirit.

And when I am meeting with evidences that these communications will be treated by some in accordance with the human judgment of those who shall receive them, when I realize that some are watching keenly for some words which have been traced by my pen and upon **82** which they can place their human interpretations in order to sustain their positions and to justify a wrong course of action--when I think of these things, it is not very encouraging to continue writing.

Some of these who are certainly reprov'd, strive to make every word vindicate their own statements. The twistings and connivings and misrepresentations and misapplications of the Word are marvelous! Persons are linked together in this work. What one does not think of, another mind supplies.--Letter 172, 1906.

Wresting the Scriptures and the Testimonies

The lessons of Christ were often misunderstood, not because He did not make them plain, but because the minds of the Jews, like the minds of many who claim to believe in this day, were filled with prejudice. Because Christ did not take sides with the Scribes and Pharisees, they hated Him, opposed Him, sought to counteract His efforts, and to make His words of no effect. {3SM 82.2} Why will not men see and live the truth? Many study the Scriptures for the purpose of proving their own ideas to be correct. They change the meaning of God's Word to suit their own opinions. And thus they do also with the testimonies that He sends. They quote half a sentence, leaving out the other half, which, if quoted, would show their reasoning to be false. God has a controversy with those who wrest the Scriptures, making them conform to their preconceived ideas.--Manuscript 22, 1890.

Words Wrested and Misunderstood

It seems impossible for me to be understood by those who have had the light but have not walked in it. What I might say in private conversations would be so repeated as to make it mean exactly opposite to what it would have meant had the hearers been sanctified in mind and spirit. I am afraid to speak even to my friends; for afterwards I hear, Sister White said this, or Sister White said that.

My words are so wrested and misinterpreted that I am coming to the conclusion that the Lord desires me to keep out of large assemblies and refuse private interviews. **83** What I say is reported in such a perverted light that it is new and strange to me. It is mixed with words spoken by men to sustain their own theories.--Letter 139, 1900.

From the First a Voice in Our Midst

We call upon you to take your stand on the Lord's side, and act your part as a loyal subject of the kingdom. Acknowledge the gift that has been placed in the church for the guidance of God's people in the closing days of earth's history. From the beginning the church of God has had the gift of prophecy in her midst as a living voice to counsel, admonish, and instruct.

We have now come to the last days of the work of the third angel's message, when Satan will work with increasing power because he knows that his time is short. At the same time there will come to us through the gifts of the Holy Spirit, diversities of operations in the outpouring of the Spirit. This is the time of the latter rain.--Letter 230, 1908.

The Protective Barrier Torn Away

The enemy has made his masterly efforts to unsettle the faith of our own people in the Testimonies, and when these errors come in they claim to prove all the positions by the Bible, but they misinterpret the Scriptures. They make bold assertions, as did Elder Canright, and misapply the prophecies and the Scriptures to prove falsehood. And, after men have done their work in weakening the confidence of our churches in the Testimonies, they have torn away the barrier, that unbelief in the truth shall become widespread, and there is no voice to be lifted up to stay the force of error.

This is just as Satan designed it should be, and those who have been preparing the way for the people to pay no heed to the warnings and reproofs of the Testimonies of the Spirit of God will see that a tide of errors of all kinds will spring into life. They will claim Scripture as their evidence, and deceptions of Satan in every form will prevail.--Letter 109, 1890.

Secure From Satan's Seductive Delusions

Men **84** may get up scheme after scheme, and the enemy will seek to seduce souls from the truth, but all who believe that the Lord has spoken through Sister White, and has given her a message, will be safe from the many delusions that will come in these last days.--Letter 50, 1906.

It Is Not I Whom You Betray, but the Lord

I have tried to do my duty to you and to the Lord Jesus, whom I serve and whose cause I love. The testimonies I have borne you have in truth been presented to me by the Lord. I am sorry that you have rejected the light given. . . .

Are you betraying your Lord because in His great mercy He has shown you just where you are standing spiritually? He knows every purpose of the heart. Nothing is hid from Him. It is not I whom you are betraying. It is not I against whom you are so embittered. It is the Lord, who has given me a message to bear to you.--Letter 66, 1897.

Giving Up Faith in the Testimonies

One thing is certain: Those Seventh-day Adventists who take their stand under Satan's banner will first give up their faith in the warnings and reproofs contained in the Testimonies of God's Spirit.

The call to great consecration and holier service is being made, and will continue to be made.--Letter 156, 1903.

Two Typical Examples: Personal Testimony Gratefully Received

We returned December 12 [1892]. On the evening of the next day, Brother Faulkhead called to see me. [SEE SELECTED MESSAGES, BOOK 2, PP. 125-140, FOR THE MESSAGE GIVEN TO N. D. FAULKHEAD.] The burden of his case was upon my mind. I told him that I had a message for him and his wife, which I had several times prepared to send them, but I had felt forbidden by the Spirit of the Lord to do so. I asked him to appoint a **85** time when I could see them.

He answered. "I am glad that you did not send me a written communication; I would rather have the message from your lips; had it come in another way I do not think it would have done me any good." He then asked, "Why not give me the message now?" I said, "Can you remain to hear it?" He replied that he would do so.

I was very weary, for I had attended the closing exercises of the school that day; but I now arose from the bed where I was lying and read to him for three hours. His heart was softened, tears were in his eyes, and when I ceased reading, he said, "I accept every word; all of it belongs to me."

Much of the matter I had read related to the [Australian] Echo Office and its management from the beginning. The Lord also revealed to me Brother Faulkhead's connection with the Free Masons, and I plainly stated that unless he severed every tie that bound him to these associations he would lose his soul.

He said, "I accept the light the Lord has sent me through you. I will act upon it. I am a member of five lodges, and three other lodges are under my control. I transact all of their business. Now I shall attend no more of their meetings, and shall close my business relations with them as fast as possible."

I repeated to him the words spoken by my guide in reference to these associations. Giving a certain movement that was made by my guide, I said, "I cannot relate all that was given to me." Brother Faulkhead told Elder Daniells and others that I gave the particular sign known only by the highest order of Masons, which he had just entered. He said that I did not know the sign, and that I was not aware that I was giving the sign to him. This was special evidence to him that the Lord was working through me to save his soul.--Letter 46, 1892.

2. A Brother and the Visitor on the Campground

I took some of our brethren aside in our tent [at the Milton, Washington, camp meeting] and read the matter I had written three years ago in regard to their **86** course. They had pledged to the General Conference and taken it all back again. I read to them straight, clear, and pointed testimonies, but here was the trouble--they had felt no obligations to believe the Testimonies. Brother L had been one of the Marion Party [AN OFFSHOOT MOVEMENT THAT SPRANG UP IN MARION, IOWA, IN THE MID-1860'S.] when he lived in LaPort, Iowa, and what to do with these folks was a mystery. There was no minister or his message which they respected above their own judgment. How to bring anything to bear upon them was the question. We could only pray, and work for them as though they did believe every word of testimony, and yet be so cautious, as though they were unbelievers. . . .

Early Sabbath morning [June 7, 1884] I went into meeting and the Lord gave me a testimony directly to them, all unexpected to me. I poured it out upon them, showing them that the Lord sent His ministers with a message and the message they brought was the very means God had ordained to reach them, but they felt at liberty to pick it in pieces and make of none effect the Word of God. . . .

Sabbath, June 14. We had meetings long to be remembered. Sabbath forenoon Brother [J. N.] Loughborough talked. I talked in the afternoon. The Lord helped me. I then called them forward. Thirty-five responded. They were mostly young men and women, and old men and women. We had a most precious meeting. Some who had left the truth came back with repentance and confession. Many were starting for the first time. The Lord was there Himself. This seemed to break down the prejudice and melting testimonies were borne. We had a recess, and then began again, and the good work went on. . . .

Friday afternoon I read important matter written three years ago. This was acknowledged to be of God. The testimonies were accepted heartily and confessions made of great value to the wrongdoer.--Letter 19, 1884. **88**

Chapter 12

Literary Assistants in the Work of Ellen G. White

Introduction

MUCH OF ELLEN WHITE'S LIFE WAS SPENT PREPARING BOOKS THAT CARRIED THE MESSAGES GOD GAVE HER FOR HIS PEOPLE AND IN SOME INSTANCES TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC. THE WHITE ESTATE FILES CONTAIN RELATIVELY FEW OF HER STATEMENTS CONCERNING THE DETAILS OF THIS WORK. HOWEVER, OTHERS WORKING WITH HER

WROTE MORE FULLY. HER RELATIVELY FEW STATEMENTS, HOWEVER, DO TAKE US INTO THE VERY HEART OF HER WORK. WE PRESENT HERE SOME OF THESE STATEMENTS RELATIVE TO THE PREPARATION AND PUBLICATION OF THE TESTIMONIES FOR THE CHURCH AND CERTAIN OF HER BOOKS THAT PRESENT THE CONFLICT OF THE AGES STORY, PARTICULARLY THE GREAT CONTROVERSY AND THE DESIRE OF AGES.

SINCE THE INITIAL WRITINGS ON VARIOUS COMPONENTS OF THE CONFLICT OF THE AGES STORY WERE ENLARGED TWO OR THREE TIMES, IT IS NOT POSSIBLE TO PRESENT A PRECISE CHRONOLOGICAL SEQUENCE OF ELLEN WHITE'S WORK DEPICTING THE EVENTS OF THE AGELONG CONTROVERSY. IT SHOULD ALSO BE NOTED THAT ELLEN WHITE CONSIDERED ALL PARTS OF THIS NARRATIVE AS PART OF THE GREAT CONTROVERSY STORY, WHETHER OLD TESTAMENT, NEW TESTAMENT, OR POST-BIBLICAL HISTORY.

STATEMENTS EXPLAINING THE WORK OF HER LITERARY ASSISTANTS ARE INCLUDED, CONSTITUTING THE OPENING CHAPTER OF THIS SECTION. ANOTHER CHAPTER TRACES HER WORK IN WRITING ON THE LIFE OF CHRIST, IN WHICH SHE WAS ASSISTED BY HER NIECE IN 1876 AND BY MARIAN DAVIS IN THE 1890'S. {3SM 88.3} ELLEN WHITE'S SON WILLIAM WAS CLOSELY ASSOCIATED WITH HER IN THE PRODUCTION OF HER BOOKS AFTER 1881, THE YEAR JAMES WHITE DIED. ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS HE WROTE FROM HIS INTIMATE KNOWLEDGE OF HIS MOTHER'S WORK IN BOOK PREPARATION. SEVERAL ENLIGHTENING STATEMENTS FROM HIS PEN, AS WELL AS FROM THE PEN OF MARIAN DAVIS, APPEAR AS APPENDIX ITEMS.--WHITE TRUSTEES.

James White and Others Assisted

While my husband lived, he acted as a helper and counselor in the sending out of the messages that were given to me. We traveled extensively. Sometimes light would be given to me in the night season, sometimes in the daytime before large congregations. The instruction I received in vision was faithfully written out by me, as I had time and strength for the work. Afterward we examined the matter together, my husband correcting grammatical errors and eliminating needless repetition. Then it was carefully copied for the persons addressed, or for the printer.

As the work grew, others assisted me in the preparation of matter for publication. After my husband's death, faithful helpers joined me, who labored untiringly in the work of copying the testimonies and preparing articles for publication.

But the reports that are circulated, that any of my helpers are permitted to add matter or change the meaning of the messages I write out, are not true.-- Letter 225, 1906, published in 1913 in *Writing and Sending Out of the Testimonies for the Church*, p. 4. (Selected Messages, book 1, p. 50.)

E. G. White Feeling of Inadequacy in 1873

90 This morning I take into candid consideration my writings. My husband is too feeble to help me prepare them for the printer, therefore I shall do no more with them at present. I

am not a scholar. I cannot prepare my own writings for the press. Until I can do this I shall write no more. It is not my duty to tax others with my manuscript.--Manuscript 3, 1873. (Diary Jan. 10, 1873.)

Determined to Develop Her Literary Skills

We rested well last night. This Sabbath morning opens cloudy. My mind is coming to strange conclusions. I am thinking I must lay aside my writing I have taken so much pleasure in, and see if I cannot become a scholar. I am not a grammarian. I will try, if the Lord will help me, at forty-five years old to become a scholar in the science. God will help me. I believe He will.--Manuscript 3, 1873. (Diary Jan. 11, 1873.)

Sense of Inadequacy in 1894

Now I must leave this subject so imperfectly presented that I fear you will misinterpret that which I feel so anxious to make plain. Oh, that God would quicken the understanding, for I am but a poor writer, and cannot with pen or voice express the great and deep mysteries of God. Oh, pray for yourselves, pray for me.--Letter 67, 1894.

Refuting Reports of Changes in the Writings

My copyists you have seen. They do not change my language. It stands as I write it. . . . {3SM 90.3} My work has been in the field since 1845. Ever since then I have labored with pen and voice. Increased light has come to me as I have imparted the light given me. I have very much more light on the Old and New Testament Scriptures, which I shall present to our people.-- Letter 61a, 1900.

Final Reading of All Writings Published and Unpublished

I am still as active as ever. I am not in the least decrepit. I am able to do much work, writing and speaking as I did years ago.

I read over all that is copied, to see that everything is as it should be. I read all the book manuscript before it is sent to the printer. So you can see that my time must be 91 fully occupied. Besides writing, I am called upon to speak to the different churches and to attend important meetings. I could not do this work unless the Lord helped me.--Letter 133, 1902.

The Work of Marian Davis: Miss Davis a Faithful Assistant

Marian had been with me about twenty-five years. She was my chief worker in arranging the matter for my books. She ever appreciated the writings as sacred matter placed in her hands, and would often relate to me what comfort and blessing she received in performing this work, that it was her health and her life to do this work. She ever handled the matters placed in her hands as sacred. I shall miss her so much. Who will fill her place?--Manuscript 146, 1904.

Marian Is My Bookmaker

Marian's work is of a different order altogether. She is my bookmaker. Fanny [Bolton] [FANNY BOLTON, A NEWSPAPER WRITER, AFTER BECOMING A SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST, WAS DRAWN INTO ELLEN WHITE'S LITERARY WORK AND SOON AFTER ACCOMPANIED HER TO AUSTRALIA.] never was my bookmaker. How are my books made? Marian does not put in her claim for recognition.

She does her work in this way: She takes my articles that are published in the papers, and pastes them in blank books. She also has a copy of all the letters I write. In preparing a chapter for a book, Marian remembers that I have written something on that special point, which may make the matter more forcible. She begins to search for this, and if when she finds it, she sees that it will make the chapter more clear, she adds it.

The books are not Marian's productions, but my own, gathered from all my writings. Marian has a large field from which to draw, and her ability to arrange the matter is of great value to me. It saves my poring over a mass of matter, which I have no time to do.

So you understand that Marian is a most valuable help to me in bringing out my books. Fanny had none of **92** this work to do. Marian has read chapters to her, and Fanny has sometimes made suggestions as to the arrangement of the matter.

This is the difference between the workers. As I have stated, Fanny has been strictly forbidden to change my words for her words. As spoken by the heavenly agencies, the words are severe in their simplicity; and I try to put the thoughts into such simple language that a child can understand every word uttered. The words of someone else would not rightly represent me.

I have written thus fully in order that you may understand the matter. Fanny may claim that she has made my books, but she has not done so. This has been Marian's field, and her work is far in advance of any work Fanny has done for me.--Letter 61a, 1900.

Marian's Caution While Working on Patriarchs and Prophets in 1889

Willie [W. C. White] [WILLIAM C. WHITE, SON OF ELLEN WHITE, AT THE TIME SERVING AS ACTING PRESIDENT OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE.] is in meeting early and late, devising, planning for the doing of better and more efficient work in the cause of God. We see him only at the table.

Marian will go to him for some little matters that it seems she could settle for herself. She is nervous and hurried and he so worn he has to just shut his teeth together and hold his nerves as best he can. I have had a talk with her and told her she must settle many things herself that she has been bringing Willie.

Her mind is on every point and the connections, and his mind has been plowing through a variety of difficult subjects until his brain reels and then his mind is in no way prepared to take up these little minutiae. She must just carry some of these things that belong to her part of the work, and not bring them before him nor worry his mind with them. Sometimes

I think she will kill us both, all unnecessarily, with her little things she can just as well settle herself as to bring them before us. Every 93 little change of a word she wants us to see.--Letter 64a, 1889.

Her Faithful Services Greatly Prized

I feel very thankful for the help of Sister Marian Davis in getting out my books. She gathers materials from my diaries, from my letters, and from the articles published in the papers. I greatly prize her faithful service. She has been with me for twenty-five years, and has constantly been gaining increasing ability for the work of classifying and grouping my writings.--Letter 9, 1903.

We Worked Together, Just Worked Together

Marian, my helper, faithful and true as the compass to the pole in her work, is dying. [THIS WAS WRITTEN SEPT. 24, 1904. MARIAN DAVIS DIED OCT. 25, 1904, AND WAS BURIED AT ST. HELENA, CALIFORNIA.--COMPILERS.] . . .

I am leaving tomorrow for Battle Creek. Yet my soul is drawn to the dying girl who has served me for the last twenty-five years. We have stood side by side in the work, and in perfect harmony in that work. And when she would be gathering up the precious jots and tittles that had come in papers and books and present it to me, "Now," she would say, "there is something wanted [needed]. I cannot supply it." I would look it over, and in one moment I could trace the line right out.

We worked together, just worked together in perfect harmony all the time. She is dying. And it is devotion to the work. She takes the intensity of it as though it were a reality, and we both have entered into it with an intensity to have every paragraph that shall stand in its right place, and show its right work.--Manuscript 95, 1904.

Chapter 13

The Testimonies for the Church

1855 Vision Published in First Testimony

[THE PUBLICATION OF THE NOVEMBER 20, 1855, VISION AND THE MAY 27, 1856, VISION IN 16-PAGE PAMPHLETS TITLED "TESTIMONY FOR THE CHURCH," WAS INITIATED BY EYEWITNESSES IN THE BATTLE CREEK CHURCH, AS NOTED IN EACH PAMPHLET: "WE THE UNDERSIGNED, BEING EYEWITNESSES WHEN THE ABOVE VISION WAS GIVEN, DEEM IT HIGHLY NECESSARY THAT IT SHOULD BE PUBLISHED, FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE CHURCH, ON ACCOUNT OF THE IMPORTANT TRUTHS AND WARNINGS WHICH IT CONTAINS. SIGNED: JOS. BATES, J. H. WAGGONER, G. W. AMADON, M.E. CORNELL, J. HART, URIAH SMITH."--TESTIMONY FOR THE CHURCH [NO. 1, 1855], P. 8. "TO THE SAINTS SCATTERED ABROAD.--THE FOREGOING TESTIMONY WAS GIVEN IN THE PRESENCE OF ABOUT ONE HUNDRED BRETHERN AND SISTERS ASSEMBLED IN THE HOUSE OF PRAYER, ON WHOSE MINDS IT APPARENTLY MADE A DEEP IMPRESSION. IT HAS SINCE BEEN READ BEFORE THE CHURCH AT BATTLE CREEK, WHO GAVE THEIR UNANIMOUS VOTE IN FAVOR OF ITS PUBLICATION FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE SAINTS SCATTERED ABROAD.

SIGNED: CYRENIUS SMITH, J. P. KELLOGG."--TESTIMONY FOR THE CHURCH [NO. 2, 1856 ED.].]

November 20, 1855, while in prayer, the Spirit of the Lord came suddenly and powerfully upon me, and I was taken off in vision. I saw that the Spirit of the Lord has been dying away from the church.--Testimonies, vol. 1, p. 113.

Sent Out by the Author Without Change

I have sent out (postpaid) to brethren in different States about 150 copies of "Testimony for the Church." It can be had by addressing me at Battle Creek, Michigan. I shall be happy to hear from those who may receive it. Those who would encourage the circulation of such 95 matter can do so by assisting in its publication.--Review and Herald, Dec. 18, 1855.

Condensation of First Ten Testimony Pamphlets Republished in 1864

During the last nine years, from 1855 to 1864, I have written ten small pamphlets, entitled, Testimony for the Church, which have been published and circulated among Seventh-day Adventists. The first edition of most of these pamphlets being exhausted, and there being an increasing demand for them, it has been thought best to re-print them, as given in the following pages, omitting local and personal matters, and giving those portions only which are of practical and general interest and importance. Most of Testimony No. 4 may be found in the second volume of Spiritual Gifts, hence, it is omitted in this volume. [BY POPULAR DEMAND THE FIRST TEN WERE REPRINTED, IN 1874, IN FULL IN BOOK FORM, TOGETHER WITH A REPRINTING OF NUMBERS 11-20.--COMPILERS.]--Spiritual Gifts, vol. 4a, p. 2.

Personal Testimonies Published

Since the warning and instruction given in testimony for individual cases applied with equal force to many others who had not been specially pointed out in this manner, it seemed to be my duty to publish the personal testimonies for the benefit of the church. . . .

I know of no better way to present my views of general dangers and errors, and the duty of all who love God and keep His commandments than by giving these testimonies. Perhaps there is no more direct and forcible way of presenting what the Lord has shown me.

In a vision given me June 12, 1868, I was shown that which fully justified my course in publishing personal testimonies: "When the Lord singles out individual cases, and specifies their wrongs, others, who have not been shown in vision, frequently take it for granted that they are right, or nearly so. If one is reproved for a special wrong, brethren and sisters should carefully examine themselves to see wherein they have failed, and wherein they have been guilty of the same sin."--Testimonies, 96 vol. 5, pp. 658, 659.

Editing the Published Testimonies in 1884

Dear Brother Smith: I have today mailed you a letter, but information has been received from Battle Creek that the work upon Testimonies is not accepted. [REFERENCE IS TO THE

WORK BEING DONE IN RESPONSE TO THE GENERAL CONFERENCE SESSION ACTION OF NOVEMBER 16, WHICH READS:

"32. WHEREAS, SOME OF THE BOUND VOLUMES OF THE TESTIMONIES TO THE CHURCH, ARE OUT OF PRINT, SO THAT FULL SETS CANNOT BE OBTAINED AT THE OFFICE; AND, "WHEREAS, THERE IS A CONSTANT AND URGENT CALL FOR THE REPRINTING OF THESE VOLUMES; THEREFORE,

"RESOLVED, THAT WE RECOMMEND THEIR REPUBLICATION IN SUCH A FORM AS TO MAKE FOUR VOLUMES OF SEVEN OR EIGHT HUNDRED PAGES EACH.

"33. WHEREAS, MANY OF THESE TESTIMONIES WERE WRITTEN UNDER THE MOST UNFAVORABLE CIRCUMSTANCES, THE WRITER BEING TOO HEAVILY PRESSED WITH ANXIETY AND LABOR TO DEVOTE CRITICAL THOUGHT TO THE GRAMMATICAL PERFECTION OF THE WRITINGS, AND THEY WERE PRINTED IN SUCH HASTE AS TO ALLOW THESE IMPERFECTIONS TO PASS UNCORRECTED; AND,

"WHEREAS, WE BELIEVE THE LIGHT GIVEN BY GOD TO HIS SERVANTS IS BY THE ENLIGHTENMENT OF THE MIND, THUS IMPARTING THE THOUGHTS, AND NOT (EXCEPT IN RARE CASES) THE VERY WORDS IN WHICH THE IDEAS SHOULD BE EXPRESSED; THEREFORE, "RESOLVED, THAT IN THE REPUBLICATION OF THESE VOLUMES, SUCH VERBAL CHANGES BE MADE AS TO REMOVE THE ABOVE-NAMED IMPERFECTIONS, AS FAR AS POSSIBLE, WITHOUT IN ANY MEASURE CHANGING THE THOUGHT; AND FURTHER,

"34. RESOLVED, THAT THIS BODY APPOINT A COMMITTEE OF FIVE TO TAKE CHARGE OF THE REPUBLICATION OF THESE VOLUMES ACCORDING TO THE ABOVE PREAMBLES AND RESOLUTIONS."--REVIEW AND HERALD, NOV. 27, 1883

"THE COMMITTEE OF FIVE TO TAKE CHARGE OF THE REPUBLICATION OF THE TESTIMONIES PROVIDED FOR IN THE THIRTY-FOURTH RESOLUTION WAS ANNOUNCED AS FOLLOWS, THE CHAIR HAVING BEEN EMPOWERED TO SELECT FOUR PERSONS BESIDES HIMSELF FOR THIS PURPOSE: W. C. WHITE, URIAH SMITH, J. H. WAGGONER, S. N. HASKELL, GEORGE I. BUTLER."--IBID.

THE WORK WAS SUBMITTED TO ELLEN WHITE AND WAS APPROVED BY HER. THE LETTER TO ELDER SMITH INTIMATES THAT SHE WAS MORE READY TO ACCEPT THE IMPROVEMENTS THAN SOME IN BATTLE CREEK. THE PRODUCT WAS OUR PRESENT TESTIMONIES, VOLS. 1-4, PUBLISHED IN 1885.--COMPILERS.]

I wish to state some matters, which you can do what you please with. These statements you have heard me make before--that I was shown years ago that we should not delay publishing the important light given me because I could not prepare the matter perfectly. My husband was at times very sick, unable to give me the help that I should have had and that he could have given me had he been in health. On this account I delayed putting before the people that which has been given me in vision.

But I was shown that I should present before the **97** people in the best manner possible the light received; then as I received greater light, and as I used the talent God had given me, I should have increased ability to use in writing and in speaking. I was to improve everything, as far as possible bringing it to perfection, that it might be accepted by intelligent minds. {3SM 96.3}

As far as possible every defect should be removed from all our publications. As the truth should unfold and become widespread, every care should be exercised to perfect the works published.

I saw in regard to Brother Andrews' History of the Sabbath, that he delayed the work too long. Other erroneous works were taking the field and blocking the way, so that minds would be prejudiced by the opposing elements. I saw that thus much would be lost. After the first edition was exhausted, then he could make improvements; but he was seeking too hard to arrive at perfection. This delay was not as God would have it.

Ellen G. White Desired Language Correctly Used

Now, Brother Smith, I have been making a careful, critical examination of the work that has been done on the Testimonies, and I see a few things that I think should be corrected in the matter brought before you and others at the General Conference [November, 1883]. But as I examine the matter more carefully I see less and less that is objectionable. Where the language used is not the best, I want it made correct and grammatical, as I believe it should be in every case where it can be without destroying the sense. This work is delayed, which does not please me. . . .

My mind has been exercised upon the question of the Testimonies that have been revised. We have looked them over more critically. I cannot see the matter as my brethren see it. I think the changes will improve the book. If our enemies handle it, let them do so. . . .

I think that anything that shall go forth will be criticized, twisted, turned, and boggled, but we are to go forward with a clear conscience, doing what we can **98** and leaving the result with God. We must not be long in delaying the work.

Now, my brethren, what do you propose to do? I do not want this work dragging along any longer. I want something done, and done now.--Letter 11, 1884. (Written from Healdsburg, California, Feb. 19, 1884.)

The Work of E. G. White Selecting Matter for the Testimonies

I must select the most important matters for the Testimony (vol. 6) and then look over everything prepared for it, and be my own critic; for I would not be willing to have some things which are all truth to be published; because I fear that some would take advantage of them to hurt others.

After the matter for the Testimony is prepared, every article must be read by me. I have to read them myself; for the sound of the voice in reading or singing is almost unendurable to me.

I try to bring out general principles, and if I see a sentence which I fear would give someone excuse to injure someone else, I feel at perfect liberty to keep back the sentence, even though it is all perfectly true.--Letter 32, 1901.

Letters to Help Others; Anticipated Use of Letters

I am endeavoring by the help of God to write letters that will be a help not merely to those to whom they are addressed, but to many others who need them.--Letter 79, 1905.

Chapter 14

Initial Steps in Writing and Publishing The Great Controversy Story

The 1858 Great Controversy Vision; the Vision March 14, 1858

In this vision at Lovett's Grove, [ELDER AND MRS. WHITE, WHO RESIDED IN BATTLE CREEK, MICHIGAN, WERE HOLDING MEETINGS WITH THE BELIEVERS AT LOVETT'S GROVE, OHIO. THE VISION HERE REFERRED TO WAS GIVEN TO ELLEN WHITE WHILE ATTENDING A FUNERAL SERVICE CONDUCTED BY HER HUSBAND ON SUNDAY AFTERNOON, MARCH 14, 1858.--COMPILERS.] most of the matter of the great controversy which I had seen ten years before, was repeated, and I was shown that I must write it out. That I should have to contend with the powers of darkness, for Satan would make strong efforts to hinder me, but angels of God would not leave me in the conflict, that in God must I put my trust.--Spiritual Gifts, vol. 2, p. 270. (See Life Sketches, p. 162.)

Satan's Attack

Monday we commenced our journey homeward. . . . While riding in the cars we arranged our plans for writing and publishing the book called the Great Controversy, immediately on our return home. I was then as well as usual. On the arrival of the train at Jackson, we went to Bro. Palmer's. We had been in the house but a short time, when, as I was conversing with Sr. P., my tongue refused to utter what I wished to say, and seemed large and numb. A strange, cold **100** sensation struck my heart, passed over my head, and down my right side. For a while I was insensible; but was aroused by the voice of earnest prayer. I tried to use my left arm and limb, but they were perfectly useless. For a short time I did not expect to live.--Ibid., p. 271.

Writing the Controversy Story

For several weeks I could not feel the pressure of the hand, nor the coldest water poured upon my head. In rising to walk, I often staggered, and sometimes fell to the floor. In this condition I commenced to write the Great Controversy. I could write at first but one page a day, then rest three; but as I progressed, my strength increased. The numbness in my head did not seem to becloud my mind, and before I closed that work Spiritual Gifts, vol. 1 [NOTICE OF THE PUBLICATION OF THE BOOK, SPIRITUAL GIFTS--THE GREAT CONTROVERSY BETWEEN CHRIST AND HIS ANGELS AND SATAN AND HIS ANGELS, WITH A LISTING OF ITS CHAPTERS, WAS GIVEN BY JAMES WHITE IN THE REVIEW AND HERALD OF SEPTEMBER 9, 1858, IN TWO LAST PAGE NOTES:

"SPIRITUAL GIFTS"

"THIS IS A WORK OF 224 PAGES WRITTEN BY MRS. WHITE, WITH AN INTRODUCTORY ARTICLE ON THE PERPETUITY OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS, BY BRO. R. F. COTTRELL. PRICE 50 CENTS. "SPIRITUAL GIFTS, OR THE GREAT CONTROVERSY, HAS NOW BEEN SENT TO ALL WHO HAVE ORDERED. IF ANY DO NOT RECEIVE IT IN DUE TIME, LET NOTICE BE GIVEN."]

THE BOOK WAS EAGERLY SECURED AND RAN THROUGH TWO OR MORE PRINTINGS.--COMPILERS.], the effect of the shock had entirely left me.--Ibid., p. 272.

Shown Satan's Hindering Tactics

At the time of the conference at Battle Creek, June, 1858, . . . I was taken off in vision. In that vision I was shown that in the sudden attack at Jackson, Satan designed to take my life to hinder the work I was about to write; but angels of God were sent to my rescue, to raise me above the effects of Satan's attack. I saw, among other things, that I should be blessed with better health than before the attack at Jackson.--Ibid.

Spiritual Gifts, Volumes III and IV: Writing Old Testament History 1863-1864

After we returned from the East [December 21, 1863], I **101** commenced to write [Spiritual Gifts] Volume III, expecting to have a book of a size to bind in with the testimonies which help compose [Spiritual Gifts] Volume IV. As I wrote, the matter opened before me and I saw it was impossible to get all I had to write [on Old Testament history] in as few pages as I at first designed. The matter opened and Volume III was full [304 pages].

Then I commenced on Volume IV, but before I had my work finished, while preparing the health matter for the printers, I was called to go to Monterey. We went, and could not finish the work there as soon as we expected. I was obliged to return to finish the matter for the printers. . . .

I had written almost constantly for above one year. I generally commenced writing at seven in the morning and continued until seven at night, and then left writing to read proof sheets. [BOOK PUBLISHING AT THIS TIME WAS DONE SOMEWHAT IN PIECEMEAL. WHILE THE WRITING WAS IN PROGRESS, THE TYPE WAS HAND SET AND ACTUAL PRINTING MIGHT COMMENCE BEFORE THE LAST OF THE MANUSCRIPT WAS COMPLETED. THUS WRITING AND READING PROOF SHEETS COULD RUN AT THE SAME TIME.--COMPILERS.] -Manuscript 7, 1867.

Author's Preface Recognized Vision Source

In presenting this, my third little volume to the public, I am comforted with the conviction that the Lord has made me His humble instrument in shedding some rays of precious light upon the past. Sacred history, relating to holy men of old, is brief. . . .

Since the great facts of faith, connected with the history of holy men of old, have been opened to me in vision; also, the important fact that God has nowhere lightly regarded the sin of the apostate, I have been more than ever convinced that ignorance as to these facts, and the wily advantage taken of this ignorance by some who know better, are the grand bulwarks of infidelity. If what I have written upon these points shall help any mind, let God be praised.

When I commenced writing, I hope to bring all into this volume, but am obliged to close the history of **102** the Hebrews, take up the cases of Saul, David, Solomon, and others, and treat upon the subject of health, in another volume. [SPIRITUAL GIFTS, VOLUME 4, WAS PUBLISHED IN 1864. ENLARGEMENTS OF THIS INITIAL PRESENTATION APPEARED IN THE SPIRIT OF PROPHECY, VOL. 1 (1870), AND PATRIARCHS AND PROPHETS (1890).--COMPILERS.]--Spiritual Gifts, vol. 3, pp. 5, 6 (E.G.W. Preface).

Chapter 15 – A Running Account of Ellen G. White's Experience in Writing on the Life of Christ in 1876

[PUBLISHED AS THE SPIRIT OF PROPHECY, VOL. 2, DEALING WITH THE LIFE OF CHRIST FROM HIS BIRTH TO THE TRIUMPHAL ENTRY INTO JERUSALEM.]

March 25, 1876

Mary Clough [ELLEN G. WHITE'S NIECE, DAUGHTER OF HER SISTER CAROLINE. AN EARNEST CHRISTIAN GIRL, BUT NOT HERSELF A SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST, MARY SERVED FOR A TIME AS MRS. WHITE'S LITERARY ASSISTANT, AND DURING THE TRAVELS OF ELDER AND MRS. WHITE, AS A PUBLICITY AGENT, WRITING ARTICLES FOR LOCAL NEWSPAPERS PARTICULARLY ABOUT MRS. WHITE'S SERMONS AND TEMPERANCE LECTURES.--COMPILERS.] and I will do all we can to forward the work of my writings. I cannot see any light shining to Michigan for me. [ON MARCH 22, JAMES WHITE LEFT OAKLAND, WHERE THEY HAD JUST BUILT A HOME, FOR A SPECIAL SESSION OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE AT BATTLE CREEK, MICHIGAN. HE AND HIS WIFE WERE SEPARATED FOR SIXTY-SIX DAYS, UNTIL THEY MET AGAIN ON MAY 27 AT THE KANSAS CAMP MEETING. DURING THIS PERIOD SHE WROTE HER HUSBAND ALMOST EVERY DAY AND OCCASIONALLY TO OTHERS.--COMPILERS.] This year I feel that my work is writing. I must be secluded, stay right here, and I must not let inclination or persuasion of others shake my resolution to keep closely to my work until it is done. God will help me if I trust in Him.--Letter 63, 1876. (To James White, March 25, 1876.)

April 4

We have been having company about every day for some days back, but I try to stick to my writing and do as much each day as I dare. I cannot write but one half of a day each day. . . .

104

Mary [is] in the office, I upstairs writing. . . .

I have had much freedom in prayer and sweet communion with God in my waking hours at night and early in the morning. I am gaining some strength, but find that any taxation affects me seriously, so that it takes time to recover from it. My trust [is] in God. I have confidence that He will help me in my efforts to get out the truth and light He has given me to [give to] His people.--Letter 3, 1876.

April 7

The precious subjects open to my mind well. I trust in God and He helps me to write. I am some twenty-four pages ahead of Mary. she does well with my copy. It will take a clear sense of duty to call me from this work to camp meetings. I mean to finish my writings on one book, at any rate, before I go anywhere. . . . The East will not see me for one year unless I feel that God calls me to go. He has given me my work. I will do it, if I can be left free.--Letter 4, 1876.

April 8

I have liberty in writing and I plead with God daily for counsel and that I may be imbued with His Spirit. I then believe that I shall have help and strength and grace to do the will of God. . . .

I never had such an opportunity to write in my life, and I mean to make the most of it. . . .

How will it do to read my manuscript to Elders [J. H.] Waggoner and [J. N.] Loughborough? If there is any wording of doctrinal points not so clear as might be, he might discern it (W. [ELDER J. H. WAGGONER WHEN HE BECAME A SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST WAS A NEWSPAPER EDITOR AND PUBLISHER.--COMPILERS] I mean).--Letter 4a, 1876.

April 8

My husband writes that an appeal is to be sent to me from the [General] Conference [session], but I shall not be moved from that which I believe to be my duty at this time. I have a special work at this time to write out the things which the Lord has shown me. . . .

I have a work to do which has been a great burden to my soul. How great, no one but the Lord knows.

Again, I want time to have my mind calm and **105** composed. I want to have time to meditate and pray while engaged in this work. I do not want to be wearied myself or be closely connected with our people who will divert my mind. This is a great work, and I feel like crying to God every day for His Spirit to help me to do this work all right.--Letter 59, 1876. (To Lucinda Hall, April 8, 1876.)

April 14

It seems to me my writings are important, and I [am] so feeble, so unable to do the work with justice. I have pleaded with God to be imbued with His Holy Spirit, to be connected

with heaven, that this work may be done right. I can never do this work without the special blessing of God.--Letter 7, 1876, p. 2.

April 16

I have written quite a number of pages today. Mary is hard after me. She gets so enthusiastic over some subjects, she brings in the manuscript after she has copied it, to read it to me. She showed me today quite a heavy pile of manuscripts she had prepared. [ALL WORK WAS AT THIS TIME IN HANDWRITTEN SHEETS. TYPEWRITERS DID NOT COME INTO ELLEN WHITE'S WORK UNTIL 1883, TWO YEARS AFTER HER HUSBAND'S DEATH.--COMPILERS]. . .

I am feeling very free and peaceful. I feel the precious love of Christ in my heart. It humbles me in my own sight, while Jesus is exalted before me. Oh, how I do long for that social and mysterious connection with Jesus that elevates us above the temporal things of life. It is my anxiety to be right with God, to have His Spirit continually witnessing with me that I am indeed a child of God.--Letter 8, 1876.

April 18

We went to the city [San Francisco] Sunday night. I spoke to quite a large congregation of outsiders with acceptance, taking up the subject of the loaves and fishes with which Jesus, by His miraculous power, fed about ten thousand people . . . that were continually collecting, after the Saviour had blessed the small portion of food; Christ walking on the sea, and the Jews requiring a sign that He was the Son of God. The neighbor next to the church near the public garden was **106** there. Cragg, I believe his name is. They all listened with wide-open eyes and some open mouths. . .

I would feel pleased to meet my brethren and sisters in camp meeting. It is just such work as I enjoy. Much better than the confinement of writing. But this will break up my work and defeat the plans of getting out my books, for I cannot do both--travel and write. Now seems to be my golden opportunity. Mary is with me, the best copyist I can ever have. Another such chance may never be mine.--Letter 9, 1876.

April 21

I have just completed quite a lengthy article on several miracles; makes fifty pages. We have prepared about 150 pages since you left. We feel the best of satisfaction in what we have prepared.--Letter 12, 1876.

April 24

Mary has just been reading to me two articles--one on the loaves and fishes, Christ walking on the water, and stating to His hearers He was the Bread of life, which caused some of His disciples to turn from Him. This takes fifty pages and comprises many subjects. I do think it the most precious matter I have ever written. Mary is just as enthusiastic over it. She thinks it is of the highest value. I am perfectly satisfied with it.

The other article was upon Christ going through the cornfield, plucking the ears of corn, and healing the withered hand--twelve pages. If I can, with Mary's help, get out these subjects of such intense interest, I could say, "Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace." These writings are all I can see now. . . .

My heart and mind are in this work, and the Lord will sustain me in doing this work. I believe the Lord will give me health. I have asked Him, and He will answer my prayer.

I love the Lord. I love His cause. I love His people. I feel great peace and calmness of mind. There seems to be nothing to confuse and distract my mind, and with so much hard thinking, my mind could not be perplexed with anything without being overtaxed.--Letter 13, 1876. 107

April 25

I cannot merely portion my writing to one half the day, as some of the time my head troubles me, and then I have to rest, lie down, stop thinking, and take my time for writing when I can do so comfortably. I cannot rush business. This work must be done carefully, slowly, and accurately. The subjects we have prepared are well gotten up. They please me.--Letter 14, 1876. {3SM 107.1} April 27.--I have written fifteen pages today. Mary Clough is hard after me. She has copied fifteen pages today--a good, large day's work. . . . Never have I had such an opportunity in my life before. I will improve it. We have written about 200 pages since you left, all copied, ready for printers. . . .

I feel that I am less than nothing, but Jesus is my all--my righteousness, and my wisdom, and my strength.--Letter 16a, 1876.

May 5

I have been writing more than usual, which was too much for me. I cannot and must not write more than half a day, but I continue to step over the bounds and pay for it. My mind is on my subjects day and night. I have strong confidence in prayer. The Lord hears me and I believe in His salvation. In His strength I trust. In His strength I shall complete my writings. I cling firmly to His hand with unwavering confidence. . . .

I have important subjects coming in next paper [Signs of the Times] on Jeremiah. My mind was urged to this by the Spirit of God. The view I had sixteen years ago was forcefully impressed on my mind. I saw that important matter was to be seen applicable to the people of God. This was in reference to testimony God had given me to bear in reproving wrong.--Letter 21, 1876.

May 11

If I get my writings [Spirit of Prophecy, vol. 2] all in manuscript, my part of the work is done and I shall be relieved.--Letter 24, 1876.

October 19

We have decided to have the printers [at the Review and Herald office in Battle Creek] go on my book and not transport these books across the plains again. Part of the book is here already printed. We shall **108** not have them stereotyped, [PAGES WOULD NOT BE MADE INTO PRINTING PLATES, BUT LEFT IN STANDING TYPE, ALLOWING CHANGES TO BE MADE IF DESIRED.--COMPILERS.] because we shall not wait to have matters of my book so very, very exact, but get out this first edition and get it in market. Then we can take time to get out a more perfect edition on Pacific Coast and have [it] stereotyped. Then your father's and my life will be written and printed in the Pacific Printing Office. But we have all used our best judgment and think we had better remain here [Battle Creek] till December and complete this edition.--Letter 45, 1876.

October 26

We are in the very worst drive and hurry getting off my volume two, Spirit of Prophecy. Three new forms are already printed. If we remain here [Battle Creek] four weeks longer, we shall have the book completed and removed from my mind a great burden of care. [THE BOOK ADVERTISED.--THE SECOND VOLUME OF THE SPIRIT OF PROPHECY, BY MRS. E. G. WHITE, WILL BE READY IN A FEW DAYS. THIS WORK IS A THRILLING DESCRIPTION OF THE FIRST ADVENT, LIFE, TEACHINGS, AND MIRACLES OF CHRIST, AND WILL BE REGARDED BY THE FRIENDS OF MRS. W. AS A BOOK OF ALMOST PRICELESS VALUE. IT CAN BE FURNISHED ONLY BY MAIL UNTIL NEW YEAR'S, AND AFTER THAT AT ONE-FOURTH DISCOUNT FOR CASH WITH ALL ORDERS. PRICE, POSTAGE PAID, \$1. J.W.--REVIEW AND HERALD, NOV. 9, 1876

COMMENDED BY URIAH SMITH, THE EDITOR OF THE REVIEW AND HERALD--WE ARE PREPARED TO SPEAK OF THIS VOLUME, NOW JUST ISSUED, AS THE MOST REMARKABLE VOLUME THAT HAS EVER ISSUED FROM THIS OFFICE. IT COVERS THAT PORTION OF THE GREAT CONTROVERSY BETWEEN CHRIST AND SATAN, WHICH IS INCLUDED IN THE LIFE AND MISSION, TEACHINGS AND MIRACLES, OF CHRIST HERE UPON THE EARTH. MANY HAVE ENDEAVORED TO WRITE THE LIFE OF CHRIST; BUT THEIR WORK, AS COMPARED WITH THIS, SEEMS TO BE ONLY LIKE THE OUTER GARMENTS TO THE BODY. HERE WE HAVE, SO TO SPEAK, AN INTERIOR VIEW OF THE WONDERFUL WORK OF GOD DURING THIS TIME. AND IF THE READER HAS A HEART THAT CAN BE IMPRESSED, FEELINGS THAT CAN BE STIRRED, AN IMAGINATION THAT CAN RESPOND TO THE MOST VIVID PORTRAITURE OF THE MOST THRILLING SCENES, AND A SPIRIT TO DRINK IN LESSONS OF PURITY, FAITH, AND LOVE FROM CHRIST'S DIVINE EXAMPLE, HE WILL FIND IN THIS VOLUME THAT WHICH WILL CALL INTO LIVELIEST PLAY ALL THESE FACULTIES. BUT THE BEST OF ALL IS THE LASTING IMPRESSION IT MUST MAKE FOR GOOD UPON ALL WHO READ. IT SHOULD HAVE AN UNLIMITED CIRCULATION. POST-PAID, BY MAIL, AS PER PREVIOUS NOTICES, \$1. U.S.--REVIEW AND HERALD, NOV. 30, 1876.] --Letter 46, 1876. (To. W. C. White and wife, Oct. 26, 1876.)

Chapter 16

Expanding the Great Controversy Presentation

Preparing Manuscript for Spirit of Prophecy, Volume 4, [WHILE IN ELLEN WHITE'S MIND ALL MATERIALS COMPRISING THE AGELONG CONFLICT WERE A PART OF THE GREAT

CONTROVERSY STORY, THIS CHAPTERFO CUSES ON THE POST-BIBLICAL PART OF THE NARRATION AS FOUND IN SPIRIT OF PROPHECY, VOL. 4, PUBLISHED IN 1884, AND THE GREAT CONTROVERSY, WHICH APPEARED IN 1888. THE ENLARGED WRITING ON THE LIFE OF CHRIST FOR THE DESIRE OF AGES FOLLOWS IN THE NEXT CHAPTER.--COMPILERS.] the Forerunner of The Great Controversy.

Intensity of Feeling While Writing (February 19, 1884)

I write from fifteen to twenty pages each day. It is now eleven o'clock and I have written fourteen pages of manuscript for Volume Four and seven pages of letters to different ones besides this. I feel continually grateful to God for His merciful kindness. . . .

As I write upon my book I feel intensely moved. I want to get it out as soon as possible, for our people need it so much. I shall complete it next month if the Lord gives me health as He has done. I have been unable to sleep nights, thinking of the important things to take place. Three hours' sleep, and sometimes five, is the most I get. My mind is stirred so deeply I cannot rest. Write, write, write, I feel that I must, and not delay.

Great things are before us, and we want to call the people from their indifference, to get ready for that day. Things that are eternal crowd upon my vision day and **110** night. The things that are temporal fade from my sight. We are not now to cast away our confidence, but to have firm assurance, firmer than ever before. Hitherto hath the Lord helped us, and He will help us to the end. We will look to the monumental pillars, reminders of what the Lord hath done for us, to comfort and to save us from the hand of the destroyer.--Letter 11a, 1884.

History Opened Up in Scenic Visions From Time to Time

Through the illumination of the Holy Spirit, the scenes of the long-continued conflict between good and evil have been opened to the writer of these pages. From time to time I have been permitted to behold the working, in different ages, of the great controversy between Christ, the Prince of life, the Author of our salvation, and Satan, the prince of evil, the author of sin, the first transgressor of God's holy law.--The Great Controversy, Introduction, p. x.

Visions of the Past and Future While Writing

When I am using my pen, wonderful representations are given me of past, present, and future.--Letter 86, 1906.

Reformation History Presented in Vision

The banner of the ruler of the synagogue of Satan was lifted high, and error apparently marched in triumph, and the reformers, through the grace given them of God, waged a successful warfare against the hosts of darkness. Events in the history of the reformers have been presented before me. I know that the Lord Jesus and His angels have with intense interest watched the battle against the power of Satan, who combined his hosts with evil men, for the purpose of extinguishing the divine light, the fire of God's kingdom.

They suffered for Christ's sake scorn, derision, and the hatred of men who knew not God. They were maligned and persecuted even unto death, because they would not renounce their faith.-- Letter 48, 1894.

Shown Ellen White Years Before Visiting Europe in 1885-1887

Years ago, the work of the first message in these countries [Sweden and other northern **111** countries] was presented before me, and I was shown circumstances similar to those related above [Swedish child-preaching].--Ellen G. White, in Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of Seventh-day Adventists (Basel, 1886), p. 108.

Chapter on Time of Trouble

We have just read the matter in regard to the time of trouble. Brother Smith thinks that chapter by no means should be left out of Volume 4. He says there is not a sentence in it that is not essentially needed. This seemed to make a very deep impression upon his mind and I thought I would write to you in reference to this matter. I have read it and it has just a thrilling power with it. I see nothing that will exclude it from the book for general sale among unbelievers. [THE BOOK WAS PUBLISHED BY THE PACIFIC PRESS IN LATE SEPTEMBER, 1884, AND GAINED FAVORABLE NOTICE: "THE GREAT CONTROVERSY, VOL. IV: THIS VOLUME, SO LONG LOOKED FOR, IS NOW OUT. AND WE ARE CONFIDENT THAT IT WILL MORE THAN MEET THE EXPECTATIONS OF THOSE WHO HAVE ANXIOUSLY WAITED FOR IT. WE JUDGE FROM OUR OWN READING OF IT; WE FOUND THE CONTENTS OF DEEPER INTEREST THAN OUR IMAGINATION COULD HAVE REACHED."--SIGNS OF THE TIMES, OCT. 2, 1884,--COMPILERS.] --Letter 59, 1884.

The 1888 Edition of The Great Controversy

Work Begins on the Enlargement of The Great Controversy.--Basel, Switzerland, June 11, 1886. I think you will want to hear some particulars in regard to our family. We now number ten. W.C.W. [White] and Mary and Ella are well. Sarah McEnterfer is well, and just as busy as she can be taking letters by dictation and writing them out on the calligraph [typewriter]. Marian's [Davis] health is about as it usually is. She is at work on volume 4, "Great Controversy."--Manuscript 20, 1886.

Bidden to Portray Scenes of the Past and the Future

As the Spirit of God has opened to my mind the great truths of the past and the future, I have been bidden to make known to others that which has thus been revealed--to trace the history of the controversy in past ages, and especially so to present it as to shed a light **112** on the fast-approaching struggle of the future. In pursuance of this purpose, I have endeavored to select and group together events in the history of the church in such a manner as to trace the unfolding of the great testing truths that at different periods have been given to the world, that have excited the wrath of Satan, and the enmity of a world-loving church, and that have been maintained by the witness of those who "loved not their lives unto the death."--The Great Controversy, Introduction, p. xi.

Scenes Presented Anew While Writing

While writing the manuscript of "Great Controversy," I was often conscious of the presence of the angels of God. And many times the scenes about which I was writing were presented to me anew in visions of the night, so that they were fresh and vivid in my mind.--Letter 56, 1911.

Vivid Scenes of Christ's Second Advent

The sky opened and shut, and was in commotion. The mountains shook like a reed in the wind, and cast out ragged rocks all around. The sea boiled like a pot, and cast out stones upon the ground. And as God spoke the day and hour of Jesus' coming, and delivered the everlasting covenant to His people, He spoke one sentence and then paused while the words were rolling through the earth. . . .

I have not the slightest knowledge as to the time spoken by the voice of God. I heard the hour proclaimed, but had no remembrance of that hour after I came out of vision. Scenes of such thrilling, solemn interest passed before me as no language is adequate to describe. It was all a living reality to me, for close upon this scene appeared the great white cloud, upon which was seated the Son of man.--Letter 38, 1888. (Published in Selected Messages, book 1, pp. 75, 76.)

Reading the Page Proofs--Last Work on the Book

I have just read the manuscript of the three last chapters. I cannot see but that it is all right and of the most intense and thrilling interest. I am glad you have **113** sent these pages and I want the book--the very first one from the press--sent to me. . . .

Last Sabbath was an impressive, solemn time. I spoke upon some of the very scenes described in these last chapters and there was deep feeling in the meeting.--Letter 57, 1884.

Steps Taken to Make It the Best Possible

In the preparation of this book, competent workers were employed and much money was invested in order that the volume might come before the world in the best style possible. . . .

The Lord impressed me to write this book, in order that without delay it might be circulated in every part of the world, because the warnings it contains are necessary for preparing a people to stand in the day of the Lord.--Manuscript 24, 1891.

Experience of Ellen White While Writing The Great Controversy

I was moved by the Spirit of the Lord to write that book, and while working upon it, I felt a great burden upon my soul. I knew that time was short, that the scenes which are soon to crowd upon us would at the last come very suddenly and swiftly, as represented in the words of Scripture: "The day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night" (1 Thessalonians 5:2).

The Lord has set before me matters which are of urgent importance for the present time, and which reach into the future. The words have been spoken in a charge to me, "Write in a book the things which thou hast seen and heard, and let it go to all people; for the time is at hand when past history will be repeated." I have been aroused at one, two, or three o'clock in the morning, with some point forcibly impressed upon my mind, as if spoken by the voice of God. I was shown that many of our own people were asleep in their sins, and although they claimed to be Christians, they would perish unless they were converted.

The solemn impressions made upon my mind as the truth was laid out in clear lines before me, I tried to bring before others, that each might feel the necessity of **114** having a religious experience for himself, of having a knowledge of the Saviour for himself, of seeking repentance, faith, love, hope, and holiness for himself.

I was assured that there was no time to lose. The appeals and warnings must be given; our churches must be aroused, must be instructed, that they may give the warning to all whom they can possibly reach, declaring that the sword is coming, that the Lord's anger upon a profligate world will not long be deferred. I was shown that many would listen to the warning. Their minds would be prepared to discern the very things that it pointed out to them.

I was shown that much of my time had been occupied in speaking to the people, when it was more essential that I should devote myself to writing out the important matters for Volume IV, [TO ELLEN WHITE THE 1888 EDITION OF THE GREAT CONTROVERSY WAS STILL VOLUME IV IN THE PRESENTATION OF THE GREAT CONTROVERSY STORY, AND WAS OFTEN REFERRED TO BY HER AS SUCH. --COMPILERS.] that the warning must go where the living messenger could not go, and that it would call the attention of many to the important events to occur in the closing scenes of this world's history.

As the condition of the church and the world was opened before me, and I beheld the fearful scenes that lie just before us, I was alarmed at the outlook; and night after night, while all in the house were sleeping, I wrote out the things given me of God. I was shown the heresies which are to arise, the delusions that will prevail, the miracle-working power of Satan--the false Christs that will appear--that will deceive the greater part even of the religious world, and that would, if it were possible, draw away even the elect.

Is this work of the Lord? I know that it is, and our people also profess to believe it. The warning and instruction of this book are needed by all who profess to believe the present truth.--Letter 1, 1890.

Chapter 17

The Experience of E. G. White in Preparing The Desire of Ages

Notations From Letters and Diaries July 15, 1892

This week I have been enabled to commence writing on the life of Christ. Oh, how inefficient, how incapable I am of expressing the things that burn in my soul in reference to the mission of Christ! I have hardly dared to enter upon the work. There is so much to it all.

And what shall I say, and what shall I leave unsaid? I lie awake nights pleading with the Lord for the Holy Spirit to come upon me, to abide upon me. . . .

I walk with trembling before God. I know not how to speak or trace with pen the large subject of the atoning sacrifice. I know not how to present subjects in the living power in which they stand before me. I tremble for fear lest I shall belittle the great plan of salvation by cheap words. I bow my soul in awe and reverence before God and say, "Who is sufficient for these things?"--Letter 40, 1892.

May 23, 1893

It is cloudy and raining this morning. I have been writing upon the life of Christ since four o'clock. Oh, that the Holy Spirit may rest and abide upon me, that my pen may trace the words which will communicate to others the light which the Lord has been pleased in His great mercy and love to give to **116** me.--Manuscript 80, 1893.

June 15, 1893

I am anxious to get out the life of Christ. Marian [Davis] specifies chapters and subjects for me to write upon that I do not see really need to be written upon. I may see more light in them. These I shall not enter upon without the Lord's Spirit seems to lead me. The building [of] a tower, the war of kings, these things do not burden my mind, but the subjects of the life of Christ, His character representing the Father, the parables essential for us all to understand and practice the lessons contained in them, I shall dwell upon.--Letter 131, 1893.

July 2, 1893

I write some every day on the life of Christ. One chapter sets my mind fresh upon other subjects so that I have several scratch books that I am writing upon. I hardly dare send manuscript by young Linden, fearing it may get lost, and I wish to give more time to some subjects.--Letter 132, 1893. (Written from New Zealand.)

July 7, 1893

I have written you a little bit every mail we heard of that went to . . . [America], and when Brother Linden went, sent you a letter and manuscript . . . some on the life of Christ. . . . That on life of Christ can be used for articles for the paper.--Letter 133, 1893.

Late 1894

It is decided in council I shall write on the life of Christ; but how any better than in the past? Questions and the true condition of things here and there are urged upon me. . . .

I have done scarcely anything on the life of Christ, and have been obliged to often bring Marian to my help, irrespective of the work on the life of Christ which she has to do under great difficulties, gathering from all my writings a little here and a little there, to arrange as best she can. But she is in good working order, if I could only feel free to give my whole attention to the work. She has her mind educated and trained for the work; and now I

think, as I have thought a few hundred times, I shall be able after this mail [American] closes to take the life of **117** Christ and go ahead with it, if the Lord will.--Letter 55, 1894.

October 25, 1894

Marian is working at the greatest disadvantage. I find but little time in which to write on the life of Christ. I am continually receiving letters that demand an answer, and I dare not neglect important matters that are brought to my notice. Then there are churches to visit, private testimonies to write, and many other things to be attended to that tax me and consume my time. Marian greedily grasps every letter I write to others in order to find sentences that she can use in the life of Christ. She has been collecting everything that has a bearing on Christ's lessons to His disciples, from all possible sources. After the camp meeting is ended, which is a very important meeting, I shall locate myself in some place where I can give myself to the work of writing on the life of Christ. . . .

There is much to be done in the churches, and I cannot act my part in keeping up the interest and do the other work that is necessary for me to do without becoming so weary that I cannot devote strength to writing on the life of Christ. I am much perplexed as to what is my duty. . . .

I have about decided to . . . devote all my time to writing for the books that ought to be prepared without further delay. I would like to write on the life of Christ, on Christian Temperance [Ministry of Healing], and prepare Testimony No. 34 [volume 6] for it is very much needed. I will have to stop writing so much for the papers, and let the Review and Herald, the Signs of the Times, and all other periodicals go without articles from my pen for this year.

All articles that appear under my signature are fresh, new writings from my pen. I am sorry that I have not more literary help. I need this kind of help very much. Fanny [Bolton] could help me a great deal on the book work if she had not so many articles to prepare for the papers, and so many letters and testimonies to edit to meet the demands of my correspondence and the needs
118 of the people.

It is of no use to expect anything from Marian [Davis] until the life of Christ is completed. I wish I could procure another intelligent worker who could be trusted to prepare matter for the press. Such a worker would be of great value to me. But the question is, Where shall I find such an one? I am brain weary much of the time. I write many pages before breakfast. I rise in the morning at two, three, and four o'clock. . . .

You know that my whole theme both in the pulpit and in private, by voice and pen, is the life of Christ. Hitherto nearly all that I have written on this theme has been written during the hours when others are sleeping.--Letter 41, 1895.

June 6, 1896

That which is holy and elevated in heavenly things, I scarcely dare represent. Often I lay down my pen and say, Impossible, impossible for finite minds to grasp eternal truths, and deep holy principles, and to express their living import. I stand ignorant and helpless. The

rich current of thought takes possession of my whole being, and I lay down my pen, and say, O Lord, I am finite, I am weak, and simple and ignorant; Thy grand and holy revelations I can never find language to express.

My words seem inadequate. I despair of clothing the truth God has made known concerning His great redemption, which engrossed to itself His undivided attention in the only-begotten Son of the Infinite One. The truths that are to last through time and through eternity, the great plan of redemption, which cost so much for the salvation of the human race, presenting before them a life that measures with the life of God-- these truths are too full, deep, and holy for human words or human pen to adequately express.--Manuscript 23, 1896.

July 29, 1897

I awaken at half past two, and offer up my prayer to God in the name of Jesus. I am weak in physical strength; my head is not free from pain; my left eye troubles me. In writing upon the life of Christ I am **119** deeply wrought upon. I forget to breathe as I should. I cannot endure the intensity of feeling that comes over me as I think of what Christ has suffered in our world.--Manuscript 70, 1897.

July 16, 1896

The manuscript for the "Life of Christ" is just about to be sent to America. [CONTRARY TO HER EXPECTATION, IT WAS NOT UNTIL EARLY 1898 THAT THE MANUSCRIPT WAS READY TO SEND TO THE PACIFIC PRESS. IT WAS SENT IN PIECEMEAL, FOR NEW REVELATIONS LED TO MANY ADDITIONS TO THE MANUSCRIPT THOUGHT TO BE COMPLETE.--COMPILERS.] This will be handled by the Pacific Press. I have employed workers to prepare this book, especially Sister Davis, and this has cost me three thousand dollars. Another three thousand will be needed to prepare it to be scattered broadcast through the world in two books. We hope that they will have a large sale. I have devoted little time to these books, for speaking, writing articles for the papers, and writing private testimonies to meet and repress the evils that are coming in keeps me busy.--Letter 114, 1896.

Meeting Criticisms of The Desire of Ages June 20, 1900

I received your letter, Edson. [JAMES EDSON WHITE WROTE TO HIS MOTHER ON MAY 11, 1900, PRESENTING CRITICISMS OF THE SIZE, FORMAT, PRICE, AND ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE DESIRE OF AGES. HE ALSO OBJECTED TO THE APPENDIX IN THE FIRST EDITION, ASKING, "WHAT IS THE USE OF PITCHING INTO OTHER PEOPLE'S BELIEFS IN THE WAY IT IS DONE IN THIS APPENDIX?" HE ARGUED THAT SUCH MATERIAL MADE IT DIFFICULT FOR LITERATURE EVANGELISTS TO SELL THE BOOK.] In regard to The Desire of Ages, when you meet with those who have criticisms to make, as will always be the case, do not take any notice of the supposed mistakes, but praise the book, tell of its advantages. The Desire of Ages would have been the same size as the two former books [Patriarchs and Prophets and The Great Controversy], had it not been for the strong recommendation of Brother O who was then general canvassing agent. What you say about the appendix is the first objection we have heard regarding that feature. Many have spoken of the great help

they have found in the appendix. If people are prejudiced against anything that makes prominent the **120** Sabbath, that very objection shows the necessity of it being there to convict minds.

Let us be guarded. Let us refuse to allow the criticisms of anyone to imprint objections on our minds. Let critics live by their trade of criticism. They cannot speak in favor of the very best of blessings without attaching a criticism to cast a shadow of reproach. Let us educate ourselves to praise that which is good when others criticize. Murmurers will always pick flaws, but let us not be saddened by the accusing element. Let us not consider it a virtue to make and suggest difficulties which one mind and another will bring in to harass and perplex.--Letter 87, 1900.

Chapter 18

Comments While at Work on the Conflict Series Books

The Result of Visions Spanning Her Lifetime

I had been, during the forty-five years of experience, shown the lives, the character and history of the patriarchs, and prophets, who had come to the people with messages from God, and Satan would start some evil report, or get up some difference of opinion or turn the interest in some other channel, that the people should be deprived of the good the Lord had to bestow upon them. . . .

I could but have a vivid picture in my mind from day to day of the way reformers were treated, how slight difference of opinion seemed to create a frenzy of feeling. Thus it was in the betrayal, trial, and crucifixion of Jesus. All this had passed before me point by point.--Letter 14, 1889.

Constructive Criticisms Appreciated (1885)

Tell her [Marian Davis] I have just one minute ago read the letters in which she has specified the improvements to be made in articles for Volume 1 [Patriarchs and Prophets]. I thank her. Tell her that she has a point about Zedekiah's having his eyes put out. That needs to be more carefully worded--also the rock, when the water **122** flowed--something in reference to this. I think I can make the articles specified more full.--Letter 38, 1885.

Books Sought Giving Order of Events

Well, my dear Willie and Edson and Emma, let us draw very nigh to God. Let us live daily as we would wish we had lived when the judgment shall sit and the books shall be opened, and when everyone will be rewarded according to his works. . . . Tell Mary to find me some histories of the Bible that would give me the order of events. [IN THE PREPARATION OF THE DESIRE OF AGES SUCH WORKS WERE USED IN DETERMINING THE ORDER OF EVENTS. ON THIS POINT MARIAN DAVIS, WRITING TO THE MANAGER OF THE PACIFIC PRESS, STATED ON NOVEMBER 23, 1896, "IN THE ORDER OF CHAPTERS WE FOLLOWED ANDREWS' HARMONY AS GIVEN IN HIS LIFE OF CHRIST. HE IS GENERALLY REGARDED AS THE VERY BEST AUTHORITY, AND IS QUOTED BY LEADING WRITERS. WE KNOW OF NO BETTER ARRANGEMENT THAN HIS." SAMUEL J. ANDREWS, THE LIFE OF OUR LORD UPON THE EARTH, FIRST PUBLISHED IN 1862. THE 1891 EDITION WAS IN ELLEN WHITE'S

LIBRARY. HIS "HARMONY OF THE GOSPELS" APPEARS ON PAGES XXII TO XXVII.--
COMPILERS.] I have nothing and can find nothing in the library here [Basel, Switzerland].--
Letter 38, 1885, p. 8.

Holy Spirit Traced Truths on Ellen White's Heart

How many have read carefully Patriarchs and Prophets, The Great Controversy, and The Desire of Ages? I wish all to understand that my confidence in the light that God has given stands firm, because I know that the Holy Spirit's power magnified the truth, and made it honorable, saying: "This is the way; walk ye in it." In my books, the truth is stated, barricaded by a "Thus saith the Lord."

The Holy Spirit traced these truths upon my heart and mind as indelibly as the law was traced by the finger of God upon the tables of stone, which are now in the ark, to be brought forth in that great day when sentence will be pronounced against every evil, seducing science produced by the father of lies.--Letter 90, 1906. (Colporteur Ministry, p. 126.) **123**

The 1911 Revision of The Great Controversy

The Author Explains What and Why-Sanitarium, Cal., July 25, 1911

Dear Brother [F. M.] Wilcox:

A few days ago I received a copy of the new edition of the book Great Controversy, recently printed at Mountain View, and also a similar copy printed at Washington. The book pleases me. I have spent many hours looking through its pages, and I see that the publishing houses have done good work.

The book Great Controversy I appreciate above silver or gold, and I greatly desire that it shall come before the people. While writing the manuscript of Great Controversy, I was often conscious of the presence of the angels of God. And many times the scenes about which I was writing were presented to me anew in visions of the night, so that they were fresh and vivid in my mind.

Recently it was necessary for this book to be reset, because the electrotype plates were badly worn. It has cost me much to have this done, but I do not complain; for whatever the cost may be, I regard this new edition with great satisfaction.

Yesterday I read what W. C. White has recently written to canvassing agents and responsible men at our publishing houses regarding this latest edition of Great Controversy, and I think he has presented the matter correctly and well. [SEE APPENDIX A FOR THE ELLEN G. WHITE-APPROVED W. C. WHITE STATEMENTS EXPLAINING THE INVOLVEMENTS OF REVISING THE GREAT CONTROVERSY IN 1911. APPENDICES B AND C PRESENT HIS ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS RELATIVE TO THE WRITING OF THE GREAT CONTROVERSY STORY AND EXPLAINING HOW THE LIGHT CAME TO HER, ET CETERA.--
COMPILERS.]

When I learned that Great Controversy must be reset, I determined that we would have everything closely examined, to see if the truths it contained were stated in the very best manner, to convince those not of our faith that the Lord had guided and sustained me in the writing of its pages.

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As a result of the thorough examination by our most experienced workers, some changing in the wording has been proposed. These changes I have carefully examined, and approved. I am thankful that my life has been spared, and that I have strength and clearness of mind for this and other literary work.

While preparing the book on the Acts of the Apostles, the Lord has kept my mind in perfect peace. This book will soon be ready for publication. When this book is ready for publication, if the Lord sees fit to let me rest, I shall say Amen, and Amen. If the Lord spares my life, I will continue to write, and to bear my testimony in the congregation of the people, as the Lord shall give me strength and guidance. . . . (Signed) Ellen G. White --Letter 56, 1911