

ELLEN G. WHITE ESTATE



DIVINE
GUIDANCE IN
THE REMNANT
OF GOD'S
CHURCH

DENTON EDWARD REBOK

Divine Guidance in the Remnant of God's Church

Ellen G. White

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Overview

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About the Author

Ellen G. White (1827-1915) is considered the most widely translated American author, her works having been published in more than 160 languages. She wrote more than 100,000 pages on a wide variety of spiritual and practical topics. Guided by the Holy Spirit, she exalted Jesus and pointed to the Scriptures as the basis of one's faith.

Further Links

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By Denton Edward Rebok

Introduction

This series of studies was given to the church leaders in the Southern Asia Division in December, 1953, at the time of their annual Division Council, which was held in Poona, India. The workers in the publishing house, the Division office, the school, and local churches joined day by day to listen to this series on the important subject of “Divine Guidance in the Remnant of God’s Church.”

There is no topic discussed among Seventh-day Adventists which evinces greater interest and more concern. It is a vital part of the Advent Movement, and to understand it better is the sincere desire of every member of the church, for an understanding leads to a conviction, and a conviction leads to definite and specific personal action.

The identifying marks of the “remnant of God’s church” are obedience to the commandments of God, and the presence of the testimony of Jesus Christ, which is the Spirit of prophecy. We are members of the remnant of God’s church only when we are found obeying His commandments and having or possessing or clinging to the Spirit of prophecy. The two are inseparable, and to be minus either one or both is tantamount to a declaration that we are not wholeheartedly in the Remnant Church or a part of it.

This accounts for the seriousness of the subject and the universal interest in it. That interest on the part of our people in Southern Asia led to the action taken to put this series of studies in print, and that they be made available to our church members in that section of the world field.

The informal nature of these studies accounts for the language used, and for the lack of literary finesse. They are merely heart-to-heart talks on a subject of vital and mutual interest. They are sent forth in this book with the prayer that they may be used of God to help prepare a people for an entrance into His everlasting kingdom.

D. E. Rebok.

January, 1955.

Chapter 1—The Prophet and His Work

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Every Seventh-day Adventist must meet the issue of the Spirit of prophecy among the people of God, and decide what shall be his individual attitude regarding the instruction and the counsel that has been given to us as a people.

Inasmuch as we think of the Spirit of prophecy as “the counselor,” “the messenger,” “the servant of the Lord,” we should know for ourselves just what that counsel means and how we should apply the counsel to our individual lives. In order to do that we shall have to go back in our thinking and come to some conclusions, first regarding the Bible itself—even regarding God—so that all our thinking may come from the Scriptures, and thus lead us to a conclusion which will be most certainly justified.

As God looks down upon the world, He does not see thirteen great religions or faiths by which men live. He does not see one of them, Christianity, divided into two hundred and fifty-eight sects or groups or denominations. This division among the Christian people did not originate with God. It is not recognized in the Scriptures. For, if we read correctly, in the fourteenth Psalm we must come to a conclusion that in God’s sight there are in the world but two kinds of people, or two great classes of people. [Verse 2](#) says,

“The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God.”

[10] That gives us the basis upon which God divides the people of the world. He does not think of them as Christians, Hindus, Mohammedans, Confucianists, or Taoists. He does not think of them in terms of belonging to any one of the thirteen great religions which are extant in the world today. He thinks of them in terms of just two groups—those who are seeking after Him and who would understand Him, and those who are not interested in Him, not seeking after Him, and who do not care to understand Him.

In the eleventh Psalm we have the names given to these two groups. [Verse 4](#):

“The Lord is in His holy temple, the Lord’s throne is in heaven: His eyes behold, His eyelids try, the children of men.”

Now what does He find? Look at [verses 5 and 6](#):

“The Lord trieth the righteous: [that is the name given to one group] but the wicked, [that is the name given to the other group] and him that loveth violence, His soul hateth. Upon the wicked He shall rain [and the margin says ‘quick burning coals’] and an horrible tempest: this shall be the portion of their cup.”

To that group whom God calls “the wicked,” there is not a very pleasant outlook for the future. It simply means annihilation, at a given time, when the time is ripe.

“For the righteous Lord loveth righteousness; His countenance doth behold the upright.”

So in God’s sight there are but two classes, two groups, of people, in the world, not based upon the religious faiths of the people among whom we associate, but rather, the division is made on the basis of those who would seek to know and understand God and those who reject Him and are not interested in Him.

That being true, we shall find these two classes of people in every country, in every city, in every town, in every village, in every street, and *almost* in every home. There are no national boundaries. There are no geographical areas to which the one group is confined and not the other. The two groups are found everywhere. This eliminates all competition, all conflict among the thirteen great religions of the world. Those religions are man-made divisions among the people. They are not ordained by heaven. Then we ask, “Why is Christianity divided into two hundred and fifty-eight sects, denominations, or groups of people?”

When I talked to the Confucianists, the Buddhists, and the Taoists in China about Christianity, they would say, “But we cannot [11]

understand. The Baptists, the Methodists, the Presbyterians, the Adventists, the Catholics, and the Congregationalists, and all the rest—why so many groups?”

My first arrival in Hongkong was in the summer of 1917. To me it was exceedingly hot, and I had nothing but the usual woollen suits worn in the northern part of the United States—rather uncomfortable for hot weather. So the first thing I did was to go to a Chinese tailor. In our conversation the tailor said, “I am a Christian,” to which I replied, “That is wonderful.” Then he added, “I am a Baptist.” “Well,” I said, “that is fine. I have many very good Baptist friends.” A few minutes later in our chatter, he said, “I am, also a Presbyterian.” In my surprise I questioned, “How is that? Why are you both Baptist and Presbyterian?” He explained, “Belong Baptist, one-piece chance go topside. Belong Presbyterian, two-piece chance go topside.” You see the. Chinese are a very practical people.

Really it *is* confusing and we should ask ourselves, Why the divisions? I think the reason is given in 2 Timothy, the first chapter, [verse 12](#):

“For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him....”

The division among Christians did not originate with Christ, neither would we be divided if we all believed in Him, but the difficulty is that we do not think of Christianity in terms of a Person, nor as the union with a Person, but rather as a system of doctrines and teachings and beliefs subject to individual interpretation by people who have varying backgrounds and therefore different opinions.

Christianity is divided because of the what of Christianity, and not the who of Christianity. Christ is one, and Christianity has but “one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all.” But somehow or other Christians have gotten into a difficulty and we Seventh-day Adventist Christians are not entirely free from it. When we begin to discuss Christianity our minds seem to concentrate on the what of Christianity, and we say very little about the who—the Man Christ Jesus. Our interpretation of the messages, the doctrines

set forth in the Scriptures and seen from varying viewpoints, opinions, and convictions, has resulted in the two hundred and fifty-eight kinds of Christians.

But you say, “Does that come in among Seventh-day Adventists?” Frankly, we must admit, “Yes, to some extent.” There are now some seven “reformed” groups who call themselves Seventh-day Adventists. It is because some of us are forgetting the who of Christianity and arguing about the what of Christianity.

The divisions among Seventh-day Adventists have come largely from difference of opinion regarding the Spirit of prophecy. We do not have any divergence of opinion regarding the Sabbath. All of these “reformed” groups, as they call themselves, observe the Seventh-day Sabbath. We do not have any difficulty over the second coming of Christ, or any of the great fundamental doctrines, but it does come over an interpretation and application of the teachings of the Spirit of prophecy, and that is a reason for my interest in trying to understand better the real significance and the meaning of the Spirit of prophecy.

Our difficulty grows out of a tendency on the part of some to take a sentence or a paragraph out of the writings, and put our own interpretation, our own emphasis, and our own focus upon it, to the extent that we differ with our brethren. This to me is a very serious thing. I am sure God never intended that the Spirit of prophecy should become a cause for division. I believe the Spirit of prophecy was given that we might be more closely united.

This, then, is my reason for bringing this subject to you. I am anxious that all of us think the problem through together and come to a settled conclusion with regard to the Spirit of prophecy.

With that as a background, let us take up another aspect of the problem. Like many of you I have wondered how to present the Spirit of prophecy in such a way that it can be clearly understood, and be something that is reasonable and satisfying. So I began to think of a way to present this subject that would overcome a prejudice that is existent in the minds of Christians in general who do not understand. It is a prejudice and we must overcome that prejudice.

In [Counsels to Writers and Editors, 52](#), we find this paragraph:

“Messages of every order and kind have been urged upon Seventh-day Adventists, to take the place of the truth which, point by point, has been sought out by prayerful study, and testified to by the miracle-working power of the Lord. But the waymarks which have made us what we are, are to be preserved, and they will be preserved, as God has signified through His Word and the testimony of His Spirit. He calls upon us to hold firmly, with the grip of faith, to the fundamental principles that are based upon unquestionable authority.”

Here the suggestion is that messages, the what of Christianity, of every order and kind have been urged upon Seventh-day Adventists. We have them coming in constantly.

One brother in the United States who considers himself to be the prophet for today sends out a “testimony” about once in two weeks. Another brother in Europe, who considers himself to be a prophet, sends out a “message” about once a month. There is a lady in the central part of the United States who considers herself to be a prophetess, and she sends her visions about twice a month. So we are getting messages now from seven or eight different sources. They come to me and I read them very carefully, because I am not going to be guilty of rejecting without investigating. I dare not simply say, “It is false,” and have nothing more to do with it. Without testing and trying and proving them I cannot possibly know whether or not God has chosen to use any one of them, and I would be guilty of rejecting Him merely because of prejudice. I do not intend to be guilty of that. So today as these messages come from various quarters, and they are increasing, I say to myself, “I shall read them carefully, evaluate them, and try to come to a decision as to whether I think they are true or false.”

We have a folder in the General Conference Secretarial Department into which all such messages go. I can assure you it is one of the most interesting folders in the files of the General Conference.

[14] Some of them, of course, are a bit wild; some of them are really very sincere; and it is my duty to read and study them so that I may know for myself. That puts a responsibility upon me which I want to discharge in all fairness to each one who thinks that he or she is

to be used by God in these days. This perhaps gives you a clearer background as to why I am interested in the subject of the Spirit of prophecy. It is time for everyone of us to study it very carefully.

First of all, Seventh-day Adventists have the Bible. This becomes the most precious book to each Adventist wherever he may live around the world. There is no book that can take the place of this one. In fact, in many countries they have nothing other than this book, and this is all they need to see them through to the kingdom of heaven provided they read it, study it, and live by it.

In addition to the Bible, Seventh-day Adventists as a people have an abundance of wonderfully fine material—some twenty-five million words written by one who said she was “the messenger of the Lord.” We now have the messages those words represent in forty-three bound volumes and in four thousand articles which have appeared in the church papers over these many years. God has given us an abundance of material that should throw light on our paths and cause us to live better lives than any other Christian group in the world. “To whom much is given, of them much shall be required.” And so we should know our messages and we should be able to live by them.

Let me turn to a verse of Scripture which was one of Mrs. White’s favourite passages found in the sixth chapter of Hosea and the fifth verse. I am told that in her home as the family of workers would gather together for morning or evening worship, when some one of the secretaries would hand the Bible to her, she would often open to that book and read from [verse 1](#) to [verse 5](#). I shall read only the fifth verse:

“Therefore have I hewed them by the prophets....”

The word “hewed” means to fashion, to mould, to cut, to carve, to hew. It simply means “to make.” The verse then means,

“Therefore have I made them, or moulded them, or fashioned them by the prophets.”

[15]

This, then, is a brief, very concise statement, as to the business, or the purpose, of prophets. Through their messages God wants to

make me what He would have me to be in order that I may have a place in His kingdom. In other words, God has in mind a pattern, a mould, a certain ideal of the kind of people He wants to have with Him throughout eternity. He wants you and me to know what He has in mind, and then make ourselves into that kind of a people. It will be done by means of the messages of the prophets. These messages can and will mould *me* and fashion *me* and make *me* into the kind of a person that God wants *me* to be.

I did not have any choice when I came into this world; neither did you. We just came and what we are, we are; but not so in God's everlasting kingdom. You and I will be in that kingdom solely by our own choice, and by our own individual decision. If I do not want to be there, God is not going to force me into His kingdom. If you do not choose to be moulded after God's pattern, then *you* will not be there either. The prophets are given by God to mould and to help make us into the kind of individuals that will reach God's standard—the standard which He has set for the people who will occupy His kingdom throughout eternity. Does not that put a great responsibility upon the prophets? The messages of the prophets must then be from God, and He has His design, He has His ideal, He knows what He wants of the people who will be with Him throughout eternity.

When we think of it in that way, the prophets really become very important people. They transmit from God to the people of the world God's ideas, God's ideals, God's standards, God's pattern. The more I study the Bible, and the writings of the Servant of God, I am constrained to think of them as instruments by which I am to be moulded and fashioned, and made into the kind of a person that God wants me to be. If I submit, if I subject myself to that moulding process, if I allow God to transform me by His messages, by His [16] prophets, then I have a hope of being in His kingdom. But if I refuse to submit, if I refuse to go along, if I say, "Well, this is not important and that is not important, I shall do this but I will not do that," then God will not have me in His kingdom, because I would manifest that same disposition over there, and that has been the cause of most of our trouble here in this world.

It is my individual idea in conflict with God's idea; and when I have not agreed with God I have separated myself from Him. Reconciliation is the only means by which I can come back to Him.

The work of reconciliation is the work of the prophets. As a part of God's plan you and I have a work to do in calling the attention of the people everywhere to the messages of these prophets. This is our part in this work of reconciliation.

In thinking about Christianity, and the basis for prophetism, or the doctrine, or teaching concerning prophets, I have come to a conclusion that we must begin in terms of five basic concepts. The first and most important, is *a belief in the existence of God*. How do I know that God is? Can I go into the laboratory, take a test tube, and by manipulating certain chemicals and things like that prove that God is? No. How would you go about to prove that God is?

The fact is that most of us as Christians do not ask for proof. We just say, "Well, God is." And that is a manifestation of our faith. To us it is so simple, but to the non-Christian, to the unbeliever, it is difficult; it is at times a stumbling-block. Many of my Chinese friends had great difficulty in establishing the fact that God is. To me it is a fact, but a fact of faith. To them it is pure foolishness. They demanded proof. They demanded evidence. Of course, I could use such evidence as the beautiful sunset, the planting of the seed, the growing of the trees, and the bearing of the fruit—all of that. I could easily prove that everything that exists must have a maker, and by inference come to the conclusion that God is the Maker of the world and the universe.

But the eleventh chapter of Hebrews makes a very definite statement that the only way that I can accept God is by faith. We just have to believe that He is, and if we believe that we have no difficulty; [17] "but without faith it is impossible to please Him for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him." So to me as a Christian, and to all Christians generally, there is no difficulty at all about this first great fact upon which Christianity is based—the fact that God is.

Is it important that I know that God is? The importance is this—only as I know that God exists, that God is in His heaven, that God is looking down upon the earth, that God sees *me* and hears *me*, do I become careful as to what I do, and what I say. My faith that God is causes me to live in such a way, that before Him, in His presence, I shall walk and talk in a manner pleasing to Him.

May I use a very homely illustration? When I was a very small boy, my father had a store, a big store. Four or five ladies worked in that store as clerks, and a man who delivered the goods. He drove a two-horse team, and a big wagon. That was before the days of auto trucks. My chief delight was to ride with him high up on the seat above the horses, and as a small boy that was a thrill to me.

One day going back to the store, he said, "Do you want to have some fun?" Without a moment's hesitation, I shouted, "Why, sure!" "All right," he chuckled, "when we get back to the store we shall have some fun." As soon as we tied up the horses, he went into the warehouse where he knew of a nest of little white mice. He took one of them, tied a string to its tail, tied the other end of the string to my finger and then put the little mouse in my pocket.

"Now," he said, "when you get into the store and see those ladies visiting over there, you just walk over and let the little mouse loose." As I walked into the store I looked around to make sure that a certain individual was not there. Fortunately he was not. So I walked over to where those ladies were having a little visit and let the little mouse loose. Immediately they climbed up on the shelves and on top of the counter. They were afraid of that little mouse.

[18] Just as I had them up on the counter and up on the shelves, who should come into the store but my father. Of course he took in the situation in one swift glance. He said, "My boy, come with me." Those were very serious words. We went back into the go-down, or warehouse, as some call it, and had a little session there, a session which I have never forgotten.

You see, had my father been in the store, I would never have done such a thing, but in his absence I was ready to have some fun. It is just that way with us in our everyday living, in our conversation, in our conduct. If we sense that God is there, we shall be very circumspect in all that we do.

So I say that this is the first great fundamental truth upon which Christianity is based—the existence of God—the fact that God sees—that God hears—that God knows of everything that you and I do. Only as our individual sense of the existence and the presence of God is keen and sure, will we conduct ourselves carefully and with due caution.

I thought of it the other day as we were driving through the country. My friend had a new car. He wanted to show me how good that car was. I noticed that he looked ahead and then he looked into the mirror to see if a particular person might be coming from the rear. He looked all around and then said, "Now, let's try it." When we got up to over eighty miles an hour I said, "Brother, you have got a good car, now let us slow down." I noticed that he looked again. Can you guess for whom he was looking? Why of course, the traffic officer. Had the traffic officer been behind, do you think he would have let loose at almost ninety miles an hour? No indeed!

We are all just like that. Human nature is that way, and so you and I as Christians must first believe that God is and that we are living every moment in His presence. I call this the first great fact of Christianity—that God exists, that God sees, and hears, records, and judges everything I do, every word I say. Do you understand now? The first great fact of Christianity is a fact of faith, God is.

The second great fact of faith is something like it. I must believe *that this Bible is God's book*. How do I know? How can I prove it? Oh, we have several simple little proofs, or evidences, that we try to apply to it. But as for me, I am not asking for the proof. I simply believe that it is God's book. This is the second great fact of faith upon which Christianity is based. This Bible, my friends, is God's book. How do I know? How else could you know? [19]

One answer is that you could go over to Palestine, to some of those old, old places, and find there some stones with inscriptions on them which tell about the Hebrews, and mention the Israelites. Some of those ancient stones tell of the Egyptians, the flood, and many other things. We have them as an external evidence of the internal correctness, validity, genuineness of this Book. I do not need to go to Palestine or to Egypt or to any other place to find those things to cause me to believe that this is God's Book. I just believe it, and so it is with every other Christian.

The third great fact of faith is simply this, that *God spoke through His prophets and gave us this Book—the Bible*. How do I know that? How can I prove it? I was not back there when Samuel lived, nor when Daniel had his dreams and visions, but on Tuesday, November 24, 1954, it was my good fortune to go out from the city of Baghdad about sixty miles to the site of the ancient city of Babylon, where

are now only piles of sand and dirt and rubbish, and as I looked at the piles of rubbish there I said to myself, "How can I know that this is where Daniel lived?" Then when we came a little closer to the place where the German archaeologist had excavated great piles of dirt, Brother Jacobson said, "This is the very road on which Daniel walked." I said to myself, "How do they know that?"

As I walked about that place, looked around and saw the inscriptions on the bricks, I remembered my history books, and other books describing those places. I said, "Well, Brother, this is really a fulfilment of prophecy." Just then in the midst of all that stillness where not a man was seen nor a sign of life was found, an animal suddenly jumped from one place to another, and scampered over the mound. I said, "That, too, is a fulfilment of the prophecy of Jeremiah."

You see, we have such evidences that will help me to some extent to believe the Book. However, I do not need those evidences. [20] I simply believe that this is God's Book, and the more firmly I believe in it, the more careful I shall be to observe what it tells me to do. But if I say that Book is just like any other book, I am not apt to pay any particular attention to it. If, however, I firmly believe that this is God's Book, given to me by the prophets, then I shall certainly walk according to the instructions given in it.

In Hebrews, the first chapter and the first verse, I read,

"God, who at sundry times and in divers manners
spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets."

Here is all the evidence I need. God says so; therefore, it is so. That is the way I see it, because that is the way God states it. Since I believe in God, and know that He cannot lie, I take Him at His word in this as in all other matters. Peter says of those prophets that they were "holy men ... moved by the Holy Ghost." Now how do I know that all of this is true? What evidence have I that this is indeed God's Book? and that God spoke the words of the Book through His prophets? The honest answer is that we have only faith, and by this act of faith I believe it is a fact—the third great foundation upon which my Christianity is based.

The fourth great fact of faith is that *man is a sinner in need of a Saviour*. And the fifth great fact is that *Jesus Christ is that Saviour*. I will not take time to discuss these, but on these five great facts of faith which we have before us is Christianity based. Take away faith and what have you left? No God. No Bible. No prophets. No recognition of man's sinfulness. No need of the Saviour. No Saviour Jesus Christ. And what is left of Christianity when you take away all of that? Nothing.

As I think about it today, it is not necessary for me to prove that God used prophets in the past. He merely declares that He did, and if I believe God then I must believe what He says concerning the prophets.

If our reasoning is correct there were prophets in ancient times, and there might be prophets in modern times. The important fact is that God said there were prophets through whom He spoke in the past, and that there would be prophets in this our day. If I believe God, then I must accept His prophets. Many a good friend to whom I have told all of this has said, "I can follow you in your reasoning, but it is very difficult to think that there were prophets after John who wrote the Revelation." To which I reply, "Brother, all you need to do is to look at the Mormons. They had a prophet. And look at the great Moslem world with their several hundred million people who say that their religion is based upon the words and the work of a prophet. Can you deny it?"

[21]

Furthermore, we have had many movements in the history of the Christian church which have grown out of the leadership of some individual who claimed to be a prophet. There have been prophets, and we all admit the fact. But you say, "How can you tell whether they are true or false?" To which I must reply, "That is indeed our only problem now." How may I know that any one who steps forth and claims to be a prophet is indeed a true or a false prophet?

Thus far I think we have made it clear that Christianity is based upon these five great facts of faith. There are other facts in the foundation of Christianity which for lack of space we cannot include in this study. Christians everywhere are willing to accept the first fact, that God is. They are all willing to accept the second fact, that the Bible is God's Book. Likewise they are willing to accept the fourth fact, that man is a sinner in need of a Saviour.

All Christians will accept the fifth great fact, that Jesus Christ *is* that Saviour. Thus Christians accept the fifth, the fourth, the second and the first great facts of their faith, but the only one in question is the third. Even this fact is partially accepted, for they do believe that God spoke through prophets, so far as Daniel, Ezekiel, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Malachi, and John, who wrote the Revelation, are concerned. They will accept all of that. Why do they stop there? They stop only on the last part of this third great fact of faith, namely, that God plans to speak through His servants in modern times. There is the problem. There is where Christians part company.

[22] This makes it clear that Seventh-day Adventists do not have much to prove. All we have to prove is that God spoke through prophets in the past and that He has spoken through at least one in our own times. Why do some Christians refuse to go along with God all the way? It is purely a prejudice, something that builds up in the mind a sort of opposition to the thought of having some person now called a prophet whose business it is to help mould and fashion us today.

Dear brethren and sisters, what we need above all else is to come to a conclusion in our own thinking with regard to the Word of God. We find it in 1 Thessalonians, the second chapter, [verses 11 to 13](#).

“As ye know how we exhorted and comforted and charged every one of you, as a father doth his children, that ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto His kingdom and glory. For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.”

What is the business of the prophets who wrote that Word? Hosea says, “Therefore have I hewed them by the prophets.” Paul says, “The word of God which effectually worketh also in you that believe.” What then is the purpose of the message of the prophets contained in this book, the Word of God? The Bible declares God’s purpose to be that these messages might effectually work within us

to make us the kind of men and women God wants us to be, and whom He would have in His kingdom.

You see now that I am leading you to a conclusion; and you have almost reached that conclusion in your thinking today, because you believe the great facts of Christianity. I do not *need* to bring *all* the proofs and evidences to you, but I shall briefly review some of the evidences in this series of studies so there will be no question in any mind as to whether God chose to speak His word to the remnant church through one whom we know as Ellen G. White.

Perhaps we should close this study with this thought found in Revelation, the first chapter, verses one to three. In these three verses there are set forth the steps by which God chose to make His revelation known to the people:

“The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto Him, to shew unto His servants things which must shortly come to pass; and He sent and signified it by His angel unto His servant John: who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw. Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.”

[23]

What are the steps by which God’s ideas and standards come to us as a people? (1) God gave the revelation to Christ, (2) Christ gave it to the angel, (3) the angel gave it to the prophet, and (4) the prophet gave it to the people. These are the steps by which God has chosen to make known His will to the children of men. Somehow as I think through it again, with the Thessalonians I am constrained to say, “Thank God for His word.” Not the word of men, but the word of God which came through His Son, through the angel, through the prophets to you and me.

Chapter 2—Accepting or Rejecting the Prophets

In this study I wish to call your attention to one phase of the study on prophets. I like to think of it in terms of accepting or rejecting the prophets, but as a Scripture lesson turn with me to this favourite text of Ellen G. White found in Hosea, the sixth chapter, and we shall read beginning with the first verse:

“Come and let us return unto the Lord: for He hath torn, and He will heal us; He hath smitten, and He will bind us up. After two days will He revive us: in the third day He will raise us up, and we shall live in His sight. Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord: His going forth is prepared as the morning; and He shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth. O Ephraim, what shall I do unto thee? O Judah, what shall I do unto thee? for your goodness is as a morning cloud, and as the early dew it goeth away. Therefore have I hewed them by the prophets.”

As I mentioned in the first study, the chief work of the prophet is to bring a message, or the message from God, a message which is designed to mould and to fashion and to make us after the pattern that God has set for His kingdom. This thought is also expressed in the seventeenth chapter of John, the seventeenth verse, which says:

“Sanctify them [or make them holy] through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth.”

So the words of the prophet are designed to make us a sanctified or a holy people. It is thus that we are to be moulded and fashioned and hewed by the Word of God according to the pattern of God.

In 2 Timothy, the [3rd chapter](#), is a very familiar text, one which we frequently read, but I should like to give it here, in just a little different context:

“But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; and that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.” [Verses 14, 15.](#)

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The purpose of the Scriptures then is to mould us and fashion us and make us wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.”

Here again is stated the work of the prophets to hew, to Fashion, to mould, to “make us wise unto salvation.” The Scriptures, as given through the prophets, are good for doctrines, good for reproof, good for correction, good for instruction, and the object is “that the man of God may be perfect.” [Verses 16, 17.](#)

In these few texts of Scripture we have set before us the very purpose that God had in mind in sending prophets to the church.

“God ... spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets.” [Hebrews 1:1.](#)

Since that is a fact which we must accept, the purpose for which He spoke is likewise a fact; and that makes us ready now to enter into the thought of this second study.

As mentioned at the very beginning, it is a question of accepting or rejecting the prophets, and you and I personally and individually must make that decision. I cannot make the decision for you; you cannot make the decision for me. I must accept, or I must reject. You must accept, or you must reject.

We go back in the history of the prophets, and find in the introduction to the [The Spirit of Prophecy 1:7](#), these words by James White:

“Once, man walked with God in Eden. With open face he beheld the glory of the Lord, and talked with

God and Christ and angels in Paradise, without a dimming veil between. Man fell from his moral rectitude and innocency, and was driven from the garden, from the tree of life, and from the visible presence of the Lord and His holy angels.”

[26] In the beginning it was God's plan to talk directly to man, to come and speak to him face to face, in order that man might have direct access to God and be in the very presence of God. If man had not sinned, that relationship would have continued, but sin erected a barrier between God and man. Isaiah, the 59th chapter and the [verse 2](#) tells us that very plainly. That which stands between man and God is sin, and when sin came into man's life, God did not henceforth speak to him directly. Thereafter, because of sin, man could not come and talk to God face to face, so to overcome that barrier God arranged another plan, and He began to talk to men through those whom He called “prophets” in Genesis, the 20th chapter, [verses 6 and 7](#); and through “priests,” [Genesis 14:18](#); and at times through “angels,” [Genesis 16:7-13](#).

The term most commonly used in connection with those who are God's messengers is the word “prophets.” That word occurs more frequently in the Scriptures than any other. In the Introduction to *Great Controversy*, Ellen G. White has put it this way:

“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 intrusted to earthen vessels, yet it is, none the less, 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.”

Now here is a thought that we must not forget. When God chose human agencies, men, or women, He did not take their hands and force them to write His words. He did not, except in rare instances,

put His words in their mouths and say, “This is *the very word* that you must use;” but, rather, He gave them the thought, the message, and then allowed them to express it in their own words. Ellen G. White speaks of, “the imperfect expression of human language.”

Immediately this forces us to a conclusion that it was not “verbal inspiration” but, rather, as Elder F. M. Wilcox always put it, it was “thought inspiration” expressed in human language, which is subject to the imperfections of the man who speaks. Therefore, the language is not the important thing, but it is the message contained in those human words which are at times imperfect because perfection is not with man. I shall come back to that a little later, but I wanted you to catch that thought so that, right from the very beginning, we shall not think in terms of verbal inspiration for any one of the prophets, Mrs. White included. We should not think in terms of verbal inspiration because the Spirit of prophecy in speaking of the work of the prophets stated it in these words,

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“The testimony is conveyed through the imperfect expression of human language.” [The Great Controversy, Introduction, vii.](#)

I like this thought in [Education, 46](#):

“From the earliest times, prophets had been recognized as teachers divinely appointed. In the highest sense the prophet was one who spoke by direct inspiration, communicating to the people the messages he had received from God. But the name was given also to those who, though not so directly inspired, were divinely called to instruct the people in the works and ways of God.”

This, I think, makes it quite clear that, so far as God is concerned, He is interested in giving the message, or the thought, to the human instrument or agency, and then allowing that individual, aided by the Spirit of God, to express the thought in his own words.

The question now comes as to what we shall do about the prophets, or those who claimed the gift of prophecy. Let us think of

this question in the light of 1 Thessalonians, the fifth chapter, [verses 19, 20, and 21](#):

“Quench not the Spirit. Despise not prophesyings.
Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.”

So your business and mine is not hastily to say, “I will have nothing to do with it. I do not want anything to do with a person who claims to have revelations from heaven, or visions, or dreams.”

[28] Our attitude on the contrary should be, I shall try it, I shall test it, I will prove it, to see whether there is anything in it or not, and then come to a conclusion. In other words we must test and try and prove before we come to a conclusion rather than coming to the conclusion first and refusing to have anything to do with it. This has been a question for God's people all through the years. John says:

“Beloved, 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](#).

If there are many false prophets, it becomes all the more important to try them, test them, prove them. The other day over in the Middle East, I talked on this subject, and after the meeting a young lady came to me. She said, “I am not a Christian, I am a Moslem, and I did not like some things you said this morning. You intimated that my prophet might be true or might be false, and that all I had to do was to test and to try and to prove Mohammed.” “Why,” she declared, “that is unthinkable!”

Not wishing to offend, or argue the question, I asked, “How did you come to this conclusion? Did you ever investigate, to really prove your prophet true or false? or did you just accept it without a question?” She replied, “Well, I guess I just accepted it as my mother, my father, and all of my people have believed without any doubt or any question whatsoever. Why, of course, he was a true prophet.” I replied to that sweet, sincere, honest young lady, “What I am trying to do is to apply the Bible tests. I am applying them to one whose name is Ellen G. White.”

“Now,” she came direct to the heart of the matter, “do you want me to take the texts that you have given us and apply them to Mohammed?” I replied, “I suppose if you want to know whether Mohammed were true or false, you would have to apply those tests.” Then she came to a very vital conclusion, and said, “That being the case, it would be very difficult to do.”

I would not want to force anyone into a conclusion without first examining the evidence, but let me put it this way. Our business is not to declare that Mohammed was false, but rather our business is to test and to try and to prove Mohammed as a prophet, and if he should stand up to the test, then we would have to conclude that he was true. If he did not meet the test, then we would come to the conclusion that he was not a true prophet.

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The same is true with Ellen G. White. If she does not stand up to the four tests given in the Scriptures, we would have to conclude that she was a false prophet. I think above all things we must be reasonable, we must be fair, we must have a sense of balance and proportion in dealing with the prophet of the Mormons, or the prophet of the Moslems, or the prophet of the Remnant Church. We must be equally fair, and equally sincere and honest. That brings us now to the question, What are the tests?

I wish to deal with the tests in the next study, because that is a subject all of its own. In this particular study I wish to call your attention to what we should do about prophets in general, and what has been done about the prophets in the past. Perhaps we should read a text of Scripture which will help us to know the attitude of people in the past in regard to prophets.

We shall begin with this word in 2 Chronicles, the 36th chapter, [verse 15](#):

“And the Lord God of their fathers sent to them by His messengers, rising up betimes, and sending; because He had compassion on His people, and on His dwelling place: 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.”

[30] Jeremiah repeats the same thing. He said that God from time to time sent His messengers with messages for the people. Some accepted, many rejected; and of the rejecting we find an outstanding example in Jeremiah, the [36th chapter](#), where we have the experience of King Jehoiakim. You remember in that chapter God said to Jeremiah, "I want you to take a scroll and write on that scroll the words that I have given you. Put on that paper the messages which I have given to you from time to time." So Jeremiah took the roll of the book and he called his secretary, Baruch, and said to him, "You sit down and write and I will dictate the record which God has given."

As the message was written on the scroll, it became available to the people to read, and Baruch himself took the message out and began to read the words of the prophet to the people. Some of those who heard were princes from the king's own palace, and they were so much impressed with these words that they decided the king himself must hear this. Thereupon they took the scroll into the palace and began to read to the king. The record at this point says that Jehoiakim was sitting by a fire on the hearth.

Today I can understand that situation a little better, for only a few days ago I was over in Beirut, and the weather was perfect. Then all at once the sky changed, and what they call the "early rains" began to fall; I mean it really rained in torrents. In fact, we had rain and hail and sleet, and on the mountains to the east heavy snow, for it was not only wet but very cold. The change was so sudden I told the people there that I could then appreciate why Jehoiakim sat beside the fire on his hearth trying to keep warm.

He was sitting there warming himself when the princes brought in the scroll and began to read the message. As he listened he became interested, but he did not like what he heard and shouted, "Give that to me." He took the scroll, began to read it for himself, became more and more angry, for he did not like the words. He reached into his pocket, took out his knife, and declared, "I will show God what I will do with things like that," and before the startled princes he began to rip the scrolls all to pieces. Then, of course, after he had ripped the messages to pieces, he added, "I shall even get rid of them." Whereupon he put them into the fire and burned them. This is the attitude of some people to the messages of God's prophets.

Honestly now can you get rid of God's message by ripping it to shreds? or tearing it all to pieces and casting it into the fire? You cannot get rid of God. You cannot get rid of God's message, nor can you get rid of God's messenger in that way. Some people even today are inclined to treat the prophets and the messages of the prophets in that way. [31]

An example comes to mind in the old story of one whose name was Stephen Smith. You may have heard it. Stephen Smith was a man in middle life who accepted the Sabbath message back about 1850. He really believed in the second coming of Christ and he loved the Sabbath. He was a very promising man, so gifted with words that he could speak and cause everybody to enjoy hearing his messages. Even the good old church paper, the *Review and Herald*, commented that here was a man, who, they hoped, would go out and do a great work as a preacher. Of course this idea of the Spirit of prophecy was soon called to his attention, but he said in his heart that he could have nothing to do with one who claimed in our day to be a prophet, a messenger of the Lord. Stephen Smith shook his head and declared, "Well, the Sabbath I can believe. The second coming of Christ I can believe and preach, but when it comes to visions and dreams and revelations through a woman like that, I shall have nothing to do with it."

Not very long after that Stephen Smith received in the mail a long envelope with his name upon it, bearing the name of Ellen G. White, and he said, "There it is. She thinks she is going to give me one of her testimonies. I will have nothing to do with it." He took the envelope to his home. He opened the door. He went into the room and looked around to see where he could put it, and there was an old trunk. He unlocked it, lifted the lid, and put that envelope down at the bottom but did not open it. He said, "I will have nothing to do with that." So it was out of his way.

But Stephen Smith had a rather strange experience; for every strange idea that came along, he absorbed it just like a piece of blotting paper absorbs the ink, and he was off with this movement, and off with that. In fact, he was given to fanaticism. He had nothing to guide him. During those days when these different offshoots arose, Ellen G. White was there to guide our people, but Stephen Smith had nothing to do with her. He did not like the idea of taking

[32] messages from a woman. That was just too much for him. So he went on his way, and it was not very long until he was out with all of our people. He did not agree with them on much of anything and, of course, they had to dismiss him and he went out of the church.

Stephen Smith became very bitter. That tongue of his which was given to speaking words so fluently and so fast, turned to speaking the most blistering, the most sarcastic, the most bitter words that you could ever imagine any individual speaking. He became known throughout that whole country as just a vicious old man.

He grew old of course, and about 1884, twenty-seven years after he received that envelope, he was sitting one day in his living room. His good wife had remained faithful all that time, and week by week she had put the copy of the *Review and Herald* on the living room table. This man who was growing old and gray and bent, sat down by the table and looked at the paper when she was not around. Thus he began to read the *Review*. He read one article by Ellen G. White, and said, "That is the truth." The next week when the paper came, he found himself back by the table and he looked at it. Nobody around, he read another article by Ellen G. White. He said, "That is very good. That's God's truth."

Of course, he did not want anybody to see him reading those papers, but week by week he read and, in one of those papers early in 1885 he saw that Eugene Farnsworth was coming back to Washington, New Hampshire, where Farnsworth had grown up as a boy and where Stephen Smith had known him as a friend. They knew each other well. Elder Farnsworth was sent back to Washington, New Hampshire, our first Seventh-day Adventist church, to conduct a series of revival meetings in the old church building. Stephen Smith said to himself, "Well, I think I'll go and hear what Eugene has to say."

[33] Friday morning he walked fourteen miles from where he lived over to Washington, New Hampshire. During the meeting Sabbath morning, he was very much impressed by the message given by Eugene Farnsworth. When the speaker sat down, old Stephen Smith shuffled a bit and stood up. As he arose the people all gave a sort of a sigh and thought, here it comes again. We shall have to listen to another tirade. They had heard that old man so many times during

the years, but there seemed nothing to do but let him talk. So they sat back and waited.

This time when Stephen Smith got up, he said, "I don't want you to be afraid of me, brethren, for I haven't come to criticize you. I have quit that kind of business." Then he went back and reviewed the past. He told how he had opposed the church organization and most everything else. He referred to his connections with different parties, the "Messenger party," and this group and that group. He told it all. Finally he said, "Facts are stubborn things. But the facts are that those who have opposed this work have come to naught, while 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 to debate and they have lost all their religion. No honest man can help but see that God is with them and against us. I want to be in fellowship with this people in heart and in the church."

They had not heard anything like that from Stephen Smith for a long, long time. He attended the meetings from day to day, and thought about his own condition. On Wednesday he happened to remember the letter in the bottom of his trunk. So Thursday morning he walked the fourteen miles back to his home, entered the house, unlocked the old trunk, lifted the lid and went down to the bottom of the trunk, and sure enough there was the envelope, a bit yellow from age, for twenty-eight years had passed. He opened the envelope and began to read. It was a most interesting message. It told him that God loved him and that God was anxious to save him, and further if he would do so and so, and so and so, his life would be—and she outlined exactly what his life would be. Then she outlined in detail what his life would be if he rejected the message.

As the old man read it, he said, "That is a picture of my life, just exactly as I have lived it for these twenty-eight years, and here is what I might have been." It made quite an impression on the old man's mind. He folded up the letter and started back that Friday morning to Washington, New Hampshire to attend the meeting the next day.

Sabbath morning Elder Farnsworth preached on the subject of the Spirit of prophecy in the Advent Movement and, no sooner had he finished his sermon than Stephen Smith was on his feet again.

This time he said, "I received a testimony myself twenty-eight years ago, and I took it home and I locked it up in my trunk and I never read it until last Thursday." He said he had been afraid to read it for fear it might make him mad, but then he said, "I've been mad for these twenty-eight years,"—mad at everybody and everything. He said, "Brethren, every word of that testimony for me is true and I accept it and I have come to that place where I finally believe that they 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 should have been a different man. Any man that is honest may say that they lead a man toward God and the Bible always. If he is honest he will say that; if he will not say that, he is 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 1844 movement, but I thought I knew as much as the old woman's vision' as I used to term it. 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 1854 (that is when the little group thought that Christ would come) and I spent all I had, when if I had heeded them, I should have saved myself all of that and much more. The testimonies are right and I am wrong." Then he added, "I'm too old to undo what I've done. I'm too feeble to get out to our large meetings, but I want to tell you to tell the people everywhere that another rebel has surrendered." And old Stephen Smith sat down.

[35] You know, dear friends, it may be that we have not received personal messages in that way, but I am convinced that most of us have on our shelves at home the messages bound in red cloth, or red leather. I hesitate to ask how many of us read the messages. My name was not written directly in any of those messages so far as I have been able to read, and I have read a lot of them, but I find my situation described in so many of those messages that I believe the Lord intended those messages for me as well as for you. The trouble is that while you and I keep the messages and do not rip them all to pieces nor throw them into the fire as did Jehoiakim, yet I am inclined to think that perhaps some of us allow them to stand on our shelves day after day and we never read them. I am inclined to think that in many cases we are about as guilty as was Stephen Smith.

That, however, is not the only kind of record we have. There is quite another type of record to which I like to turn in the Bible. I refer to the record of David. You will remember when David was the king that he did a very strange thing. The incident is recorded in Second Samuel, the [11th and 12th chapters](#). It is hard to understand how such a good man of God could stoop to do such a terrible thing as he did. In brief, he wanted another man's wife; and to get rid of the man, he put him right out in the very front line of the battle, knowing exactly where the battle was to be heaviest and where the danger spot would be so that he might be killed. Then David took the man's wife. I consider that to be very low down trickery, about as despicable as anything you can find in the records. Now what did God do about it? The Bible says, that God spoke to His servant, and said something like this, "Nathan, I have a little errand for you this morning. I want you to go over to see the king, and I want you to go right into the king's palace and tell him a little story."

Nathan was a man of God, and when God told him to do something he did it. Under such circumstances it was not very pleasant to take a message to the king, but God showed him exactly what had happened. When Nathan went into the presence of the king he did not come right out and say, "Now, King David, you have done a very wrong thing," because that would have been a very poor approach. Nathan was very tactful, so he gave his message in a story. David listened very attentively, and as Nathan reached the climax he demanded, "O king! what do you think should be done with a man who would do a thing like that?"

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David's response was quick and decisive. He was really angry when he responded, "Why, that man should restore fourfold. He should be dealt with summarily." He was very ready to give a verdict, a judgment in a case like that. Then Nathan pointed his finger at the king and said, "Thou art the man!" Immediately the king recognized himself as the one whom he had judged.

In such a situation the king might have taken the prophet out and had him put to death. He could have gotten rid of the prophet very quickly. David might have become very angry and thrown him out of the palace, and said, "I will have nothing to do with you and your message." But what did David do? The Bible records exactly what

we would expect of a man like King David: “I have sinned. I have done wrong. I have made a mistake.”

For a king to admit that he had made a mistake was, I think, pretty good evidence of the kind of man he was at heart. Oh yes, he made mistakes. He did some very strange things. At times even we do things that we ourselves cannot understand, nor can our very best friends understand them. But I am so glad that there is a God in heaven who understands the frailty of human nature and the weakness of human flesh. When we on our part manifest an attitude of humility, repentance, sorrow, and when we recognize we have made a mistake and repent in tears, we have a God who is ready and willing to forgive.

The Bible does not tell us all that was said and done in connection with that experience, but the 12th chapter and the 13th verse closes the incident with these words, “And Nathan said unto David, the Lord also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die.” Our hearts should rejoice in words like that.

[37] You see, when we accept the messages of the prophets, the messages that come from God to us, they produce a change; a reformation takes place in the heart and life of the individual. We have before us these two outstanding examples—King Jehoiakim, who rejected the messages, tore them up, and burned them up; and King David, who accepted the messages, the reproof, the counsel, and profited by the instructions.

Brethren and sisters, our prayer today should be that somehow we shall not be like Jehoiakim and Stephen Smith, but that we may be like David. May we have courage not only to read but to accept and believe the words of the prophets, and then those messages will work in us and bring about a marvellous transformation.

Someone asks, “How is the prophet called to his office?” “How may we know that a man is chosen of God to be a prophet?” God does not select a prophet by having just any person rise up and declare, “From now on, I’m going to be the prophet.” That is not God’s way. The prophet is not chosen by a committee, nor is a prophet confirmed by committee action. There is a text of Scripture which reads something like this concerning the priests, and I believe it must be true of a prophet, “No man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron.” [Hebrews 5:4](#). We thus

come to the conclusion that the prophet is the one who is called of God. He is chosen by God, and not by a man himself.

It is God, through His Holy Spirit, who moves upon men. We must remember what Amos said, “I was no prophet, neither was I a prophet’s son; but I was an herd-man, and a gatherer of sycamore fruit: And the Lord took me as I followed the flock, and the Lord said unto me, Go, prophesy unto My people Israel.” [Amos 7:14](#).

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Chapter 3—The Gift of Prophecy in the Advent Movement

Prophets in the Old Testament are taken for granted and generally accepted by all Christians. The same is true of the prophets in the New Testament, for we have the positive declaration of the apostle Paul recorded in [Ephesians 4:8, 11](#),

“Wherefore He saith, when He ascended up on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men, ... and He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers.”

Here is presented the fact that God set some prophets to work in His church in the Christian era. Furthermore we are assured by Paul in [1 Corinthians 1:5-8](#),

“That in everything ye are enriched by Him, in all utterance, and in all knowledge; Even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you: So that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

From this text we must conclude that God plans to work through prophets down to the end of time, to the second coming of Christ; and that the work of such prophets shall be for the purpose of helping Christians become “blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus.”

Then, too, in [Ephesians 4:12-15](#), we have a list of the objectives set forth for those who are apostles and prophets and evangelists, pastors and teachers:

First, “for the perfecting of the saints”: second, “for the work of the ministry”: third, “for the edifying of the body of Christ”:—“till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the

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Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of

the fullness of Christ.”

It seems to me that this is a very important text, for it sets forth God’s plan for leading and guiding His people from the time they first accept Christ as “babes” in the doctrines to the time when they become mature intelligent Christians.

We must ever remember that prophets are placed in the church primarily for the church and not for unbelievers. As we go out to work for unbelievers we should bear this in mind, and not endeavour to introduce them to God through the present day manifestations of the gift of prophecy. It is our business to introduce unbelievers to Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour and make of them “believers” or Christians.

This is taught also in 1 Corinthians 14. [Verse 3](#) says, “He that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort.” Then in [verse 4](#), it is stated “He that prophesieth edifieth the church,” and further, in [verse 22](#), we find the thought: “Prophesying serveth not for them that believe not, but for them which believe.” So the messages of the prophets are primarily designed for those who are believers already, for those who are in the church. The reason for prophecy and prophesying within the church is to build up the church, to build up the saints, to build up the believers.

Now this corresponds very closely with the thought expressed by Mrs. Ellen G. White in the [The Review and Herald, February 18, 1888](#), where she says that our business is first of all to go out and proclaim the gospel. This will make “sons of God” of those who believe. This article likewise makes it clear that any man who hears the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, who becomes aware of the fact that he is a sinner in need of a Saviour, and who acknowledges Christ as his Saviour, immediately becomes a member of God’s family, a believer. Then, after he believes, and has become “a son of God” he begins a process of growth in grace by which he becomes “an intelligent Christian.”

All of this is in harmony with the passage which we read previously, in 2 Timothy, [chapter 3](#), where it says that all Scriptures which are given by inspiration are for the purpose of making a man holy, perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works. We, therefore, draw a conclusion that the gift of prophecy is for me and for you. The testimonies are primarily for those who already believe. It is

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the gospel that makes believers into “sons of God,” and it is the messages of the prophets that build the believers up into “intelligent Christians.”

We now turn to the question of how the people back in 1844,⁴⁵ and ⁴⁶ accepted the one who came forth in the Remnant Church and claimed the gift of prophecy. I have often wondered just how I would have related myself to that individual back there. Maybe I can give you just a little feeling of the situation as it existed in 1844.

There was a large group of Advent people led by a number of ministers who preached that Christ would come in 1844. Finally, taking that text, [Daniel 8:14](#), “Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed,” they set the date October 22 as the day on which Christ would return. About a year or so ago, Elder D. E. Robinson and my wife and I made a little tour in New England visiting all those old places of historical interest connected with the Advent movement. Elder Robinson is a grandson of the first Adventist to begin keeping the seventh-day Sabbath in 1844. In our travels we came to William Miller’s old farm. It was just about sundown when we went to the back of the farm to a big flat rock that stands out like a dome in the old field behind the barn. On that rock we stood that evening and watched the sun go down, but we thought in our minds of that group of Advent people who assembled there on October 22, 1844.

[41] Elder D. E. Robinson told the story in great detail. I wish you could have been there. I wish you could have heard that thrilling story. I have never heard it before nor since in such detail and with such feeling as he told it that evening while we stood there on the rock. As we stood there the sky appeared most beautiful. We could see from one horizon to the other, and in all four directions without any obstructions. We stood there in the still of eventide, and as he recounted the story, I could almost feel I was among that group on October 22, looking at the sky, watching to see the appearance of Christ, first as a small cloud, and then coming closer and closer. But the sun went down that evening and He had not come. I could actually sense the disappointment of that early Advent group.

The evening wore on and it went far into the night before they fully realized that they had fixed their hopes upon something that had not been fulfilled; it was indeed a terrible disappointment. Out of

that disappointment on October 22 came confusion, and a scattering of the Advent people. On October 23 everybody, it seems, soon had a different idea, or reason, for the apparent failure of their hope, and out of that failure came much discontent. Many took the position that God had not led them.

It was shortly after that time, that a little group of women up in Portland, Maine, gathered in the home of a Sister Haines for prayer. These five ladies were kneeling, seeking light from God, when one of them, a seventeen-year-old girl, had a very strange experience. In her own words she says, "The power of God came upon me as I had never felt it before." And during that prayer she saw, as it were, the Advent people journeying from the disappointment in 1844 clear through to the city of God.

Coming from that little season of prayer, she looked at those ladies and commented that she had had a very strange experience. She could not understand it. She could not explain it. It seemed as though she was travelling on a very narrow path, and she recounted the vision as you will read it in [Early Writings, 14 to 20](#). Now the Advent believers had been taught to be very sceptical of anybody who claimed to have dreams and visions. Let me give you the reason for such an attitude.

The Advent people in 1843, on May 29, met in Boston in conference, and in connection with that conference, gave study to the question of dreams and visions and revelations, for several people claimed to have them at that time. On this subject they took an action and recorded it thus in their minutes: "We have no confidence whatever in any visions, dreams, or private revelations."

[42]

You can imagine that little group of women with a seventeen-year-old girl coming from their season of prayer telling of a very strange experience in which she says: "The power of God came upon me as I have never felt it before." Then she told them of what she had seen. I wonder, friends, how many of you ladies, if you had been there in that little group, would have said, "Now, Ellen, we are sure that what you say is right and we accept you and believe you to be a prophet. Surely you are one of God's great prophets." Would you have said that? I doubt it. I rather imagine that some of those ladies questioned a bit even what Sister Ellen herself had said.

At that time she herself did not want to accept the responsibility. She tried to throw it off. She tried to repress all of those feelings, and of her experience she says, "After I came out of this vision I was exceedingly troubled.... 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.'" ¹ Thus she described her own experience. At first she did not want to go out and tell the people what she had seen. She knew they would ridicule, she knew they would censure, she knew that many would reject, and she hesitated to tell them what she had experienced.

[43] That was back in 1844. There was no evidence of any kind other than her own words as to what she had seen. Whether or not to believe it was a great question. In fact, some of those people back there seriously questioned the experience. We have the words of one worker in 1847 who put it this way: "I cannot endorse Sister Ellen's vision as being of divine inspiration, as you and she think them to be; yet I do not suspect the least shade of dishonesty in either of you in this matter.... I think that what she and you regard as visions from the Lord, are only religious reveries, in which her imagination runs without control upon themes in which she is most deeply interested.... I do not by any means think her visions are like some from the devil."

You see, he was very kind in saying, "I do not think they are from the devil, but I just cannot accept them as you do." So it was in the years following 1844 and 1845 that many people turned their backs upon her, and she had a rather difficult time.

We can almost sense her feelings during those years as we try to re-live that experience. But not all of the people were quite so outspoken as this brother, for we have in the words of James White himself his own testimony, and we believe that he spoke for many like him. These are his words:

"Dreams and visions are among the signs that precede the great notable days of the Lord. And as the signs of that day have been, and still are fulfilling, it must be clear to every unprejudiced mind, that the time

¹White, Ellen G., *Early Writings*, 20.

has fully come, when the children of God may expect dreams and visions from the Lord.

“I know that this is a very unpopular position to hold on this subject, even among Adventists; but I choose to believe the Word of the Lord on this point, rather than the teachings of men. I am well aware of the prejudice in many minds on this subject; but as it has been caused principally by the preaching of popular Adventists and the lack of a correct view of this subject; I have humbly hoped to cut it away, with the ‘sword of the Spirit,’ from some minds, at least.”²

That is James White’s written testimony concerning the attitude of the people back there. They were not clear as to these manifestations and revelations. They needed some kind of evidence that would convince them that what she said was true and accurate, reliable and something to be depended upon.

We now turn to another very interesting character in Seventh-day Adventist history. Joseph Bates was a man of integrity, of position and authority, among the early Advent people. He had become a captain and owner of a sea-going vessel of his own. As the captain he had become a sort of astronomer. He loved to read about astronomy. He delighted to talk about it. Everywhere he went he discussed astronomy. In the month of November, 1846, he went up to Topsham, Maine, to visit with the Whites and to meet with the other people in a conference. He made it definitely known that he did not believe in visions and dreams and revelations. He would have nothing to do with that. So far as he was concerned that was impossible.

[44]

One day he took opportunity to ask Mrs. White (she had married James White) what she knew about astronomy. He found her as ignorant as most of us are on the subject, and was disappointed that she had never read a book or an article on it. In fact, she had no inclination even to hear or talk of it. Of course, very few people are interested in astronomy, and so it was not strange that Mrs. Ellen G. White knew nothing about the subject. But one evening during that conference, Joseph Bates not only saw her in vision, which he

²White, James, in “A Word to the ‘Little Flock,’” p. 13.

had hitherto denied, and which he had thus far rejected; but in that vision, she began to talk about the heavenly bodies, and to describe some of them.

She told about the stars and the rosy-tinted belts around one of them. She told about four moons here and seven moons there and so forth. Joseph Bates listened. "My," he thought, "there is something very strange." She knew nothing at all about astronomy, she had so declared. But when she began to describe the opening in the heavens and tell about that open space with all its beauty, Joseph Bates exclaimed, "Oh, if only Lord John Rosse were here now to hear that description," for it was in 1845 that Lord John Rosse, an English astronomer, had described the open space in Orion. It was called "the gap in the sky" and Joseph Bates had read the description of that open space in the *Illustrated London News* of April 19, 1845. That was one of his favourite themes. He had not even mentioned that to Mrs. White because he thought, "She knows nothing about astronomy. What does she know about the opening in the heavens?"

[45] In that vision she began to describe it, and did it in such an interesting way, that Joseph Bates said, "O, how I wish Lord John Rosse were here tonight." He concluded that such knowledge does not come from any imagination. That such a description could not come from a religious reverie. There must be some power beyond her control. It was then that he declared, "I believe the work is of God, and is given to comfort and strengthen His 'scattered,' 'torn,' and 'pealed people.'" We do not use that expression these days, but it is very significant.

So it was back in those early days. The question in the mind of everyone was, "Is she indeed a servant of the Lord? Does God give her visions and revelations?" Some accepted, some rejected.

The story of Robbins and Sargent, two leaders of a fanatical group of that time in Boston, is a very interesting one to show those who did not accept it. This man Robbins, and his friend Sargent, had started a movement among the Advent believers back there teaching that it was a sin to work. In fact, they advocated that nobody should work, for they thought that they were in the "Jubilee," and therefore every one should rest. They believed that to do any work was a terrible sin.

Sometimes I wonder if today we might not even have a lot of people who belong to that same organization. As we might expect in connection with such a fanatical movement, Mrs. White, then Ellen Harmon, had a vision, a revelation concerning it; and she spoke very positively against such foolishness. She was very straightforward in condemning such a movement as that. Naturally Robbins and Sargent had nothing to do with Ellen Gould Harmon and rejected her counsel.

At that time Ellen and her sister Sarah were invited from their home in Maine to a place near Boston, to visit in the home of Brother and Sister Otis Nichols. One day while they were there this man Robbins and his friend Sargent drove up in a carriage and called out to Brother Nichols, "We have come to stay overnight with you. We have a little matter we want to talk about, and we'll tarry overnight!"

Brother Nichols hurried out of the house in his enthusiasm to welcome the two. He shouted that he was glad they had come, for Sisters Ellen and Sarah were in the house and he wished them to become better acquainted. He of course knew of their claims that she could never have a vision in their presence.

[46]

Brother Robbins and Brother Sargent immediately remembered they had some other urgent business in Boston, and suggested that they would be very happy to have Ellen come to Boston on the following Sabbath morning. There they could discuss the matter before the church, and all the people could enter into and enjoy such a discussion. They moved on, and promptly forgot the announcement of their original intention to stay overnight.

The appointment was made that they should all meet in Boston on Sabbath, but the evening before, when the Nichols family was having its worship, Ellen Harmon had a very short vision. In that vision the angel said, "Tomorrow, you go to Randolph." Ellen did not know where Randolph was, but the prayer season over, she said to Brother Nichols, "Tomorrow we will go to Randolph."

You can imagine Brother Nichols' surprise, and he thought, We cannot do that; we have already agreed to meet those people in Boston, and Boston is in the opposite direction from Randolph. It was his opinion that they should go to Boston, but Ellen Harmon was instructed to go to Randolph. The next morning, instead of going to Boston, they went to Randolph.

As they approached the home in which the Advent people were meeting in Randolph, they heard singing. Opening the door and stepping into the house, who should they see there in that room conducting the meeting but Robbins and Sargent! Then it was that Ellen Harmon knew why she had been instructed to go to Randolph and not to Boston. When those two men saw that lady come into that room on that Sabbath morning they looked at each other and groaned! Was that, my friends, just a religious reverie that caused her to go to Randolph when she could have gone to a score of other places around Boston?

[47] Oh, no! those men recognized it as something beyond the ken of men. They soon dismissed the meeting, appointing another for the afternoon.

During that afternoon meeting Ellen Harmon was given one of the longest visions she had in all her seventy years of service for God; it lasted for several hours. Those men did their best to bring her out of that vision, to disturb her, and to destroy her influence through that vision. They began to shout at the top of their voices, and when they got tired of shouting they called upon the people to sing at the top of their voices, and when they had sung all the hymns they knew, they began to read the Bible as loudly as they could read. They did not want to give an opportunity for the people to hear the words spoken by Ellen Harmon, who was in vision. But the brethren and sisters in Randolph that day learned a lesson. When God spoke to His servant, she obeyed His voice. That is just a little interesting side-light in connection with those very early days.

We now come down to about 1861. Out in Parkville, Michigan, there was a man whose name was Doctor Brown. He was a physician but a spiritualist, and when he heard about these visions of Mrs. White, he, too, made a claim that she would never have a vision while he was around. In fact, he claimed that if he ever saw her in vision he could bring her out of it immediately. He declared her experiences to be due to spiritualism. So he made very boastful claims as to the power that he could have over her.

Rather unexpectedly and within a very short time, in fact, only a matter of a few weeks, Elder and Mrs. White came to Parkville, Michigan, for a meeting on Sabbath, January 12, 1861. During that service in that little meeting house, she had a vision, and immediately

the people of that little town remembered Doctor Brown's boast. Somebody said, "Let's get Doctor Brown and see what he can do."

In their enthusiasm, they sent somebody for him and he came running, thinking that he had a wonderful opportunity to make good his boastful claim. As he entered the little church, he came forward to examine her. He looked at her, and said, "She does not breathe!" The whole story is told by one of the eye witnesses: "Before he had half completed his examination, he turned deathly pale, and shook like an aspen leaf. Elder White said, 'Will the doctor record her condition?' He replied, 'She does not breathe,' and rapidly made his way to the door. Those at the door who knew his boasting said, 'Go back, and do as you said you would; bring that woman out of the vision.' In great agitation he grasped the knob of the door, but was not permitted to open it until inquiry was made by those near the door, 'Doctor, what is it?' He replied, '*God only knows; let me out of this house*'; and out he went."³ So he who came to mock, fled in consternation. [48]

In the early years of the work of Ellen G. White there are many instances of that nature which we could use to give evidence that there was something beyond the power of an ordinary man or woman to say and to do the things that she did.

³Loughborough, "The Great Second Advent Movement," p. 211.

Chapter 4—Tests of the True Prophet

There are four tests of the true prophet, and it might be well for us to review those four tests. These tests are given in the Scriptures so that men may easily determine the validity of the claims made by any individual who declares that God has given him visions and revelations. They are:

1. Fulfilled predictions.
2. Divine guidance.
3. To the law and the testimony.
4. By their fruits ye shall know them.

The Test of Fulfilled Predictions

I like to think of the tests of fulfilled predictions in terms of four texts of Scripture. The first text is Deuteronomy 29, [verse 29](#), which says that “the secret things belong unto the Lord our God.” The second text is [Amos 3:7](#), which states that God reveals “His secret unto His servants the prophets.” The third text is Jeremiah 28, [verse 9](#), which makes it clear that unfulfilled predictions made in the name of the Lord are presumptuous, while fulfilled predictions demonstrate that the prophet was sent by the Lord. The fourth text is Jeremiah 18, [verses 7 to 10](#). Here we have the thought expressed that some predictions are conditional.

When we come to the first test of fulfilled predictions, we should ask ourselves in all sincerity and honesty, “Did Mrs. White ever make any predictions that were fulfilled?” Based upon the study of that test we should be able to draw our first conclusion.

In 1890 in the [The Signs of the Times, April 21, 1890](#) Mrs. White wrote these words:

“The tempest is coming, and we must get ready for its fury by having repentance towards 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. Disaster 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... Oh, let us seek God while He may be found, call upon Him while He is near!"

We have all read of how whole navies went down in the great world wars. I have seen the effect of incendiary bombs dropped upon certain great cities. The fires broke out and nothing could extinguish the flames. They tried water, and water only caused it to spread. They had not learned how to combat the incendiary bomb and the flames had their own way. In 1890 there were no incendiary bombs, and none of the chemical bombs we know of today. Yet, in the prophecy, she predicted that fires would break out unexpectedly and no human effort could quench them. That prediction seems very interesting in the light of what we have in these days.

Disasters by rail have become more and more frequent. Confusion, collision, and death without a moment's warning do occur on the great lines of travel.

In 1910, to emphasize what she had prophesied so many years before, she sent out another warning: "Soon strife among the nations will break out with an intensity that we do not now anticipate." This was published in the [The Review and Herald, November 17, 1910](#). We who are just a bit older and can look back to 1914 still remember some things that took place in the years 1914 to 1917 when these predictions were fulfilled. And so I say, dear friends, if we are looking for prophecies or predictions, there are many. This to me perhaps is one of the outstanding ones.

In connection with divinely fulfilled predictions, I am reminded of an experience we had just recently. It was in January [1953] that Elder Branson called me to his office one morning and said, "I would like you to bring together for me all the passages in the writings of Ellen G. White relative to our work in England, in

London particularly.” I smiled and said, “Elder, I think I know what you have in mind. You are thinking of the very same thing I have in mind. Now is the time to do something for London, and it seems to me that we should find the way to fulfil the prophecy relative to the work in London.”

Of course, he was very much interested that my mind should be running along the same line, and immediately we began to think in terms of what we could do for the work in London that would give us the kind of a setting that Mrs. White described some fifty or more years ago.

I remember so well this passage found in [Testimonies for the Church 6:25 and 26](#):

“There is a great work to be done in England. The light radiating from London should beam forth in clear, distinct rays to regions beyond. God has wrought in England but this English-speaking world has been terribly neglected. England has needed many more labourers and much more means. London has been scarcely touched. My heart is deeply moved as the situation in that great city is presented before me....

“In the city of London alone no fewer than one hundred men should be engaged. The Lord marks the neglect of His work, and there will be a very heavy account to settle by and by.”

Several weeks ago, as I passed through London, it was my privilege to go down to Regent Street, which is the Fifth Avenue of London, one of the most important of all the business streets in that city. There I saw a remarkable transformation that has taken place in what is known as “The New Gallery.” It was a cinema in the old days, said to be owned by the Crown, a very favourite spot for Queen Mary in her heyday, and a very well-known theatre.

[52] When our people began to look for a place in London, they had in mind a number of different buildings, but it seemed that the Lord was just opening the way and turning us to this particular spot. As I looked in there and saw the complete transformation from a theatre

to a Seventh-day Adventist preaching hall, I said to myself, “This indeed is a fulfilment of prophecy!”

Such a transformation you cannot imagine. All of those pictures that had to do with the theatre had been blotted out. Even the old theatre carpet with its special symbols or insignia, with the name of the theatre woven right into the carpet, had all gone. The old seats were taken out and the building completely renovated. The people of London call it, “The conversion of the theatre.” And it has been converted indeed!

That afternoon as we sat in committee, Elder W. W. Armstrong, the president of the British Union, said, “I was born into an Adventist family. As a boy I used to read those statements in the writings of the servant of the Lord and wonder how in the world they would ever be fulfilled. Now to think that the Lord has seen fit to put me here as the president of this union to bring about the fulfilment of that prophecy of so many years ago!” Then he called my attention to a paragraph that I had overlooked. Ellen G. White about fifty years ago, wrote:

“It seems to me that the necessity of the work in England is a very important question to us in this country [in America]. We talk about China and other countries. Let us not forget the English-speaking countries, where, if the truth were presented, many would receive and practice it.”⁴

“Well,” I said, “isn’t that interesting?”

It is because of the crisis in China, which makes it impossible for us to send money into China, that we had some funds available from the old China budget, which now makes it possible for us to give to London enough money to provide a church in a great evangelistic centre. If it had not been for the crisis in China, we would not have had that money.

The crisis in China means the fulfilment of a prophecy in the city of London. Again I say, dear friends, we have much for which to be thankful in connection with this Advent Movement. There is

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⁴White, Ellen G., [The General Conference Bulletin, April 22, 1901](#), quoted in [Evangelism](#), 415, 416.

no crisis with the Lord. What seems to us to be a crisis is but an opportunity in disguise.

I have given here just two references to predictions that have been fulfilled in a remarkable way. We might bring in many others, but these illustrate the point. Now we ask: Did Mrs. White make any predictions that were not fulfilled? Some would hasten to call our attention to a statement she made in 1856 at the conclusion of a worker's meeting or conference, when she said: "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.'"—[Testimonies for the Church 1:131, 132](#).

That statement was made in the year 1856, almost a hundred years ago. Since many people have been trying by various means to figure out the exact time when Christ will return, it would be expected that some good people would use this statement as a possible way of finding out how soon they might expect the Lord to come. These people have kept a list of all the names of those who were present at that meeting on that particular day in 1856, and they have crossed off each name as death came to them. They have been watching to see who are left and how old they are, thus calculating how much longer we might have to wait for the second coming of Christ.

This has now resulted in disappointment to some Seventh-day Adventist people, for, so far as we know, every one whose name was listed as having been present at that meeting in 1856 has now passed away. The White Publications Office has received many letters asking about that prediction, and calling our attention to the fact that those people have all passed away, and now why has the Lord not yet come? Our simple answer is that here is a case of conditional prophecy.

[54] Had the Seventh-day Adventist people met the conditions and done their work as they were expected to do it, the work would have been finished long ago, and we should have been in the kingdom many years ago. ⁵ The facts in the matter are that we as a people

⁵See [Testimonies for the Church 6:400](#); [Testimonies for the Church 9:29](#); "Evangelism, 694-696.

have failed to do our part in God's plan. It does not seem reasonable then that we should place the blame on God for our failure. And now let us turn to Jeremiah, [chapter 18](#), and read concerning conditional prophecies: [Verses 9 and 10](#) state: "And at what instant I shall speak 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."

When man fails to do his part, God cannot do what He promises to do. This was so in the experience of the children of Israel and the Lord declared in [Numbers 13:34](#): "Ye shall know my breach of promise." In 1883 Mrs. White speaking of this experience of Israel told us that "The same sins have delayed the entrance of modern Israel into the heavenly Canaan."—[Evangelism, 696](#).

We have, if you will remember, an example of conditional prophecy in that of Jonah. God said to Jonah, "Go over to the city of Nineveh, walk up and down the streets and proclaim the message, 'In forty days Nineveh will be destroyed.'" So Jonah went up and down the streets of Nineveh telling the people, "In forty days the city of Nineveh will be destroyed."

All the people became exercised and quite excited about it. They turned to the Lord with all their hearts. They confessed their mistakes and their wrong doings. They repented in sackcloth and ashes. Jonah went over and sat on a hillside to wait and see if the city would be destroyed. It was not destroyed. It became a conditional prophecy.

Now it does not disturb my faith in the writings of the Spirit of prophecy because that particular prediction has not yet been fulfilled. I am very glad to assure you that there are so many other predictions that have been fulfilled that I am not going to be disturbed because of the one which we can explain only on the basis of conditional prophecy.

Divine predictions fulfilled is a great test for any prophet. If the prediction comes true, we may rest assured that it must be from a true source. We must, however, bear in mind the conditional nature of certain predictions and we must also bear in mind that Ellen G. White's work was not primarily that of making predictions. Her work was mainly of a different nature.

The Test of Divine Guidance in Times of Crisis

The second test of the true prophet is mentioned in Isaiah, the 58th chapter, [verse 11](#): “The Lord shall guide thee continually.” Psalm 32, [verse 8](#): “I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go:” “I will counsel you;” and in Hosea 12, [verse 13](#): “And by a prophet the Lord brought Israel out of Egypt, and by a prophet was he preserved.” By a prophet the Lord led and guided Israel of old, and in the same way will He guide Israel of today.

I like to think of this as divine guidance in times of crisis. If we look through the Bible, we shall find many, many instances of how the Lord met a crisis with a word or message which came through the prophets. To me this is one of the most interesting things in the whole study. I should like to tell you a story this morning which indicates quite clearly how the Lord was ready to guide the Advent people in times of crisis.

It was on the night of November 3, 1890, while Sister White was attending a general meeting in Salamanca, New York, that she had a vision. In this vision she saw a group of men going up the stairs to a second storey room. They entered the room and, as they did so, one of the men turned and locked the door, and said, “We will remain here until this problem is settled no matter how long it takes us!”

Then, in this vision, she saw them sit down, she heard what each man said. She even saw one man standing up and holding a paper in his hand. He declared, “Such articles as this on the Sabbath and on the Second Advent should never be published in the religious liberty journal. They must not be in that journal!”

[56] She watched with great interest all that took place, and every detail was impressed upon her mind. The next day in her talk with two of our ministers she thought to tell them what she was shown in the vision that she had seen on that night of November 3. She hesitated and paused. “It does not come. I can’t remember what I saw,” she said. “Well, never mind, I shall think of it later,” and she went on with her talk, but it did not come back to her mind.

Four months went by and they were at the General Conference Session. In her discourse Sabbath afternoon March 7, 1891, she came to the very place where she could use that message, and she began, “On November 3, at Salamanca, the Lord revealed to me a

meeting,” and she again hesitated. She could not call it to mind. And the people were all much surprised. Three times she tried to tell it. Three times she failed. After this meeting she returned to her home and retired early.

That Saturday night at the conclusion of the meeting of the General Conference in the Tabernacle, as our church was called, the people went to their places of abode. But not all the people went home, for at the conclusion of that evening meeting a little group of men went to the old Review and Herald building. As they went up the stairs, they were discussing a question. They entered the door of one of the rooms on the second floor, and as they entered, one man of that group turned and said, “I’ll lock this door and we will stay here until this thing is settled!”

They sat down and entered into the discussion of that problem. Hour after hour went by—twelve o’clock, one o’clock, two o’clock. It was not until three o’clock in the morning that they finally said, “It is enough.” They unlocked the door and went to their several places. At three o’clock that morning in the house across the street from the Battle Creek Tabernacle, Mrs. White was awakened and bidden by the angel to go into the early meeting and present what was shown to her in Salamanca. She had written what had been shown to her. She arose, found the manuscript, reviewed it, and hurried to the meeting.

She had been giving a series of studies at that conference. Each morning at 5:30 the ministers had come together to hear her message, and when it came to that Sabbath morning, she said, “Elder Olson [the president of the General Conference], I shall not be here tomorrow.” He said, “You have nothing more to tell us, Sister White?” “No,” she replied, “I have said all I have to say at this time.”

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However, that Sunday morning she appeared at the Battle Creek Tabernacle at 5:30. As she walked in the door, Elder Olson inquired, “Sister White, have you something for us?” “Indeed I have,” she said. She went directly to the platform, spread out the papers, and began to read.

Now let me give you the experience of that morning in the words of Elder Olson, who was at that very time the president of the General Conference. “She then began to read, describing a meeting that was shown her that was held in one of the rooms in the Review office, where a number of brethren were together. She described

their attitude and their earnestness, and the position which they had taken; for there was a heated discussion, as they could not agree on certain questions at issue.

“Personally,” says O. A. Olson, “I sat there in blank bewilderment. I did not know what she referred to. I had neither heard nor had any knowledge of the things that she presented, nor of such a meeting as she described. Indeed, I was so surprised, and the things she presented as having taken place in that meeting seemed so unreasonable, that I was quite nonplused in my mind as to what this meant.”

When she finished she sat down. Everybody looked at everybody else in astonishment. When could this have occurred? The president of the General Conference knew nothing about it. Most of the people there knew nothing about it. But a few at that meeting that morning knew all about it.

[58] Then Captain Eldridge arose and said, “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 have been presented to us this morning. We remained in that room till three o'clock this morning.”

Then he added, “If I should have begun to give a description of what took place, and the personal attitude of those in the room, I could not have given it as exactly and as correctly as it has been given by Sister White. I now see that I was in error; that the position that I took was not correct; and from the light that has been given this morning, I acknowledge that I was wrong.”

There was now no question in anybody's mind as to the time of that meeting presented to Mrs. White on November 3 of the previous year which she was not permitted to speak of for those four months because the meeting had not then taken place, and did not take place until the night of March 7, 1891. You can see now why God held her back and did not permit those messages to come before the meeting took place, for had they been given before the meeting took place, the meeting never would have occurred, because the men would have known about it! And so it was withheld from her until the hour, the very moment, of the crisis. Then came the message in that remarkable way.

A. F. Ballenger was also present at that meeting. He was then the Secretary of the Religious Liberty Association, and he arose and said that the meeting described by the servant of the Lord had been held the night before. He acknowledged that he was the one who held up the copy of *The American Sentinel*, and who had pointed to the articles on the “Sabbath” and on the “Second Coming of Christ,” and declared that “Such articles must never appear in this religious liberty journal.” Then, too, he confessed that he had been on the wrong side of the controversy. He acknowledged his mistakes, and was willing to be forgiven.

I submit, dear friends, that such a thing does not come from a religious reverie. We cannot explain that experience as a figment of the imagination, for God alone knows the thoughts of men when those thoughts are afar off, before they even come to a man’s mind. And so it is that we might say not only in this, but in many instances, that God used His servant to bring His messages at the very time the messages were needed. I call this divine guidance at the time of crisis. [59]

“To the Law and to the Testimony”

There is a text in the Bible which is very familiar to all, and if you were to read the words in [Isaiah 8:20](#) I am sure you would remember that the true prophet must speak and write messages which are in harmony with the law and the prophets, otherwise, there is no light in them. This is the third test of the true prophet.

I am convinced that Ellen G. White in all of her works meets this requirement. We do not need to depend upon just a few little snatches of messages or records of visions, or revelations, but we have an abundance of material on which to base our judgment as to whether or not her teaching is in harmony with the teachings of other prophets who had gone before.

Twenty-five million words are a lot of words. Seventy years of service is a long period of service. If there were mistakes, if she were false, certainly it would become very apparent in a period of seventy years, for how easy it is for us to say something when we are twenty and something quite different from that when we are sixty! We have all had that experience. But not so in the messages of Ellen

G. White. There is a harmony that runs all the way through from the very first vision, when she was seventeen years of age, through the whole seventy years of her work. There is a continuity, a unity, and an agreement that is most marvellous and almost miraculous!

[60] Not long ago I took upon myself the task of checking the writings of the Spirit of prophecy with the teachings of the Bible. I chose twenty different topics. For instance, a “Christian”—and put in one column all that the Bible said about a Christian, and then just at random went through the forty-three volumes and some of the periodicals, and remember there are four thousand articles available, and put in a parallel column that which Mrs. White has given regarding a Christian. It was one of the most interesting studies I have ever made. And certainly, folk, the harmony is marvellous. It is almost unbelievable that there could be that harmony in her teachings running all the way through her writings from the very first until the very end of her seventy years of experience.

If you want an interesting study, do that some time. I advise you to take about a week, for a day will not be sufficient. You will become so engrossed in your study that at the end of the day you will not even want to go to bed; for when you begin a study of that kind, checking the writings, the messages, of Ellen G. White, with the teachings of the Scripture, you will find it not only wonderful, but it is almost intriguing.

Now, looking at the teachings of the Scripture, let us notice several of the outstanding points mentioned in the Bible which must be found in the teachings of the true prophet: [Deuteronomy 13, verses 1-4](#)—The true prophet will exalt the true God. May I ask you, does Mrs. White in her writings exalt the true God? Everywhere. On every page. There is no lack of material on this point.

[2 Chronicles 24:19, 20](#) and [Deuteronomy 13:4](#)—The true prophet will teach obedience to God's law. Tell me, do you find the writings of Ellen G. White teaching the necessity of obedience to God's law? Let me give you two very interesting references for you to study: [Steps to Christ, 62](#), in the Army and Navy edition. And when you have read the paragraph on page 62, then turn to *Desire of Ages*, and read two paragraphs on page 762. Putting those two paragraphs together you have the best summarization of Ellen G. White's teaching regarding the law of God. I hope you will all do

that because it will simply open up a great avenue of study which I am sure you will want to follow through.

1 [John 4:2, 3](#)—The true prophet will believe in and teach that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. Do you find that teaching in the writings of Ellen G. White? Does she make it clear that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh? Read *Desire of Ages*, *Steps to Christ*, *Ministry of Healing*, *Christ's Object Lessons*, *Mount of Blessing*, and you will find in no other book in the world such instruction, and such counsel as given by Ellen G. White relative to Jesus, our Lord and our Saviour. I think we will have to agree that if she did nothing else, she most certainly set forth the Lord Jesus as man's only Saviour. [61]

The fourth point is in [2 Peter 1:21](#)—The true prophet will speak as he is inspired by the Holy Ghost. This is what gives to us that sense of inspiration as we read such books as *Desire of Ages* and *Steps to Christ*. It is said that some years ago, in an English class in a great American university, the old English professor asked the students to bring in examples of outstanding literature. And one of them brought in examples from the book *Desire of Ages*, and read to the class some of those beautiful passages from that book. The professor asked for the privilege of reading the book. He did so, and when he came back to the class the next time, he said, "This book is certainly inspired. I do not know where it came from. I know nothing about the author, but the words and the thoughts are so elevating, so ennobling, that it inspires one to read it!" Yes, that has been the experience of many. And I am sure that you and I can bear testimony as to our own reactions to the reading of such a book as *Desire of Ages*.

“By Their Fruits Ye Shall Know Them”

The fourth and perhaps the most important test of all is, “By their fruits ye shall know them.” If Ellen G. White had been called by the Lord to serve only a few months and then had lost that gift, it would be difficult to use this test. But, having served seventy years, and having met the crises of this denomination throughout its history, and having produced and left with us so many books and so many words, she has left us an abundance of material on which to judge the kind of fruit borne by those messages.

[62] To me this is, perhaps, the strongest evidence of all. Divine predictions are important, but they do not impress me nearly so much as the kind of fruit borne by the prophet, by the messages of the prophet, the kind of instruction given to the people, and the results of following such instruction. Several years ago F. D. Nichol was writing a book. That work took him over to the college operated by another Adventist group, the First Day Advent people. He came in contact with the president of that college who, for many years, has been the leader of that group.

During their conversation this good old gentleman made observations regarding the progress of the Seventh-day Adventist movement, and the extent of that movement in the world today, and then added, "Your men were more farsighted than ours and laid better plans." Elder Nichol commented to the effect that we have been no keener, no wiser, than their leaders, but that we have had something that they did not have, namely, "a frail handmaiden of the Lord among us." Then he added that we were just simple enough in our faith to follow the divine instruction which came through that messenger, that servant of God. He assured the aged professor that anything that has come to us by way of growth, or progress, or success, has been due largely to our following the instruction which came from God through His messenger.

I think that is a good testimony, and it certainly had its effect upon that gentleman who has been the leader of one of the other Advent groups, and may I add there are five of them in the world today. The total membership of those five groups is a little less than 50,000 people, about the same number of people who were looking for the coming of the Lord in October, 1844. This is one of the evidences that God has been with us as a people, and has given us instruction. I thank the Lord that Seventh-day Adventists generally have followed those instructions.

Mrs. White says in one place that the Lord will bless us in our work in proportion to the way we carry out His instruction. I would that all of us might carry out the instruction a hundred per cent in everything, in order that we might have a hundred per cent of heaven's blessing on everything we do. And be it remembered that the nearer we keep to the blueprint, as we call it, the greater will be the blessing that rests upon our work. I wish to emphasize

that fact, for you are now going through an experience which some other parts of the world field have already gone through. In your educational work, brethren, I appeal to you with all my heart to follow the blueprint as closely as possible, and God will see you through.

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Ellen G. White lived in a number of places—New England, Michigan, Switzerland, Australia, California—and she was not there for just a day or two. She spent years in those places, and perhaps the place where she was best known was the city of Battle Creek, Michigan. She spent many years there, and as a result the people became very well acquainted with her in that city. “By their fruits ye shall know them.”

First of all I want to bring the testimony of the people who knew her best—people who were closest to her for the longest period of time—and see what kind of witness they bear concerning the fruits of her labours. One man who has always appealed to me as a very interesting character, and certainly a great leader in the Advent Movement, was Uriah Smith.

He was associated with Elder and Mrs. White for many years. He knew what it meant to receive pointed testimonies relating to his own life.

Uriah Smith, writing of the servant of the Lord, says:

“Every test which can be brought to bear upon such manifestations proves them genuine. The evidence which supports them, internal and external, is conclusive. They agree with the Word of God and with themselves. They are given, unless those best qualified to judge are invariably deceived, when the Spirit of God is especially present. Calm, dignified, impressive, they commend themselves to every beholder as the very opposite of that which is false or fanatical.”

You could not ask for a better testimony from anyone. That was given by a man who was closely associated with Ellen G. White for many, many years and to whom message after message came from the Lord through her. Uriah Smith followed those messages, accepted the reproof and the counsel.

Listen:

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“They tend to the purest morality. They discountenance every vice, and exhort to the practice of every virtue. They point out the perils through which we are to pass to the kingdom. They reveal the devices of Satan. They warn us against his snares. They have nipped in the bud scheme after scheme of fanaticism which the enemy has tried to foist into our midst. They have exposed hidden iniquity, brought to light concealed wrongs, and laid bare the evil motives of the false hearted. They have warded off dangers from the cause of truth upon every hand. They have aroused and re-aroused us to greater consecration to God, more zealous efforts for holiness of heart, and greater diligence in the cause and service of our Master.

“They lead us to Christ.... They lead us to the Bible.... 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. And no person with an unprejudiced mind can read their stirring appeals for a pure and lofty morality, their exaltation of God and the Saviour, their denunciations of every evil, and their exhortations to everything that is holy and of good report, without being compelled to say, ‘These are not the words of him that hath a devil.’”

⁶

I think, dear friends, when we look at such a testimony as that from a man who lived so close to her, we shall have to agree, “By their fruits ye shall know them.”

I like to read such paragraphs as this when it comes to the question as to whether Mrs. White really did exalt and uplift the Saviour. I take this one from [Gospel Workers, 160](#):

⁶Taken from “Life and Teachings of Ellen G. White,” pp. 120, 121.

“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 Saviour, 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 Saviour.”

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Just a paragraph, but there are hundreds just like it. I say unto you, my brethren and sisters, read the books for yourselves. Fill your minds and your hearts with the messages, and decide whether or not they lead you to a nobler life, or whether they will lead you to that which is base and ignoble. “By their fruits ye shall know them.”

There is another aspect of this question relative to the influence of the work of Ellen G. White on which we may base our judgment. I like to call it “the external evidence.” Looking at our denominational work we find four thousand one hundred and fifty-five church schools, two hundred and eighty-three intermediate schools, academies, and colleges. Over two hundred thousand students in them, and there are forty million dollars worth of property held by Seventh-day Adventists for their school work. I ask you, Where does it all come from?

It was from the inspiration given to us in the books *Education*, *Fundamentals*, and *Counsels to Teachers*. Take away those books, and what business would *we* have in the field of education at all?

Take as an example the medical work with one hundred and six sanitariums, fifty-seven treatment rooms, three hundred and seventy-one institutional doctors, the College of Medical Evangelists—twenty-five million dollars worth of medical institutions—all bear witness to the fact that Ellen G. White was the one who gave

us *our message, our counsel, our direction* in regard to *our medical work*.

[66] During the past few months I became very much interested in finding out exactly the kind of medical work God wants Seventh-day Adventists to conduct. I have brought together many pages of material. I have never read anything so inspiring. I cannot see how Seventh-day Adventist doctors can read those messages without feeling that they have been set in the world to fulfil prophecy. I thank God for our Seventh-day Adventist doctors—men who have a sense of their responsibility not alone for the healing of the body, but for the healing of the soul.

And so, as we follow through all of the instruction given us relative to our medical work, we find there the very inspiration that is behind our whole medical programme. If we had not those words, we would have no need to operate a medical college of our own, no need to operate Seventh-day Adventist medical institutions, for the world can do a good job in operating just an ordinary hospital, but they cannot and never will be able to operate a Seventh-day Adventist sanitarium. And the interesting part of it is the people of the world know it.

Not very long ago, a committee representing a city located in Florida came to our leaders in the Florida Conference and said, “We want to build a city hospital. We will supply all the money. We will erect the buildings. We shall equip those buildings. Then we would like Seventh-day Adventists to operate it because we want the same kind of an institution as you have in Orlando, Florida. We have all been there. We like the spirit of that institution. We like the doctors, the nurses, the workers. We want that group of people to come in and operate a hospital for this city. Yes, you may call it a Seventh-day Adventist hospital, for that is what we want and nothing else.” And our men said to them, “But you know, it costs money to operate an institution like that.”

The chairman of the committee thought a minute, and said, “I will tell you what we shall do. We expect you to care for the poor of our city. No one shall ever be turned away from that hospital, and we shall give you \$25,000 a year just to help in the operating of that institution in return for the charity work that you will do for the poor of our community.”

So they have done about everything they can to induce us to come and help them. A few months ago, the General Conference Committee gave approval to accept the responsibility of operating that institution. The building will be erected by the city. The building will belong to the city. All the equipment will belong to the city. We shall simply send in a group of doctors and nurses, Seventh-day Adventists through and through, to operate that institution because they want the same kind of an institution as we have in Orlando, Florida!

[67]

Well, it can be multiplied around the world. I ask you, brethren and sisters, where did that come from? The fruits of the labours of a dear old lady who somehow caught the vision of what God wanted in the way of medical care. The world cannot give it.

I was in the city of Washington, D. C., not so long ago, talking to a specialist in a certain field. He is the internal medicine man at the Medical College of George Washington University, and he said to me, "Mr. Rebok, we send our people out to your sanitarium not because your doctors are very clever, they are just like us—ordinary men—but your nursing service is superb. There is nothing equal to it." I agree with him.

My own brother-in-law is a Catholic, but a very good Catholic. He was taken sick not so long ago and of course I thought he would want to go to a Catholic hospital. But, to my great surprise, he said, "I want to go to the Sanitarium," and he went to our Sanitarium. The first evening, after the little nurse had finished her P. M. care, she stepped quietly to his bedside and said, "Mr. A., we are so sorry that you are sick, and now it is our custom to offer a word of prayer for our patients before they go to sleep. Would you mind if I prayed for you?" He said, "She said it in such a nice voice, and she was such a sweet-looking little girl, that I said to her, 'If you are willing to pray for a Catholic, then pray, for I need all the prayers I can get from everybody.'"

So the next day when my wife and I went in to see him, the very first thing he said was, "I have never heard such a sweet prayer in all my life as the prayer of that little nurse by the side of my bed last night." Night after night he had that same experience, and now he has sent no small number of his friends to the Washington Sanitarium.

He was treated so gently and kindly that he wants others to enjoy

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the same kind of Christian care that he appreciated so much.

Oh, I tell you, brethren, when we follow the instruction given to us regarding our medical work and how we should carry it on, there is something which has a power to draw people to God, and it comes through the service rendered by our doctors and our nurses. Take away all of that instruction, fail to follow all of that good counsel regarding our medical missionary work, and what will you have left? Just *another* hospital where they push the patients through as fast as possible, get them out of the way with the least possible inconvenience to the doctors and nurses. Such sick people become just case number so and so, to be pushed out, because they need the room for somebody else. Not so in Seventh-day Adventist sanitariums and hospitals. I thank God for the instruction given through Ellen G. White relative to our medical work.

Forty-three publishing houses, thirteen or fourteen million dollars worth of Seventh-day Adventist literature sold last year from those publishing houses, by four thousand five hundred faithful colporteurs going from door to door in every land. Where did that all come from? The answer is, through the inspiration given to this people by the servant of the Lord. Take away all that instruction relative to our colporteur work and the production of our literature, and what have you left? Not much!

Seventeen thousand Sabbath schools, with a million, one hundred and twenty-five thousand Sabbath school members around the world today, bringing in to our church over five million dollars a year for mission work. Where did it all come from? The fruit of the labour of the servant of God. Our world-wide work with the General Conference as an organization, some eighty union conferences, a hundred and forty-three local conferences, two hundred and twenty-seven mission organizations, over ten thousand churches, over eighteen thousand evangelistic workers, and now more than nine hundred thousand baptized members. All of this the fruit of the gift of prophecy.

[69] I say again, take away all of the instruction on our medical work. Take away all the instruction on Christian education, take away all the instruction on our colporteur work, on our Sabbath school work, on our work in general—take it all away, and what would be left for Seventh-day Adventists? Oh, maybe about the same as the other

Adventist groups. They have lacked divine guidance. If we, too, had lacked divine guidance we would be just like them. I tell you, my brethren and sisters, we have much for which to be thankful today.

Chapter 5—Evidences That Ellen G. White Was Used by God

We wish to read a few verses of Scripture found in 1 Thessalonians, the 5th chapter, beginning with the 14th verse.

“Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feebleminded, support the weak, be patient toward all men. See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men. Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing. In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. Quench not the Spirit. Despise not prophesyings. Prove all things; hold fast that which is good. Abstain from all appearance of evil. And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is He that calleth you, who also will do it.” [Verses 14-24.](#)

From these verses we gather that the purpose of all Scripture is to prepare a people who are blameless in body, soul, and spirit, to be ready when the Lord Jesus returns. This is the work of the prophets, and it has to do with each of us personally and individually. Therefore we must be clear as to the prophets themselves and understand their messages.

We have now examined the four Bible tests of the true prophet. Thus we have done that which this Scripture tells us to do, to test, to try, and to prove, and I trust that we shall keep in mind these four tests as we read the instruction and counsel given by the “messenger of the Lord.” A careful, intensive study of the life and work of Ellen G. White will cause us to come to the conclusion that she met and fulfilled the four Bible tests.

In case more evidence is needed, and I think it is good to seek all that we can find, I should like to present six types of evidence in addition to the four tests which we have already discussed. These six types of evidence are: [71]

1. The timeliness of the messages given.
2. The practical nature of the messages given.
3. The absolute certainty of the messages.
4. The relation of outside influences.
5. The recognition accorded by contemporaries.
6. The physical phenomena attending "the messenger."

We need but to reach back into the busy life and prolific writings of Ellen G. White to find any number of experiences, or evidences, which fall under some one or all of these six types which I should like to discuss.

The Timeliness of the Messages

The first one, on the timeliness of the messages, is to my mind a very important one because, if the message came too early, it would be of no avail; if it came too late, it would do no good. Thus the message had to come at the very time it was needed. If it did not arrive on time, we might say that the messenger was either true or false. We could not be sure. But, if the message came right at the moment it was needed, it would be a very good evidence that some power outside of the human mind was responsible for bringing such a message at the correct and opportune moment.

May I bring to you just two stories to help you decide whether or not God was working through Ellen G. White in connection with the timeliness of the messages. In June, 1871, two ministers began an evangelistic effort in San Francisco. Elder Loughborough was the older minister, and there was a younger man, whose name we shall not mention. By December 1, some fifty or sixty people were baptized, and a nice church was organized in San Francisco.

Much to the chagrin of all the people, the young man who had been associated with Elder Loughborough fell into some questionable company, and had some associations which were not the best. He, of course, was cautioned by Elder Loughborough and by the people, who told him that he should be most careful with whom he

[72] associated. They reminded him that he could not go just where he pleased for people were watching him, and most certainly whatever he did would have an effect upon their little church.

The young man responded that it was none of their business where he went, with whom he associated, and what he said and what he did. Some young people are like that. They think it does not matter much. They have an idea they can go where they want to go and do what they want to do without concern for anyone, but unfortunately such is not true. For what *I* do influences the opinion of people round about concerning *you* as members of *my* church. It even reflects upon God, because people will form their opinion of God by what they see revealed in me. They will form their opinion of the Seventh-day Adventist Church by what they see in you and me. We cannot as Christians, as members of the body of Christ, go where we please and do as we please without its having an influence upon those about us and those with whom we are associated. So, without any question, this young man was in the wrong.

On Sabbath, January 27, 1872, the church people decided that they should have a church trial, bring this young man before the church, discuss his situation, and decide on a course of procedure. The trial was set for Sunday morning, January 28, at nine o'clock. When the church services were over on that Sabbath day, the people went to their homes, rather expectantly looking forward to the meeting of the following morning.

On that Sunday morning Elder Loughborough was up bright and early. He made his preparations to go to the meeting. As he started down the street, he saw this young man, and noticed that he was going in the wrong direction. His attitude was entirely different from what it had been the day before. Coming a little closer, he observed that the young man had been shedding some tears. He spoke to Elder Loughborough, saying, "I am not going to the meeting today."

"Not going to the meeting?" Elder Loughborough asked.

He replied, "No, I am not going."

[73] "Well," the elder rejoined, "this meeting is called for you and for your problem." He responded, "No, I have written a letter, a confession of my wrong. You may take it and read it to the church." "Well," Elder Loughborough inquired, "tell me, Brother, what has

happened? What has brought about the change in your attitude, in your whole situation?"

The young man looked at him and said, "Elder Loughborough, last evening after the sun went down, I went to the post office and drew from the box a letter." Taking a letter from his pocket he said, "Read it!" Elder Loughborough began to read. It was postmarked January 18, from Battle Creek, Michigan, some 2,000 miles away from San Francisco. As he read, he saw that Mrs. White was describing a situation with which he was somewhat familiar.

In this letter she told the young man of a vision she had on December 10, 1871, while at Bordoville, Vermont. In that vision she saw him in company with some people with whom he should never have been associated. She saw what he was doing and heard what he said. She wrote a fine motherly letter assuring him that the Lord had instructed her to counsel him to change his ways and to amend his doings, for she warned him that he was on dangerous ground.

I have had that letter in my hands. I have read it. I have tried to put myself in the place of that young man back there, and I want to tell you, dear friends, I think the message would have had the same influence upon me as it had upon him. On December 10, 1871, in a vision in Vermont she saw what this young man was doing in San Francisco. She was on the eastern coast of the United States about 3,000 miles away from San Francisco, and later she wrote out and described the exact situation of that young man as of that moment.

It was not until January 27, that the church decided to have an investigation, and give opportunity for the young man to explain his doings. The date was set for the 28th of January. It was about the 27th of December, 1871 that Mrs. White got back to her place of abode. She sat down and began to write the letter to this young man, but something came in and she did not have an opportunity to finish it. It was not until the morning of the 18th of January that she was awakened very early in the morning. The angel standing by her side, said, "Now is the time to finish the message to the young man in San Francisco. Write!" And she wrote.

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She finished the communication quite early in the morning. She called her son and said, "Edson, take this letter to the post office immediately. Do not put it in the slot or the letter drop, but hand it to the post master and request him to put it into the mail bag going

direct to San Francisco. It must go at once, and without delay.” So the letter mailed on January 18 began its journey across the continent in 1872 at a rather slow pace, for it did not arrive in San Francisco until the 27th of January—the very day the young man needed the message.

It was at sundown on Sabbath, January 27, that he was impressed to go to the post office and there he received this message. As he read the message it brought him, of course, to a realization that there was a God in heaven who knew all about him and his doings. Yes, God could see what he was doing, knew exactly with whom he was going, and with whom he was associating, and then the loving Father in heaven instructed His messenger to write a message for that young man in particular. It made a profound impression upon the young man's mind. It caused him to see his error and to repent of his ways. He sat down immediately and wrote a letter of confession, admitting that there was no need for a church trial for he recognized that all he was doing was known to God, and to the servant of the Lord, though separated by several thousand miles.

I submit, dear brethren and sisters, that that kind of a message could not come from the mind, or the imagination, of just anybody, near or far. And I also submit that for that message to arrive on the very day, not January 29, nor December 1, but at the very moment the message was needed, is but another evidence that God was working through His servant, Ellen G. White.

[75] May I add still another experience of a similar nature, and this one, I am sure, may be known by some of our older workers, perhaps personally, and even intimately. In 1891 Ellen G. White was sent over to Australia to help in the establishment of the institutions and our work in general. She decided to stay there for a considerable length of time. While she was in Australia, the people in America were carrying on the movement and doing the best they could under the circumstances. Of course, everybody was interested in and concerned over the long absence of Mrs. White.

In Battle Creek at that time, about the middle of the 1890's, a young lady by the name of Annie Philips came out one day and claimed that she had had a vision, a revelation from the Lord. At that time she was living in the home of one of our ministers. She began to write out her messages, and naturally the people were very

much interested. Some thought it only reasonable that while Sister White was absent in Australia, the Lord would choose some one else to carry on her work in the United States. So they read her messages with great interest, and some began to compare Sister White's messages with the messages of Annie Philips. Some things she wrote were very nice and she copied Mrs. White's style. But some things she taught had no foundation in the Bible.

It was not long until A. T. Jones felt very much impressed that he should preach a sermon in the tabernacle on a Sabbath morning. He came to that meeting with the message that God had chosen another messenger. He made it clear that he did not think it necessary that the message should be given through just one agent. He thought it possible that the Lord would see fit to use many. Here was just another. He took a whole hour to compare the work of Ellen G. White and the work of Annie Philips.

He read the messages, placed them side by side, and said, "Brethren, don't you see that they are just the same. They have the same ring. They have the same content. They are written in almost the same language. This is an evidence that God has chosen another messenger." And so he urged the people of Battle Creek to accept Annie Philips as another of God's messengers. [76]

When the church service closed that morning, I can assure you that quite a few folks did not go home as readily as usual. They stood about in little clusters outside the tabernacle and talked about it, and wondered if it were possible that God had sent them another messenger. They questioned each other as to whether all the messages would be in harmony, or if there might be some conflict between them? What will Sister White do about this? and what will she say about it when she hears of the development here in Battle Creek? These were some of the questions that disturbed them. They were all excited and stirred up by the sermon.

The next morning, Sunday, Elder A. T. Jones went over to the post office. As he asked at the window for his mail he was handed a letter, a long envelope, rather big, postmarked Australia. The date was some weeks before the day on which the letter was received. The return address gave the name, Mrs. E. G. White.

He sat down and began to read this communication from Australia—from Sister White. I shall give you just the substance of the

contents. She asked Elder Jones who appointed him to preach such a sermon as he preached in the tabernacle. Who gave him the authority to be judge in such a matter as to whether God had chosen another messenger? Why did he stand before the people and compare the message of this one with the messages which God has sent to her? She went on and outlined in detail exactly what had happened on that particular Sabbath morning in the Battle Creek Tabernacle. She pleaded with him not to do anything that would hinder or thwart or confuse the people of God. It was a very powerful message, very direct, and very timely.

[77] As the preacher sat there looking at this message and reading it, there was a young man standing nearby who had come to write a post card to his parents. When he saw Elder Jones sitting there on the bench, he took a little extra time to write his card, but of course he was observing what was going on.

Just then the associate editor of the church paper came in and saw Elder Jones sitting there. He said, "What is the matter?" Elder Jones looked up and replied, "Well, Brother, what is the matter? Look at this letter. Notice the date. Note carefully the date of the postmark and where it came from. How did Sister White know a month ago that I was going to preach a sermon like I preached yesterday? Who told her? As a matter of fact, when she wrote that testimony I had no idea of preaching such a sermon. It never came into my mind until only a few days ago. Explain it for me, how so long ago, she knew not only that I was going to do this but she knew the words I was going to say—the very things that I presented to the church yesterday!"

The editor solemnly told Brother Jones that he knew the answer to his own questions; that it did not come from Sister White's own imagination. Only the God in heaven knows our thoughts afar off, before they pass through our minds. Only the God of heaven knows where we are and what we are doing and all about us. He knows. Can you deny that the God in heaven sent that message to Ellen G. White in Australia so long before and so far away, and that He had anything to do with that message arriving there on that particular day?

A. T. Jones admitted, "I have made a mistake. I was wrong. I shall go to the church next Sabbath morning and I shall read this

message, and I shall confess before all the people that I ran ahead of the Lord." So the next Sabbath morning he was back in the pulpit at the Battle Creek Tabernacle and he gave his message. It was a powerful sermon. In it he acknowledged that only God in heaven could know a man's thoughts a month or two before he thinks them, and only the God in heaven could have the power to put those thoughts into the mind of another person thousands of miles away so long before the man himself would think them.

Think now of the timeliness of that message. Here again we bring from the life and works of Ellen G. White an experience which certainly proves to me that such messages were not due to any stretch of her imagination. It was not merely a religious reverie that could bring to pass such an experience as that. No, brethren and sisters, when I come to think of these marvellous things that have taken place in the life of Ellen G. White, I stand very humble and say, "God, if you know me as well and as intimately as you knew Elder A. T. Jones, and the young man who was working with Elder Loughborough in San Francisco, then I am convinced that I ought to be the kind of a man you want me to be."

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The Practical Nature of the Messages

Next I want to take up *the practical nature of the messages*. In a letter which came to me only yesterday, my secretary summarized briefly a "message" which reached my desk in Washington from some people who think themselves to be prophets today. But when I read their words I found them to be not very practical, in fact, anything but practical. I shall not go into detail on that. Let me call your attention back to the things which are more important.

Mrs. White did not write such impractical things. She never engaged in any kind of imagination or speculation of that nature. She was dealing with real people. She was giving counsel on actual practical situations. She was concerned with real problems, and therefore every message was direct, and every message had its objective and accomplished its purpose.

Let me refer to just one phase of her work in Australia which I think will illustrate the practical nature of the messages given. When she went over there, our work was in its infancy. It had just begun.

The church was very weak. In fact, the number of believers was very small. But soon after she arrived there she made it clear to the brethren that she had come because the Lord wanted her to help them to establish the work in Australia and do it in the way it should be done, according to God's own plan.

[79] One phase of her work was to be the establishment of a Seventh-day Adventist training school for Australia. It was not to be just another college. Australia had colleges and universities—good ones—but the kind of a school that God wanted established in Australia was not just an ordinary school. He had in mind exactly the kind of school which he wanted established in that country, and for that reason He sent His messenger there to direct the minds of the people in the achievement of His purpose.

Oh, that we, too, might know the kind of a school God wants in India, in Burma, in Egypt, in Beirut, in every centre around the world. My brother, my sister, I appeal to you one and all, read the messages, follow the instruction and the counsel given by God! When He told the brethren over there that they should build a school, He also told them the kind of school that it should be.

You will find a very interesting chapter in the book *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, entitled, "Work and Education." It is a wonderful chapter on education. If you have not read it recently, turn to it and read it in the light of what I have to say this morning. As she went on to describe the school to be established, the Australian brethren shook their heads, and some of them came to a conclusion that Sister White was all wrong.

One of them even took time to talk with Elder W. C. White concerning his attitude toward the proposed school, and Elder White has given us a short paragraph which summarized the whole situation very clearly. He says:

“One day an influential and talented member of the Melbourne church after listening to our plans for the establishment of such a school as we had at Healdsburg said to me, ‘Brother White, this plan of building such a school is not an Australian plan at all, the demand for having such a school is not an Australian demand.

The idea of establishing a school at this time, when our cause is so young and weak, is not an Australian idea!”

He was right. It was not an Australian idea. It was not an Australian demand. It was not the kind of a school that the Australians would have built. It was God’s idea. It was God’s plan. It was, therefore, God’s demand, expressed through His servant, Ellen G. White.

I think, dear friends, there is something there that all of us should catch as significant. We are following not man’s ideas, not man’s plans; but God’s ideas, and God’s plans. The closer we follow the pattern, the nearer we shall come to carrying out the specifications for the building of God’s kingdom, and the greater will be the blessing that will rest upon us as we carry out God’s plan. I hope all of us will ever bear in mind that this work is not our work. The success or failure of this work does not depend entirely upon us, nor upon our efforts. God will see His work through to a successful conclusion. You and I might stand in His way a bit and hinder His plans for a while but not for long. God will finish His work and He will see it done in His own time and way. [80]

The brethren in Australia looked at each other and wondered, “Where shall we find the kind of a place that she wants us to use for such a school?” Mrs. White was sure that God had a place somewhere there in Australia. She suggested that they should look for a farm away from the cities. So they appointed a committee to search for a suitable area, but each time they returned with the report that the price was far beyond their financial resources.

Now I do not know how much your land costs here in Southern Asia, but when I was over in Egypt the other day, they took me right out on the desert. There was nothing but sand, and I said to them, “How far are you away from the water?” “Oh,” they said, “we are at least a half a mile.” “Well,” I said, “How much is this worthless land? How much does it cost?” And they told me, “It costs \$200 American money an acre.” I said, “I would not give you two hundred pence for an acre of this sand!” Then as I was at their school property I thought to myself of this story of finding a piece of land in Australia. The brethren went everywhere looking for land. They came back and reported the most beautiful land, wonderful land, but it cost several

hundred dollars an acre, the cheapest was \$75 an acre, but Sister White shook her head, and said, "No, that is not it."

[81] So she sent them out again, and soon they came back with this report, "We have found the place. Just a lot of sand and timber. A thousand five hundred acres of it, and we can have it for \$3 an acre, but what land for a farm! A day was appointed to visit the property and make a decision.

"She and Elder and Mrs. Starr got on the train that morning; the rest had gone the day before. During the trip Sister White told Brother and Sister Starr of the dream she had some nights before. She said, "I dreamed we were looking over land for a school, and while we were walking along we came to a place where a furrow was turned over about a quarter of a yard deep and several yards long. While we were standing looking at that turned furrow, two of the brethren came along and looking at it said, "This is not good land. The soil is not favourable." Sister White said, "When I heard those words, I was much depressed." Then an angel appeared and declared that false witness had been borne against the land. The angel explained the properties of the soil and declared, "With proper care this soil will yield a rich harvest."

In their conversation they discussed many other matters, and in due time they reached their destination on May 23, 1894. The next morning, May 24, the party arose. They made their preparations for the day, and then came together for morning worship. Sister White took charge of worship that morning and read a passage of Scripture. As they knelt to pray, she felt impressed to pray for the healing of a member of the group, Brother McCullagh, who was in the very last stages of tuberculosis. He looked as though he were ready to pass away any time. But Sister White felt impressed to pray for his healing.

Brother McCullagh told of the experience that when she prayed for his healing something like an electric shock passed through his body and he knew that he was healed. For thirty-five years he lived in perfect health following that memorable morning of May 24, 1894. The whole group felt impressed that God was with them, and certainly with that kind of evidence of God's presence, they would not make a mistake with regard to the selection of the land for the school. So they went out.

They walked all over that 1,500 acres of land. The party separated and scattered. Elder and Mrs. Starr, accompanied Sister White as they walked over it. During the course of their walk, they stopped and looked, and there was a furrow a quarter of a yard deep and a few yards long, neatly turned. And as they were looking at it, one brother came from one direction and a second one from another direction. These two men had grown up in Iowa (U. S. A.), and were accustomed to heavy black soil. As they stood there and looked at that worthless sand, they said, "Sister White, this is not good land! The soil is not favourable."

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Ellen G. White smiled. She looked at Elder and Mrs. Starr. Then she told those two good brethren her dream and the words of the angel. That day they decided to buy the land. But some of the group were still very sceptical. They could not see how one thousand five hundred acres of sand would ever produce anything of value. So they secretly went to the government agricultural experiment station, and asked that one of their experts go over and look at the one thousand five hundred acres and give his counsel regarding it.

He went, and came back to report that if a jack rabbit wanted to cross that one thousand five hundred acres, he would have to find some way to carry a lunch basket, for there would not be enough for even a jack rabbit to eat!" That was his report. The brethren thought, If that is the agricultural expert's opinion regarding the land, then Mrs. White would most certainly be convinced that the area was wholly unsuitable for a school.

But she was not convinced. "Is there not a God in Israel that ye have gone to the gods of Ekron?" On the other hand, Ellen G. White said, "I want to buy sixty-six acres of this land and I want to build my house right here. I wish to see what God can do with land like this." So there she built her house. She took her sixty-six acres and began to develop that place. Fourteen months after planting fruit trees she was picking the fruit. Anybody who has visited the Avondale school will agree that the one thousand five hundred acres of worthless land is today a little Garden of Eden.

I have never been there myself, but I have seen pictures of it. It is a lovely place with beautiful green grass, wonderful flowers and trees, the finest kinds of fruit trees. I tell you, dear friends, the messages that came from the servant of the Lord were down-to-earth

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practical messages. Sometimes we could not see the wisdom of the message or the counsel, and yet when our people have followed the instruction given we have made no mistakes. It is when we have failed to follow the instruction that we have made mistakes. The very practical nature of all the messages given through the servant of the Lord must appeal to us as another evidence that God is in her work.

Chapter 6—God Revealed Secrets Through Ellen G. [84] White

We turn our attention now to *the certainty of the messages* which came through the servant of God. I wish to relate a story on this aspect of Ellen G. White's work—one of the most interesting, and certainly one of the most unusual that we come across in our reading concerning her work. But before that story, we should read a few verses from the 139th Psalm. In this psalm is found the basis for the experience which we shall present.

“O Lord, Thou hast searched me, and known me. Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, Thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, Thou knowest it altogether. Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it. Whither shall I go from Thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from Thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, Thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall Thy hand lead me, and Thy right hand shall hold me. If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me. Yea, the darkness hideth not from Thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to thee.”⁷

We cannot get away from the presence of God.

⁷Psalm 139:1-12.

To think that God knows us individually and so intimately, and is able to look into our personal experiences and tell what is happening to us is beyond the understanding of man. It is one of the evidences that God knows the secret things and can reveal them to His messengers.

[85] Over in Australia, about 1891, shortly after Mrs. White arrived there, she was given a vision in which she saw a number of the workers engaged in our work in that part of the world. Among those brought to her attention in a very special way was a brother by the name of Faulkhead. N. D. Faulkhead was a very successful businessman. He was a man of unusual talents, appreciated not only by the Advent people when he joined them, but by the people of the city in which he lived. So much so, that he was a prominent leader in some five or more of their secret societies.

This Mr. Faulkhead became a Seventh-day Adventist, and at the time saw no reason why he should not continue to be a member of the Masonic order and all the rest. Of himself he says, "I was a Master of the Master Masonic Lodge; I was first Principal of the Holy Royal of Canada; third, I was Preceptor of the Knight Templars, besides many other minor lodges (five in all)—good Templars, the Rechabites, Oddfellows, and so forth." He really was mixed up in secret societies!

This man sincerely believed that he could continue to be a leader in those societies and at the same time be a devout Seventh-day Adventist, and a worker in the cause of God. On account of his business ability he was made treasurer in the publishing house at Melbourne. At first, he did very good work, but as time went on, he became more and more interested in his lodge work, and less and less interested in the publishing house work. So much so, that the brethren became quite anxious about his spiritual welfare.

Shortly after she arrived there in Australia, Mrs. White had this vision in which she saw Mr. Faulkhead. If I remember correctly it was in December of 1891. After she had this vision concerning him, and others, she sat down and wrote out the experience of Brother Faulkhead. It took some fifty pages of manuscript to set forth his experience, in a most remarkable and very detailed way.

However, when she thought to mail this communication to him, something seemed to hold her back and say, "Not yet!" "Not yet!"

So she withheld this message to him for some time. It was, in fact, a matter of twelve months later when the opportunity came for her to actually bring the message to his attention. She had been away in another part of the country and, on returning, she felt that she must give this message to Brother Faulkhead. [86]

The day after her return to Melbourne a meeting of the school board was called. In the morning everyone rejoiced in the closing exercises of the first term of the new Australian Bible School. That afternoon, Tuesday, December 13, Mr. Faulkhead, as a board member gave attention to the affairs of that meeting. At the conclusion of the business, Elder W. C. White, the chairman, stepped to the side of Mr. Faulkhead and said, "Brother Faulkhead, Mrs. White wishes to see you before you leave."

Brother Faulkhead, of course, wondered what it might be, for only a short time before that, in a dream he thought that the Lord had shown his situation to Mrs. White and that she had a message for him. He had sort of steeled himself against it, and he was just waiting for some such suggestion as that for, shortly before his dream one of the brethren, Brother Stockton, our first believer in the Australian field, was talking with Brother Faulkhead and told him frankly that they were all concerned over him. They believed that he was losing out spiritually by his contact with all of those lodges, and the fact that he was giving so much time to them and less and less time to his duties in the publishing house. Brother Stockton asked what he would do if Sister White should have a message for him.

Brother Faulkhead straightened up and said, "It would have to be a mighty strong statement that would make me believe that the Lord had given her a message for me."

Now all of this went through his mind when Elder White said to him, "Sister White wishes you to see her before you leave." So Brother Faulkhead went immediately to Mrs. White. Some time later he had told the brethren that he had had great regard for her as a Christian, but that he did not take much stock in her testimonies. He said, "I used to enjoy visiting with her and listening to her talk, but when it came to her giving testimonies, as it was stated she did and had done all along, I was a little sceptical." [87]

Thus his attitude was one of uncertainty. He did not exactly believe in the testimonies, and he was not much interested when

it came to something for himself, for he thought it to be only her imagination or something like that. Actually he had little confidence in the gift of prophecy.

With all of this in his mind he went to Sister White and asked if she had something for him. She cordially greeted him, and replied that the burden of his case was upon her heart, and she would like to see him and his wife together for a message that had to do with both of them. He replied, "Why not let me have it now?" "Well," she responded, "if you want the message now, I shall be glad to give it to you." She went to the stand and brought out a fifty-page manuscript that she had written twelve months earlier.

As he listened to the words, she not only read but she talked to him and explained it to him as she went along. He began to be very much interested, for in the course of her reading and her explanations she told of certain meetings that he had been attending and of what he had said in those meetings, where he had sat, the kind of seat on which he had sat, the position that he occupied, and the attitude that he manifested in transacting the business of the lodge, for he was one of their top-level men. Faulkhead wrote later, "I thought this was getting pretty close home when she started to talk to me in reference to what I was doing in the lodges."

In the course of her description of what he had done, and what he had said, and the place he had occupied, she gave a sign, and said, "The angel gave me this message for you and this sign that you should know, but I cannot relate all that was given to me." She stopped. "Why," he said, "Sister White, do you know what you have done?" She was not aware that she had done anything unusual. Then he told her that she had given the secret sign that is known only by the very few men who occupy that high position in that lodge.

[88] "Nobody else knows it. No woman has ever heard or seen it. We are sworn to secrecy with regard to such things."

She went on a little longer, and told him that she had heard him addressed as "Worshipful Master" and names like that or titles of that nature. She talked of Free Masonry and the impossibility of a Seventh-day Adventist being a Free Mason and a Christian at the same time. Once more she made a certain movement which she said her attending angel had made to her.

Again Mr. Faulkhead was startled and turned deathly pale. “Sister White, do you know what you have done? No woman knows that. No woman is ever allowed to hear or see what is going on in those meetings, and yet you have described a particular meeting in which I took a very important part, and you have told not only what I said, but what I did.”

She went on to describe the things that were going on in that lodge, the drinking, and the carousing, and the talk that is carried on by those men. She said, “I have heard it all.” He was even more than surprised, for at that time she made another movement. Again his face turned very white. He told her that she had just made that secret sign that is used in taking the degree of the Knight Templar.

Later he told in a letter his reaction to all of this. He wrote, “This convinced me that her testimony was from God. I can assure you this caused me to feel very queer. But, as Sister White said, the spirit of the Lord had come upon me and taken hold of me. She went on talking and reading as if nothing had happened, but I noticed how her face brightened up when I interrupted her again and spoke to her about the sign. She seemed surprised that she had given me such a sign.... Immediately the statement that I had made to Brother Stockton that it would have to be mighty strong before I could believe that she had a message for me from the Lord, flashed through my mind.”

It is an interesting story, and a wonderfully fine account that Brother Faulkhead has given, for it was a very strange experience for a man of his kind and position. It certainly revealed something in his life that was not known to others, not even to his wife; and after all this evidence had been given by the signs and by the specific expressions, along with the descriptions of what had taken place in those lodge meetings, accurately picturing the attitude of the people present, this is what he said: “I accept every word. All of it belongs to me. I accept the light that the Lord has sent me through you. I will act upon it. I am a member of five lodges; 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 thank God for that kind of a reaction, for only God could know what that man had done in the secrecy of those lodges. Only God

could see where he sat, what he was doing, and what he was saying, and know his very attitude in all of those meetings. God saw fit to reveal all of that to His servant that this man might be reclaimed and have his faith in her thus strengthened.

Now I like the rest of his testimony: "I am so glad you did not send me that testimony, for then it would not have helped me. Your reading the reproof yourself has touched my heart. The Spirit of the Lord has spoken to me through you, and I accept every word you have addressed especially to me, and the general matter also is applicable to me. It all means me. That which you have written in regard to my connection with the Free Masons, I accept.... I have just taken the highest order in Free Masonry, but I shall sever my connection with them all.... It will take me nine months to wind up my business relations with the three under my control."

[90] The hour was late when they finished their interview. He took the street car and started out to his home and, for some reason or other, the car was a little late in arriving at a certain station where he had to make a change. Just as he was arriving at the station he saw the train for Preston pull out; so he had to walk the remaining five miles to his home. He enjoyed the quiet walk for it gave him an opportunity to be alone and to think through all that had happened that afternoon and evening. He came to this conclusion: God had looked down from heaven and had seen him and had designed to help him turn from the course that would have led him away from the truth and away from the kingdom.

I do not know of any experience recorded in the life and works of Ellen G. White of greater significance than this experience of Brother Faulkhead. On the following Thursday, Brother Faulkhead, accompanied by his wife, had another interview with Mrs. White. She, in the meantime had written more about that experience—I think some twenty-eight pages—and she read all of that testimony to both of them. They both accepted it—the reproof and the counsel that came from the Lord. Finally he told Mrs. White, "I wish you to know how I look upon this matter. I regard myself as greatly honoured of the Lord. He has seen fit to mention me, and I am not discouraged, but encouraged. I shall follow out the light given me of the Lord."

Now came the real battle. He had fought the battle through on that night as he walked home, but it was not yet entirely won. He went to his office the next morning and dictated a number of letters enclosing his resignation to each and every one of those organizations, and lest he might weaken, he handed the letters to Elder A. G. Daniels, saying, "Elder Daniels, here they are. I am free from all of those things that have been binding me to the world. You mail them for me!" In relating that part of the story Mr. Faulkhead says, "How his eyes did sparkle with pleasure to think that the Lord had gained His point at last, and that his prayers had been answered."

The lodges refused to accept his resignations. He had to serve out his term of office. Then he dropped the whole thing. It was a difficult struggle. He was almost overwhelmed and once declared, "Brethren, I will not give up the conflict. I did not expect it would be so severe. I thought I could sever my connections easily; but I find it a greater struggle to break the bonds than I had anticipated. But the Lord has honoured me greatly in speaking to me through Sister White. He has presented my case to her, and called me by name. I will heed the instruction from the Lord.... O, the Lord has engraven my name on the palm of His hands."

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When a message came to her from the Lord Ellen G. White never had any doubts as to what that message meant and her duty regarding it. She never questioned. She never stood off and wondered if the Lord really meant what He said. Nor did she hesitate and wonder what the people would think when she gave her message. Neither did she think to change or soften the message to ease the blow or make it more acceptable to the one involved.

On one occasion, in a vision she did not see the face, she heard only a voice, and the angel of the Lord said, "When you hear that voice, bear this message." And he gave her the message. That was all she had—merely a voice, and a message for that voice. Here is no room for guess work nor for human devisings or imaginings.

It was some time before Mrs. White again heard *that* voice. Then came the day when she and her husband arrived on a certain camp ground. They were riding in a carriage, a brother having met them at the railway station, and as they approached the camp ground the brother said, "Now, we shall go over to the tent where you folks will be staying. We shall unload the baggage, give you a

little opportunity to refresh yourselves, and then you can go into the meeting in the big tent.”

They agreed to the arrangement, but as they came near to the big tent, Mrs. White heard a voice. Someone was preaching, and hearing the voice she said, “James, let us stop right here.”

[92] The man who drove the carriage insisted that they carry out the original plan. She listened. She said, “We stop right here,” and they stopped. They got out of the carriage. She and James White walked in from the rear of that big tent, right down the centre aisle, and stopped directly in front of the desk where the man was preaching. James White sat down. Mrs. White stepped forward, and looked up at the preacher, and said, “You have no business to be standing by that desk. You are not a fit man to be bringing a message to these people. I have been instructed that when I heard a certain voice I was to bear a certain testimony. When I came here I heard that voice. It is your voice.” She looked at that man, and she pointed her finger right at him and, of course, every eye in that great congregation was fixed upon the man standing by the desk, and upon that woman right in front of him, pointing her finger right at him. She had never seen the man before, nor did she know anything about him, except what the Lord had revealed to her. She had heard only the sound of his voice, and the Lord told her when she heard that voice to deliver a message to that person.

Then she said, “There is a woman in another state who calls you husband. There is a child in that state who calls you father, and there is a woman here that calls you husband and a child who calls you father.”

Now I wonder what you would do with a message like that and a finger pointed to you. Well, he did exactly what I think you would do. He disappeared! He never finished the preaching of that sermon; but the record is that, when he had gone, the people all sat speechless and motionless.

Then a man arose in the back part of the tent. He said, “What Sister White has said is absolutely true. That man is my brother. I know of his double life. God has given the message.” That camp meeting turned into a great revival, knowing that the presence of God was so near. Such pointed, such direct and certain messages

stirred the very hearts of the people and they realized that God was there.

We ask you in all frankness could that have come from the imagination of any man? Suppose she had made a mistake? Suppose she had pointed the finger at the wrong man. Suppose she had made that kind of an accusation against the wrong person. The consequences you can supply from your own imagination. She had never seen that man. She had heard only a voice, but when she heard that voice that morning coming from that platform, she knew the time had come to give that message. She asked nobody any questions. Who would she ask? She walked straight down that aisle to the very front of that tent and pointing the finger at the man declared that he was not a fit man to be standing by that desk. [93]

I tell you, folks, that took a lot of courage. But it took more than that. It took a lot of faith and confidence in the source of that message. Such was her confidence, and such was her faith in the work that God had given her to do.

May God help us as we read the marvellous messages that come from God through His servant, to have greater and greater confidence in the divine guidance that has come to this people all through their history. We have nothing to fear for the future except as we might forget the way God has led us in the past.

Chapter 7—The Witness of Contemporaries

Let us turn our attention to another kind of evidence, to the people who surrounded Ellen G. White. For seventy years she was the centre of great activity. She was a lady who lived an unusually busy life. Her work took her to Europe, to Australia, and to many parts of the United States. She was known to thousands, yes, hundreds of thousands of people.

Now these thousands become her contemporaries, and we do well to stop right here and find out what *recognition she was accorded by her contemporaries*. This becomes a most interesting study, and certainly a very good type of evidence by which we may judge her and measure the scope, the nature of her work.

There are three kinds of contemporaries:

1. Those interested in the subject who approve and accept it. That is one class of people. Another class would be
2. Those interested in the subject but who disagree or disapprove and who deny or reject it. The third would be
3. Those disinterested who may either accept or reject it. These three kinds of people are contemporaries to each and every one of us.

Ellen G. White had all three kinds about her and for a period of seventy years. So that if people were looking for something, some reason to reject her and reject her work, a period of seventy years would certainly give ample opportunity to find something wrong, if there were something wrong to be found. The more so since she produced so many words, about twenty-five million, enough words and enough things written about, so that men could criticize and find fault with her if there were faults to be found.

- [95] Now for a very short life and for a very short period of work, it might be difficult to use the testimony of contemporaries. But in a long life of service like seventy years, and in such an abundance of material as that which came from her pen there seems to be no lack of evidence upon which to base a judgment.

Let us first use the testimony of those who were interested and who accepted or approved. It is only reasonable, that if I want to know something about a man, say, the president of the General Conference, I would do well to go to his very closest associates and to his most intimate friends. I suggest that they should be able to make an appraisal of him and his work. If I would know the facts about Ellen G. White I would certainly not think of going to D. M. Canright or a man by the name of Jones who used to be around these parts here in Southern Asia and who now has much to say against Ellen G. White. I would not go to them to get my first and most intimate appraisal of Ellen G. White. Would you? Would that be fair?

So it is only reasonable that we should go to a man's friends with whom he has been most closely associated, to those who know him best and most intimately. For this reason I want to begin with that group of people—the friends, those intimately connected with Ellen G. White.

George I. Butler, the president of the General Conference in 1883, was most certainly very closely associated with Ellen G. White. We should be interested in what he had to say concerning her as one of her contemporaries. In the *Review and Herald*, a supplement dated August 14, 1883, this is what he said:

“The majority of our people believe these visions to be a genuine manifestation of spiritual gifts, and as such to be entitled to respect. We do not hold them to be superior to the Bible, or in one sense equal to it. The Scriptures are our rule to test everything by, the visions as well as all other things. That rule, therefore, is of the highest authority; the standard is higher than the thing tested by it. If the Bible should show the visions were not in harmony with it, the Bible would stand, and the visions would be given up. This shows plainly that we hold the Bible the highest, our enemies to the contrary, notwithstanding.”

Now to my mind, that is a very fair appraisal of the writings of Ellen G. White, and an appraisal made by a man who was the [96]

president of the General Conference in 1883, a man who was closely associated with her and her works over a period of many years, and he knew her and her works as few people could, for in his position he stood between her and the people inside and outside the church.

The Testimony of Uriah Smith

The testimony of one who was in a strategic point for observation should be most helpful. Uriah Smith, for many years the editor of the church paper, the *Review and Herald*, in constant touch with Mrs. White and her work, sometimes the recipient of her “testimonies” and “counsels,” should be able to judge her work by the fruit or results of that work:

“Every test which can be brought to bear upon such manifestations proves them genuine. The evidence which supports them, internal and external, is conclusive. They agree with the Word of God and with themselves. They are given, unless those best qualified to judge are invariably deceived, when the Spirit of God is especially present. Calm, dignified, impressive, they commend themselves to every beholder as the very opposite of that which is false or fanatical.

“Their fruit is such as to show that the source from which they spring is the opposite of evil.

“They tend to the purest morality. They discountenance every vice, and exhort to the practice of every virtue. They point out the perils through which we are to pass to the kingdom. They reveal the devices of Satan. They warn us against his snares. They have nipped in the bud scheme after scheme of fanaticism which the enemy has tried to foist into our midst. They have exposed hidden iniquity, brought to light concealed wrongs, and laid bare the evil motives of the false-hearted. They have warded off dangers from the cause of truth upon every hand. They have aroused and re-aroused us to greater consecration to God, more zealous efforts for

holiness of heart, and greater diligence in the cause and service of our Master.

“They lead us to Christ. Like the Bible they set Him forth as the only hope and only Saviour of mankind. They portray before us in living characters His holy life and His godly example, and with irresistible appeals they urge us to follow in His steps.

[97]

“They lead us to the Bible. They set forth that Book as the inspired and unalterable Word of God. They exhort to take that Word as the man of our counsel, and the rule of our faith and practice. And, with a compelling power they entreat us to study long and diligently its pages, and become familiar with its teachings, for it is to judge us in the last day.

“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. And no person with an unprejudiced mind can read their stirring appeals for a pure and lofty morality, their exaltation of God and the Saviour, their denunciations of every evil, and their exhortations to everything that is holy and of good report, without being compelled to say, ‘These are not the words of him that hath a devil.’”

8

We shall pass on to the next group of contemporaries, those interested in her but who did not accept, who rather disapproved of what she said and what she did. The outstanding example of a contemporary of this type is D. M. Canright himself. The reason I choose D. M. Canright as an example is because everywhere I go around the world, I find that ministers and missionaries of other denominations know about D. M. Canright. They have not only known about him, but they have translated his materials into various languages. Then when somebody becomes interested in Seventh-day

⁸“Life and Teachings of Ellen G. White,” pp. 120, 121.

Adventists, they say, “Here, read this, and you will get the lowdown concerning Ellen G. White and on Adventists in general.”

[98] I wish, therefore, to give you the story of D. M. Canright, and show how he came to disagree with the Spirit of prophecy and with the Advent Movement. D. M. Canright was a very capable man. He had remarkable talents. He was a very fine speaker. He was a keen debater. He was one who could bring fear and trembling into any opponent, and thus he began to think himself to be very good, an expert, in his field, too good for such a small denomination. Now, my friends, it is dangerous for a man to think highly of himself and of his qualifications and of his ability, for sometimes it does turn his head, and frequently causes him to feel a bit superior and somewhat puffed up. We call it an inflated ego.

D. M. Canright’s failure was due to the fact that he thought himself too big and too good for such a little denomination. And when the brethren did not accept him according to his own estimate of himself, he turned against the denomination and began to write against this people. Frankly this is the appraisal given to me by his own nephew, and that on the camp ground at Lynwood, California, in June, 1953. So what I am saying has been checked very carefully with this man who is certainly an authority, for he associated very intimately with his uncle. He knew him very well.

Now, let us go back to the time when D. M. Canright was an interested friend of the Movement, and read a few words from his pen. This is taken from the [The Review and Herald, January 6, 1885](#):

“While I have carefully read the first, second, and third volumes of ‘Spirit of prophecy,’⁹ heaven has seemed very near to me. If the Spirit of God does not speak to us in these writings, then I should despair of ever discerning it. Oh, how precious the dear Saviour looks! How infinitely valuable the salvation of one soul! How hateful and inexcusable sin appears! God is good, and the sweetest thing on this earth is to love and serve him.” Pretty good words, from D. M. Canright. In the same issue he writes:

⁹Note: Reference is here made to the volumes depicting the “Conflict of the Ages” story which preceded the present five volume set covering that topic.

“I have read many books, but never one which has interested me so intensely and impressed me so profoundly as Volume 4 of *The Great Controversy* by Sister White. Perhaps it may be partly because I see things differently; but I am sure that is not wholly the reason. The historical part is good, but that which was of the most intense interest to me, was the last part, beginning with the ‘Origin of Evil.’ The ideas concerning the nature and attributes of God, the character of Christ, and the rebellion of Lucifer in heaven, carry with them their own proof of inspiration. They moved the depths of my soul as nothing else ever did. I feel that I have a new and higher conception of the goodness and forbearance of God, the awful wickedness of Satan, and the tender love of Christ. I wish everybody could read it whether of our people or not. Get it, brethren, and read it carefully.”

[99]

Let me go back now to 1877, which was exactly ten years before he separated himself from this denomination. In 1877 he wrote these words:

“As to the Christian character of Sister White, I beg leave to say that I think I know something about it. I have been acquainted with Sister White for eighteen years, more than half the history of our people. I have been in their family time and again, sometimes weeks at a time. They have been in our house and family many times. I have travelled with them almost everywhere; have been with them in private and in public, in meeting and out of meeting, and have had the very best chances to know something of the life, character, and spirit of Brother and Sister White. As a minister, I have had to deal with all kinds of persons, and all kinds of character, till I think I can judge something of what a person is, at least after years of intimate acquaintance.”

I think those are very interesting words. He seems to know what he is talking about, and does not hesitate to put himself on record. He says further:

“I know Sister White to be an unassuming, modest, kindhearted, noble woman. These traits in her character are not simply put on and cultivated, but they spring gracefully and easily from her natural disposition. She is not self-conceited, self-righteous, and self-important, as fanatics always are. I have frequently come in contact with fanatical persons, and I have always found them to be full of pretensions, full of pride, ready to give their opinion, boastful of their holiness, etc. But I have ever found Sister White the reverse of all this. Anyone, the poorest and the humblest, can go to her freely for advice and comfort without being repulsed. She is ever looking after the needy, the destitute, and the suffering, providing for them, and pleading their cause. I have never formed an acquaintance with any persons who so constantly have the fear of God before them.” ¹⁰

[100] I am telling you, my friends, that you could not have a better testimony than that. I wish people could write something like that about me. Now listen: The year is 1889, just twelve years after this article, and four years after the first testimony which I just read. It is strange how people can shift their mental machinery from one gear to another, especially from high into reverse, and I think that is what happened in the case of D. M. Canright. I do not think he ever pushed in the clutch. It appears that he just switched from high to reverse without making any preparation at all. Automobile drivers, you must understand what I mean. Now listen carefully to the same man:

“I have been well acquainted with Mrs. White for nearly thirty years [this is 1889]; have been in her family for weeks at a time, and she has often been in my family. I am familiar with all her work and all her books. I am satisfied that the whole thing is a delusion. Her visions have been a constant source of quarrels and divisions among themselves. Many of their ablest men,

¹⁰The Review and Herald, April 26, 1877.

and thousands of others, have left them on this account. There is a strong anti-vision party now....

“Mrs. White’s trances are simply the result of disease and religious excitement-hysteria. At the age of nine she received a blow upon her head which broke her nose and nearly killed her. It shattered her nervous system beyond recovery, and affected her mind to melancholy and even to insanity. She was weakly, sickly, often fainted, and did not expect to live. In this condition she was carried away with the Millerite fanaticism, and went into trances with others. All this she tells herself in [Spiritual Gifts 2:7-48](#)....

“What harm does she do? Much every way. She teaches a false doctrine, writes a new Bible, leads her people to be narrow, clannish, and bigoted, to oppose the work of all other churches and needed Sunday and temperance laws. She has divided families, broken up churches, driven some to infidelity and others into despair. It leads her advocates to deceive. Being afraid that it will hurt them if it is known in what light they really hold her visions, they deny that it is a matter of importance with them. This is false and deceptive, for they hold her visions to be as sacred as the Bible. To defend her mistakes and errors, both she and her apologists have to deny the plainest facts and resort to untruthful statements. Fear of her authority compels many to profess faith in her when they have none, and thus become hypocrites.” ¹¹

I want to assure you, friends, for a man to be able to write words like that in such a few years from the time he wrote just the opposite, is one of the strangest and most interesting experiences in church history. [101]

“Well, now,” some say, “did he ever change? Did he repent before he died? Did he ever express sorrow for all these terrible things that he had said against Mrs. White and written against her?”

¹¹Canright, D. M., “No. 4, Mrs. White and Her Visions,” pp. 2, 3, 7, in “Adventism Refuted in a Nutshell” (1889).

I think we should give a fair answer to such questions. Therefore, we turn to his book written in 1919, entitled *The Life of Mrs. E. G. White*, and on page 15 we find this statement which occupies the full page, showing that it must have been very important in his thinking. At the top of the page are the two words, "Present Standing."

"Since I withdrew from the Adventists, over thirty years ago, they have continued to report that I have regretted leaving them, have tried to get back again, have repudiated my books which I wrote and have confessed that I am now a lost man. There has never been a word of truth in any of these reports. I expect them to report that I recanted on my deathbed. All this is done to hinder the influence of my books. I now reaffirm all that I have written in my books and tracts against that doctrine.

"Several Advent ministers have rendered valuable aid in preparing these pages. Once they were believers in Mrs. White's divine inspiration, but plain facts finally compelled them to renounce faith in her dreams."

That was in 1919.

No, we cannot make the statement that he ever repented or recanted or regretted except for one little thing that came in 1915. At her funeral in Battle Creek the casket was placed in the church with a group of our denominational leaders standing by as a sort of honour guard, and the people passed by that casket. Elder W. A. Spicer was one who stood by the casket, and from his pen we have the testimony that D. M. Canright and his brother, along with many other people, came by the casket. Of course, they paused a moment, and then walked on. But the two men came back a second time, and this time D. M. Canright rested his hand upon the side of the casket, and with warm tears trickling down his cheeks, said, "There is a noble Christian woman gone." This is the eye-witness testimony of W. A. Spicer. You will find it in his book, *The Spirit of Prophecy in the Advent Movement*, page 127. This is the closest we have to anything that might express a regret. No, he never regretted, he never recanted. He was always very strong in his opposition. His

chief opposition was against Ellen G. White. But this nephew of his, whom I met last summer at the Lynwood camp meeting, gave me a very interesting little sidelight into D. M. Canright's own thinking during the years after he left the church.

This man lived in D. M. Canright's home. D. M. Canright used to visit this man's home, and therefore he gave me first hand information which I can pass on to you, just because of the interest it has in connection with this story. At one time a Methodist minister wanted to challenge a Seventh-day Adventist minister to debate regarding the Sabbath. He thought if he could only get to D. M. Canright, he certainly would have the material that he needed, and then he would squash that Adventist minister with D. M. Canright's own thunder.

So he went to D. M. Canright's home and said, "I have a debate coming up with a Seventh-day Adventist minister on the question of the Sabbath. I thought you would certainly be the man to give me all the material I need to squash him. Now here I am. I can spend three days!" D. M. Canright, in the presence of his nephew, told the Methodist minister, "Brother, I advise you not to debate with the Adventists on the Sabbath. They have all of the facts on their side of the question!" It did not take him three days to tell that man that he had better be careful in a debate on the Sabbath. No, it does not take three days to give anyone the facts of church history regarding the Sabbath or the Sunday.

D. M. Canright frequently expressed the thought that Adventists were right in their general doctrines and teachings of the church. He disagreed on the question of visions, and revelations, and the relation of Ellen G. White to the church and the Bible.

The third and last group of contemporaries is made up of people who lived with or near the person under observation, but who were not interested in that person other than as an individual, neither friend nor foe. They were merely on-lookers or by-standers, who observed much but said little.

This group of Mrs. E. G. White's contemporaries saw her as a citizen, a neighbour, a mother, a person who seemed to be very much engrossed in her task, but whom they felt no obligation to accept or reject, to approve or disapprove.

She lived in a number of places in New England, in Europe, in Australia, in Michigan, and in California, but she was best known in Battle Creek, Michigan, which became a headquarters for the work of Seventh-day Adventists. The people of Battle Creek watched her come and go, and on the whole they had no special reason for saying anything good or bad about her.

They were, however, very much aware of her ability as a lecturer and public speaker. So much so that on one occasion when the city of Battle Creek was preparing for a big mass meeting in connection with some civic programme they turned to her as the most likely citizen who could rightly represent the city as a great public speaker. A committee of three, the city mayor, the cashier of the First National Bank, and a prominent citizen, went to the home of Ellen G. White to invite her to be the principal speaker of that great meeting.

Regarding that speaking appointment we have one paragraph in her writings. She wrote,

“I spoke in the mammoth tent, Sunday evening, July 1 [1877], on the subject of Christian Temperance. God helped me that evening; and although I spoke ninety minutes, the crowd of fully five thousand persons listened in almost breathless silence.” ¹²

The following year, 1878, there was produced in the State of Michigan a book entitled *American Biographical History of Eminent and Self-Made Men of the State of Michigan*. This was published by the people of the State, and we will be interested in knowing what they said about Ellen G. White, a resident in the State of Michigan. I quote from that book:

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“Mrs. White is a woman of singularly well balanced mental organization. Benevolence, spirituality, conscientiousness, and ideality are the predominating traits. Her personal qualities are such as to win for her the warmest friendship of all with whom she comes in contact, and to inspire them with the utmost confidence in her sincerity.... Notwithstanding her many years of

¹²White, Ellen G., “[Testimonies for the Church 4:275](#).”

public labour, she has retained all the simplicity and honesty which characterized her early life.

“As a speaker, Mrs. White is one of the most successful of the few ladies who have become noteworthy as lecturers, in this country, during the past twenty years. Constant use has so strengthened her vocal organs as to give her voice rare depth and power. Her clearness and strength of articulation are so great that, when speaking in the open air, she has frequently been distinctly heard at the distance of a mile. Her language, though simple, is always forcible and elegant. When inspired with her subject, she is often marvellously eloquent, holding the largest audience spellbound for hours without a sign of impatience or weariness.

“The subject matter of her discourse is always of a practical character, bearing chiefly on fireside duties, the religious education of children, temperance, and kindred topics. On revival occasions, she is always the most effective speaker. She has frequently spoken to immense audiences, in the large cities, on her favourite themes, and has always been received with great favour.”

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I consider that a wonderful testimony. Very few people can have such a testimony borne concerning them and their work. D. M. Canright speaks of Ellen G. White as a rather sickly individual, rather weak, rather frail; but, if she had a voice that could be heard distinctly at the distance of a mile, without a public address system, a microphone, and all that goes with our system of public speaking nowadays, she had something that very few speakers have today.

I like to think of this as coming from those who had no special interest in her, made no special claims for her, but simply knew her as a public speaker, one of the most effective speakers of the day.

I now come to the fifth evidence, and this one, of course, is known to all—*the physical phenomena attending the visions*. This particular evidence does not have too great an appeal to me, and I shall tell you the reason why. I have never been very much impressed

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¹³Quoted in “Our Firm Foundation,” Vol. 1, p. 241.

by the supernatural or by that which is unusual, or strange. I would rather judge the validity of an individual, and the genuineness of the work of that individual by the fruit of his or her labour, rather than by some strange or unusual phenomena.

In 1844, during those early years, there were no fruits upon which to judge the work of Ellen G. White. So God gave her in those early days especially these physical manifestations which are in harmony with the record of the Scriptures. If you will read in Daniel, the tenth chapter, [verses 16 to 19](#); Numbers 24, [verses 3 and 4](#); in 2 Samuel 23, [verse 2](#); and in 2 Corinthians 12, [verses 2 to 4](#), you find the physical manifestations which will be, or must be, present in the true prophet. And all of them were manifested in the life of Ellen G. White, especially in those early days. Often physicians and people of responsibility and authority applied every possible test to make sure that there was nothing false, and no deception in the work, or in the attitude manifested by this individual. This phenomenon had its value primarily to those who saw Mrs. White in vision.

So when it comes to this part of the subject, I give it but a very brief mention in passing, because far greater than the physical manifestation is the evidence that comes from the fruits of a life of seventy years of activity and of the writing of some twenty-five million words—enough to satisfy even the most doubtful, the most incredulous. This is the evidence which comes to me with most telling and convincing power. That is far beyond anything that can be added by way of physical phenomena.

Now I hasten on to a sixth evidence that I would like to leave with you for your study. What was Ellen G. White's *relation to outside influences*? In other words, was she influenced by some outside power or some outside material, that caused her to write and to speak as she did?

“It would be but human to question and wonder whether at times Ellen G. White was not influenced by someone near her, or working for her, or perhaps the president of the General Conference, who might give her “messages” a

[106] “These are good and fair questions, and therefore detent Milton’s

Paradise Lost might have influenced her *Conflict Series*, or whether she had been reading Doctors Trall and Jackson before her “health vision” of 1863.

These are good and fair questions, and therefore deserve the same kind of answer. First, let us look at the *Paradise Lost* question. In the spring of 1858 she had the long vision in which the scenes of the great controversy were opened before her. She was so thrilled with the message that she told it to the believers in Battle Creek at the morning and evening services.

“J. N. Andrews heard the description of the fall of Satan, the fall of man, and the plan of salvation. He asked Mrs. White whether she had ever read Milton’s book. She replied that she had never seen it nor read it. J. N. Andrews gave her a copy, but she put it up on a high shelf out of reach until she had finished writing out what she had been shown. Then she read it with great interest to see the harmony between the accounts.

“The health message of 1863 brought from her pen these words:

“As I introduced the subject of health to friends ... and spoke against drugs and flesh meats, and in favour 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 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 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.’

“In the same year she again declared, ‘My views were written independent of books or the opinions of others.’” ¹⁴

¹⁴“Our Firm Foundation,” Vol. 1, pp. 234, 235.

[107] **Chapter 8—The Relation of Ellen G. White to the Bible**

The relation of Ellen G. White to the Bible is one of the most important of the studies in this series. I have tried to indicate in the studies that have gone before that my concern is over three fundamental points of faith: (1) That I thoroughly understand and believe in God; (2) that I thoroughly understand and believe that the Bible is God's word; and (3) that I thoroughly understand and have no question whatsoever in the fact that in giving us this Book God spoke through men, called prophets.

If I am satisfied and convinced on these three facts of faith, then I have no reason to doubt anything else that is attached to the Spirit of prophecy for today. These three facts are and must be absolutely fundamental, and I must have no question or uncertainty whatsoever regarding them. Having established those three facts in my own mind, and having come to a conclusion that they are indeed facts on which the Christian faith is established, then I cannot doubt that God has and did use men and women as His spokesmen, as His servants, as His messengers.

I must then come to the question as to what I shall do with one Ellen G. White, who claimed that she was one of God's messengers. I believe the four tests and the six evidences that I have given are sufficient to convince all. I know they convince me that she was indeed one of God's messengers. Now having convinced myself of that, the next thing I must do is to settle the relation of Ellen G. White to the Bible. And here is a question that calls for very careful study. It is one which frequently disturbs the minds of some people. Let me give you the reason for such concern.

[108] A few of our people are inclined to give the impression that Mrs. White's writings are on a par with the Ten Commandments. A very few are inclined to put the writings of the Spirit of prophecy above the Bible. Now, what shall be *our* attitude? Shall we put them

above, on a par, or below? This question must be settled by every Seventh-day Adventist.

Having accepted Ellen G. White as one of God's messengers, and believing that she manifested the gift of prophecy, then I must decide on the relationship of her writings to the Bible. And this I say again is a rather difficult question for some of our people. What position can I take and be safe? You will remember, I intimated in the very first study that some people tend to be away over on one extreme, while some tend to be away on the opposite extreme, and that some tend to follow far behind, while some try to run far ahead! The question for me is, Where shall I stand? I have already stated that I have taken my personal stand right beside Ellen G. White on all of these questions. I do not intend to be away over to the right, nor away over on the left, nor too far in the rear, nor too far in advance of her position. I am determined to stand right beside her. Then I know I shall be safe on every issue.

What did she say on this question of the relationship of her works to the Bible? Let me give it to you very briefly.

First I read from her very first book, published back in 1851, *Experience and Views*, now a part of *Early Writings*:

“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.”¹⁵

What then is the relation of Ellen G. White to the Bible? If I take my position by her side, I shall have to take this statement as being a declaration of my faith and confidence in the Bible as the Christian's rule of faith and practice. That is a certainty. And, furthermore, she says that the visions are not given for a new rule of faith and practice. Therefore, I could not consistently say that I will put the Bible aside and take the writings of the Spirit of prophecy now as a new, more up-to-date, more modern, rule of faith and practice.

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¹⁵White, Ellen G., in “*Early Writings*, 78.

The second thought is this. If she at the very beginning of her ministry took that position concerning her own work in relationship to the Bible, what did she say at the conclusion of her work? This we take from words spoken at the close of her last sermon at the 1909 General Conference when she held the Bible on her extended hands and said, "I commend unto you THIS BOOK." Men who have been the closest students of the writings of the Spirit of prophecy all agree that so far as Mrs. White herself is concerned, she never claimed that; her writings were to take the place of the Bible.

The Bible in her estimation was and always will be the only rule of faith and practice for Christians everywhere. After studying for a long while on this question, and having read a great deal on it, with her I came to ten conclusions, and may I state them very briefly:

1. Ellen G. White believed that the entire Bible is the inspired Word of God. So do I.

2. She believed that men should "cling" to their Bibles. So do I.

3. She taught that men should believe and obey the Bible, and if so, not one of them would be lost. This teaching runs all the way through her writings. This I believe.

4. She believed that in the Bible is found "comfort, guidance, counsel, and the plan of salvation as clear as a sunbeam." It is the Bible which she holds up before the people at all times and in all places. So do I.

5. She believed that the Bible is "fitted" for the needs of all, rich and poor, learned and illiterate, for "all ages and all classes." So do I.

6. She believed that "the truth of God is found in His Word." So do I.

7. She believed that the Bible contains all that a man needs for salvation. So do I.

8. She believed that no one need "seek elsewhere for present truth."

[110] So do I. 9. She taught that the Bible sets forth "the Pattern for Christian Living." So do I.

10. She stated that the *Testimonies* were given only because man had neglected His Bible and that the *Testimonies* will direct man back to His Bible. They are not given as "an addition to the Word of God" nor to take the place of that Word of God. This I accept.

These ten conclusions are all held by men of the past and men of the present who have been most diligent and serious students of

the Spirit of prophecy. Now let me introduce one other thought. If all of that be true, did Ellen G. White ever claim to have given Seventh-day Adventists their doctrinal teaching? their system of theology? Did she give us our prophetic interpretations? Did she claim that her writings would supplant all other writings that had to do with the Scriptures and prophetic interpretations? The answer to all of those questions is "No."

The reason you and I should know what she said, and how she related herself to our doctrines is that too many people today are accusing us as Adventists of having a second Bible, or of setting the Bible aside and using only the "red books," as the Spirit of prophecy writings are sometimes called. I suppose that accusation comes from the fact that many of us, teachers and preachers, use these writings in our Sabbath school teaching, in our Sabbath sermons, in much of our writing because we love the way she put her thoughts and the beautiful language in which they are couched. Consequently some have assumed that we are setting the Bible aside and using the writings of Ellen G. White in place of the Scriptures. That is not true. The denomination has never done it. From the very beginning, the leaders of this people have maintained that our doctrinal teachings have come from the Scriptures.

Let us go back to 1848, to what we know as the "Bible Conferences." These Conferences were held in such places as Rocky Hill, Connecticut, April 20 to 24, 1848; in Volney, New York, beginning August 18, in "Brother Arnold's barn": in Port Gibson, New York, August 27, 28, in "Hiram Edson's barn": again in Rocky Hill, Connecticut, September 8 and 9; and in Topsham, Maine, October 20 to 22, in "Brother Howland's house."

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Where were those Bible Conferences held? Wherever the brethren could meet, and judging from the barns that I saw up in New England when I followed in the footsteps of the pioneers, they were certainly not in the most comfortable places. But they were not interested in comforts, conveniences, and all of that. They were primarily interested in finding *the truth*. Mrs. White describes those meetings, and I shall give you two paragraphs which I believe will help you to get the feel of that critical period when they were trying to find their way through in doctrinal teachings and in Biblical interpretation.

She says,

“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.”¹⁶

May we stop right here to say that we have very few Bible scholars, or Bible students, today who sit down and spend more than a few hours at a time searching for truth. But those zealous pioneers could spend all night. They were willing to work and pray and study until late in the night, because they were so desperately anxious to find God's message for their time. As the brethren came together Mrs. White noted that at first hardly two of them agreed theologically. Aside from their ardent hope which they held in common, everybody had his own ideas, and vigorously advocated his views.

It was no easy task to bring harmony out of that kind of situation. Ellen G. White, then just a young woman, and not too well educated in terms of schooling, would sit by their side and listen to those dear brethren reasoning and trying to find their way through the doctrines of the Scriptures. This is how she describes her experience:

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“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.”¹⁷

She has left us this word concerning their method of study. They would use the concordance and then read the passages, whole books

¹⁶White, Ellen G., “Special Testimonies,” Series B, No. 2, p. 57.

¹⁷“Ibid.”

at a time, trying to find the teachings on each of the doctrines. When they would come to a point in their reasoning and study, where it seemed they could go no further, it was then, in their perplexity, that God revealed the Scriptures to her. She could then take the Bible and bring to their attention the Scriptures which clarified to them some difficult point in this marvellous system of Seventh-day Adventist theology. And be it remembered that we have a most remarkable system of theology. Then through the visions the Lord often confirmed their discovery of truth. Our pioneers knew that they had the truth.

Be not mistaken, dear friends, no Christian group in the world has a more closely knit, more carefully integrated system of theology than do Seventh-day Adventists. In fact, it is so closely knit that, when we send our men out to present the message, and to convince, they are successful. We can do all of that and win the arguments; but in doing so, we have at times lost many friends. In fact, the old saying is, "Win the argument and lose friends." I am inclined to believe that that is one unfortunate feature of our work. We have put the Scriptures together so well, and we have so closely knit together our arguments, that there is just no way of refuting them. However, in our confidence in our doctrines and in our teachings, we have not always manifested the humble spirit of Christ in our presentations, and Mrs. White has cautioned us not to become pugilistic in matters of theology.

The fact is this, our doctrines come from the Bible. They came by men who diligently searched the Scriptures, and they put those doctrinal studies together in such a way that there seems to be no way to refute them. Did you know that Mrs. White kept the Sabbath for seven months before she had a vision relating to the Sabbath? And so it was with all of our doctrines. In no case did the visions run ahead of Bible study. We found our way through the Scriptures theologically, then came the visions pointing out error or clarifying difficult points or broadening our concept of those vital truths. Seventh-day Adventists did not get their system of theology from the writings of Ellen G. White. Our system of theology comes from the Scriptures alone, and Seventh-day Adventists are known as being powerful in the Scriptures because we know what the Book teaches.

Now what is the relation between the Bible and the *Testimonies*, or the writings of the Spirit of prophecy? Our men have searched diligently for a full and complete answer to this question, and we are delighted with the two passages which, to our minds, give an adequate and satisfactory answer. They were not very far away, still I cannot understand how so many of us seem to have missed them for so long. Several paragraphs are found in [Testimonies for the Church 5:664 and 665](#). Mrs. White herself says:

“I seemed to be attending an important meeting, at which a large company were assembled....

“I took the precious Bible and surrounded it with the several *Testimonies for the Church*, given for the people of God. Here, said I [in the Bible and in the writings], the cases of nearly all are met. The sins they are to shun are pointed out. The counsel that they desire can be found here, given for other cases situated similarly to themselves.... 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*.”

Now listen:

“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.”

There is the relationship between the *Testimonies*, the writings of the servant of the Lord, and the Bible. The gem on this point is found in the [The Review and Herald, January 20, 1903](#), and this is what she wrote:

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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 relation of these *Testimonies* which she put around the Bible is stated very simply in these words,

“The Lord has given the *lesser light* to lead men and women to the *greater light*.” (Italics mine)

When I take my stand beside Ellen G. White with regard to the question of the relationship between the writings of the *Testimonies* and the Bible, I must take this position that “the lesser light” is designed to lead me to “the greater light.” I want to exalt the Bible before you because she exalted this Book every time she spoke and every time she wrote.

I believe, my friends, that therein is the answer to much of the opposition from our critics. Let me give you Volume 5 of the [Testimonies for the Church 5:84](#), which seems to be a summarization of the thought:

“In the Bible the will of God is revealed to His children. Wherever it is read, in the family circle, the school, or the church, all should give quiet and devout attention as if God were really present and speaking to them.”

The thing I like most about the writings of Ellen G. White is this: In the simplicity of the language that I can understand she gives me exalted and elevating thoughts, which cause me each day to rise higher and higher in my plane of Christian living. This is the real test of the inspiration of her writings.

Let us now turn to see what our leaders in years gone by have had to say with regard to this question. Thus far I have read only Sister White’s own words. We turn first to James White. As I said before, he was well acquainted with the servant of the Lord, perhaps better than most people, for as her husband he saw more of her and was more intimately related to all of her works than any other one person. In 1855 in the [The Review and Herald, October 16, 1855](#), Elder White wrote these words:

“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 fulfilment of His word, in these *last days*, by dreams and

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visions, according to Peter's testimony. True visions are given to lead us to God, and to His Written Word; but those that are given for a new rule of faith and practice, separate from the Bible, cannot be from God, and should be rejected."

James White never claimed that she gave to us a new rule of faith and practice. He never claimed that any of her words would supplant or suppress this Book. He always maintained that the Bible is God's only rule of faith.

Another paragraph from James White, states that

"Every Christian is therefore in duty bound to take the Bible as a perfect rule of faith and duty. He should pray fervently to be aided by the Holy Spirit in searching the Scriptures for the whole truth, and for his whole duty. He is not at liberty to turn from them to learn his duty through any of the gifts. We say that the very moment he does, he places the gifts in a wrong place, and takes an extremely dangerous position."

No, my friends, we may not be free to put the Spirit of prophecy writings above or in place of the Scriptures. Sister White never did. James White never did.

Let us turn now to another very familiar writer among us, Uriah Smith, who summarized our denominational position in an article which appeared in the [The Review and Herald, October 18, 1887](#):

"Some one may say, Then you make the visions a second New Testament, a Mormon Bible in your system. We do not, as the following reason will show: We have ever held, as set forth in this work, that the Word of God, the Bible, is the standard by which to test all these manifestations. 'To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.' All gifts of the Spirit in the church, must be thus tested. Now it is evident that that which tests occupies a higher position than that which is tested

by it. This, in one word, expresses our view of the relative position which the Bible and the visions sustain to each other. But when a manifestation accords with the Word, and gives every evidence that it is a genuine manifestation of the Spirit of God, we submit it to the objector himself to say how far we may regard it lightly, or despise or transgress its teachings with impunity.”

I believe he found a sane and sensible basis which you and I would do well to reach in our thinking.

In 1888 Elder G. I. Butler went to the Battle Creek College for a series of studies similar to what I have been giving on the Spirit of prophecy, and at the conclusion of his studies he gave opportunity for the asking of questions. Question No. 14, which we find in his record, read like this: [116]

“I have heard individuals say that if they were obliged to give up the Bible or the *Testimonies*, they would give up the Bible. Is it right to make such statements, especially before those who have no knowledge of the visions?”

That is a very good question, and here is G. I. Butler’s answer:

“I should say it is very unwise and very wrong to make such a statement as that. I believe that the *Testimonies* are from God, because they agree with the Bible—with the rule it gives by which to test such things. I believe them, perhaps as strongly as anyone; but I have never said and never expect to say that the *Testimonies* are to be placed superior to the Bible, or even equal to the Bible.... But the thing which tests is superior to the thing tested. The Bible is the standard. And that which comes up to the standard we ought to accept.”¹⁸

This has been the argument from the very beginning. James White was the first one to use it. Uriah Smith used it. John Andrews

¹⁸Butler, G. I., “Talks to the Students of the Special Course at Battle Creek College,” White Publications Document File 105 F.

used it. George Butler used it. Mrs. White herself used it. Practically all of our leaders of the past have used this one argument, that the thing which is the standard by which the *Testimonies* are tested must be greater and higher than the thing tested. This is our denominational position with regard to the relationship of the Spirit of prophecy to the Bible.

[117] Now that does not excuse or release us for a minute, because the test is to show the genuineness of the writings, and if we find the writings agree with the standard, what difference is there? Do you see my point? So, my dear friends, what you and I have got to do by testing, trying, comparing, proving, is to convince ourselves that the writings are true, that they agree with the standard, that they give evidence of God's divine inspiration and revelation. Then we will live in harmony with those writings as we live in harmony with the standard by which they are tested.

But, you say, now what is the real relationship? Let me put it this way. Mrs. S. M. I. Henry, a very prominent worker in the Women's Christian Temperance Union, accepted the Seventh-day Adventist message. She accepted the Sabbath, the second coming of Christ, and all of these teachings, but she hesitated on the Spirit of prophecy. The reason she hesitated was that she found a variety of opinions among Seventh-day Adventists regarding the Spirit of prophecy. She asked a number of our people, "What is the relationship between the writings of the Spirit of prophecy and the Bible?" To her amazement and consternation she would get one answer from one person and another answer from another, and finally she admitted that she was confused and somewhat bewildered by the apparent uncertainty in so vital a matter.

So she determined that she would study it for herself. Finally she wrote a letter to Sister White in which she stated her conclusion, namely, that her writings were like a lens, a microscope, or a telescope. First there must be the Scriptures, and then you focus the microscope on the passage of Scripture to be studied. The microscope, therefore, is but a means for enlarging or clarifying that which is under the microscope. Thus the writings of the Spirit of prophecy in the same manner will help me to understand in greater detail the words of the Scripture. That is a good explanation. Therefore, the writings of Ellen G. White become more important as we think

of them in terms of enlarging and magnifying the teachings of the Bible.

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 it into words. I love those writings because they help me to understand the Book. I, as a Bible teacher, have never thought of going into a classroom to teach any portion of the Scriptures without first finding out what the Spirit of prophecy had to say about those passages.

Many an assignment that I gave to my students was something like this, "For tomorrow let us find what the Scripture means through the eye of the Spirit of prophecy." And when you approach the book of Isaiah, the book of Jeremiah, the book of Daniel, the book of Revelation, the gospels, through the eye of the Spirit of prophecy, I want to tell you, dear friends, you will find a wealth of material in those writings that you cannot find in any other commentary, any other book, written by man. [118]

Such is my confidence in these writings. We call them *the lesser light* that helps us to understand *the greater light*. We call them *the microscope* that will help to magnify and make clear the details of the truths of the Word. We may express it in almost any way that will give us the true relationship which exists between the Scriptures and the writings. As the writings are in harmony with the Scriptures, there can be no question as to the truthfulness of the writings. There is in them a power for the one who takes them to heart, to live by their counsel, by their instruction, by their reproof. They will correct our ways of living, they will point us to the Saviour, and make ready a people for God's kingdom. Such is the relationship between the writings of the Spirit of prophecy and the Scriptures.

[119] **Chapter 9—Ellen G. White’s Attitude Toward Her Own Writings**

Our scripture for this study is 2 Chronicles, the 20th chapter, and the 20th verse:

“Believe in the Lord your God, so shall ye be established; believe His prophets, so shall ye prosper.”

These are wonderfully fine words to keep in our minds as we study the series of subjects which we have been pursuing.

We have now come to the place in our study where we must determine our own individual attitude regarding the writings of the Spirit of prophecy. We must come to a conclusion in our thinking as to the relationship of those writings to us as members of the Remnant Church. You must think in terms of what God would have you do, not only with the prophets of the Old and New Testament, but with His chosen servant, His messenger, in the Remnant Church.

I am convinced, dear friends, as we think through this topic and come to this point in our thinking, that we shall have to do a great deal of praying because the issues become very concrete, very pointed, very personal. And they compel us to do something about it. In our last study we talked about the relation of the writings to the Bible.

This study has to do with Mrs. White’s own attitude toward her own writings. As for me, I have already affirmed that I have decided to take my stand beside Ellen G. White in all of these things. Thus my purpose today is to find out what she thought and said concerning her own position with regard to all of the messages that came from God through her. This should enable me to be sure of my own attitude toward her messages. In taking this position I believe I am safe, for I am in good company. What she said on this subject, therefore, settles the question for me.

[120] With that as a background I wish to turn to a very important

aspect of this study. Some of our people are not too clear with regard to what we call the “inspiration” of her writings, and what some others call the “infallibility” of the writings. Sometimes those two expressions—“inspiration” and “infallibility” are used in a rather confused way. They do not mean the same thing.

“Ellen G. White never claimed ‘verbal inspiration’ for either her own writings or the Bible itself. Neither did she ever claim infallibility for herself nor for the men who gave us the Bible.

“Let us pause for a few minutes on this question, for some of our people must clarify their thinking and bring themselves into accord and agreement with Ellen G. White, whom they so ardently support.

“First, *on infallibility* she said: ‘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.’ That is final and unequivocal. No one can possibly misunderstand or misinterpret such a definite declaration of a fact.

“Next, *on inspiration* she has much more to say, just as final and just as definite:

“‘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 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....

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“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.’

“This is E. G. White’s concept of inspiration. We also find it expressed in the Introduction to *The Great Controversy*.”¹⁹

I believe it would be helpful if you understood how Mrs. White did her work. Then I am sure you will see the impossibility of infallibility, and wherein came the inspiration. Ellen G. White herself was not what you would call a highly educated person. Her formal schooling was only a few grades. A stone thrown by a school girl hit her on the face, broke her nose, and caused a physical deformity. Because of the shock which came to her she dropped out of school and never had the opportunity to go on and learn to spell correctly every word in the dictionary, nor to write perfectly every grammatical construction. She never enjoyed that privilege, but the remarkable thing is that God could take such a humble instrument, lacking in some of those things that we consider so essential in the educated person, and could work through that humble instrument to accomplish the marvellous things that we see in all of her grand

¹⁹“Our Firm Foundation,” pp. 258, 259.

books that are in our hands today. That indeed is a most remarkable accomplishment.

When she began to write, she herself says that her hand was so feeble that she could not hold her hand steady. But the angel said, "Write, and write the things that have been shown to you." She says of herself, "the more I wrote, the easier it became to write," and that before long she could write page after page with a flowing hand for hours at a time, and never tire. That is another remarkable thing with regard to the servant of God. [122]

A vision of something was given to her, enlightening her mind, or some circumstance, some situation, some need, would be presented to her by the Lord, and then she would sit down to write what in vision she had seen or heard. The two-hour vision, about which I told you in which she saw the conflict of the ages from beginning to end, took her many, many weeks to write out.

How did she write? She took her pen and paper and wrote as the Spirit of God impressed her to write what she had seen in the vision. At times she wrote painstakingly. At other times she paid little attention to the dotting of the i's or the crossing of the t's or putting in the commas and the semicolons, the colons and the periods. She did not stop for even a misspelled word. She was writing rapidly to get the thought on paper.

When Mrs. White had finished the manuscript, whether written very carefully or more swiftly, she turned it over to her secretary. May I add here that the handwriting is an interesting study. In the very early days it was small and neat, and the letters were well formed and careful, but like some of the rest of us, as we get up in years, the sixties and seventies, and so forth, we become less painstaking and it is with difficulty that I read her writing which she did near the end of her days. Yet Elder D. E. Robinson, who worked with her for years, can read it off almost like printed material.

Each page written by hand was turned over to a secretary. The secretary copied that page on the typewriter correcting any errors in spelling, punctuation, and so forth. Sister White once wrote that there was no salvation in misspelled words or faulty grammar. The Holy Spirit does not teach one how to spell. Boys and girls in the church school, do not get the wrong idea. It takes hard work to learn

how to spell, and God will not perform a miracle and make up for your mistakes in spelling.

[123] Now to go back to her procedure. When the page was typed it was handed back to Mrs. White. Then she studied that page very carefully to make sure that every word was just in the right place to convey the correct thought. After she had gone over the corrections, perhaps adding a word or two here or there, it went back to the secretary to be typed in a clear, finished copy. Again it went back to Mrs. White, so that once more she could make sure that it was just right. She read it again to make sure that it conveyed the correct thought, and signed her name on the finished copy.

In the year 1907 Mrs. White explained the work of those who assisted her in this way:

“While my husband lived, he acted as a helper and counsellor in the sending out of the messages that were given to me. We travelled 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 person 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 laboured 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.”²⁰

Mrs. White never claimed verbal inspiration, and now you can understand the reason why. The very method of doing her work

²⁰“The Writing and Sending out of the Testimonies to the Church,” p. 4. Quoted in “Ellen G. White, Messenger to the Remnant,” 60, 61.

would make it impossible to have verbal inspiration. This is what Elder F. M. Wilcox called "thought inspiration" in contrast to "verbal inspiration."

In [Jeremiah 36](#), the first three verses, God said,

"Jeremiah, take the roll of a book, write in that book the messages that I have given to you."

So Jeremiah called his secretary, Baruch, and told him, "Baruch, bring a scroll, get your pen and your ink, and have everything all ready. I am now going to dictate to you the messages God has given me." Thus it was that he dictated, and Baruch wrote it down. [124]

I assure you, dear friends, when we think of the work of the prophet as being done in that way, there is no difficulty in our minds if one or two little inaccuracies might appear in all of the printed books and in the thousands of periodical articles that came from the pen of Ellen G. White. Very few people in the history of the world have produced more in volume, in quantity, than did Ellen G. White in the seventy years of her activity as a messenger of God.

The remarkable thing is that for so long a period of service there should be such a unity and a harmony of thought throughout all of the writings from the very first page to the very last page. To me this is one of the greatest evidences of the inspiration of the writer.

Even in 1906, Dr. David Paulson, a very interesting man, one of the most enthusiastic men I have ever seen, wrote a letter to Mrs. White stating his opinion, his convictions, regarding her and her work.

We have that letter in the file, but I am not particularly interested in his letter. I am, however, very much interested in Mrs. White's response to it. Let me read three paragraphs from the letter which she wrote in reply to David Paulson. I quote:

"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 preface to *Great Controversy*, ... you have no doubt read my statement regarding the ten commandments and the Bible, which should have helped you to a correct understanding of the matter under consideration.” [Italics mine.]

[125] This appears in our file as letter No. 206, written in the year 1906. It also appeared in the [The Review and Herald, August 30, 1906](#), p. 8.

Now what does it say? and what does it mean? Here was a zealous man, a fine Christian gentleman, a man who wanted above everything else to do right for God and be right with his brethren. He wrote to Ellen G. White and gave her his impression or conviction that every word she had ever said in public and in private, every letter that she had ever written, of whatever nature it might have been, was just like and on a par with, the ten commandments. Mrs. White corrected his impression in these words, “My brother, ... you have never found that I have made any such claims.” If Ellen G. White never made such a claim, then neither should you nor I. And I shall tell you why I make no such claim.

You see, not everybody has been given the privilege of spending some sixteen months sitting in the vault at the Ellen G. White Publications office and reading those most interesting and wonderful manuscripts—no, not everyone has had that privilege. That, however, was my privilege. I consider it to be the most important period in my life. It gave me an opportunity for which I had longed and never thought possible of fulfilment. To spend days and weeks and months doing little else but living with those writings, I want to tell you frankly, was a wonderful experience. I thank God every day for it. I thoroughly enjoyed it, and may I say today that my confidence in the Spirit of prophecy, and in the gift of prophecy, and in the writings of the Spirit of prophecy, is stronger today than ever before. I have no question regarding the gift, nor the instrument used by God.

Mrs. White was a very reasonable person. If she was anything she was a very human person. As I read those letters and manuscripts I found there among them letters addressed to Willie, or Edson, or some other member of the family, or friend, and they were characteristic letters of a good mother, a good neighbour, a fine Christian.

In those letters she wrote some very good personal instruction for the boys and she gave the news of everyday happenings which she knew would interest those to whom she was writing. She was not prevented from writing in these letters of common everyday matters. These letters might also contain some definite counsel. In speaking of such communications she drew the line of distinction between the sacred and the common. She painstakingly refrained from setting forth her own ideas as counsel or instruction and none need be confused or perplexed. Her letters certainly would never be put on an equality with the ten commandments. [126]

As we are speaking of Mrs. White's attitude toward her own writings we should consider a few more statements from her pen which make the matter clear. Of her testimony letters she wrote:

“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 which I write, in the testimonies I bear, I am presenting to you that which the Lord has presented to me.”²¹

Then of the many articles which she furnished through the years to the papers of the denomination from week to week she says:

“I do not write one article for 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.”²²

²¹“Testimonies,” Vol. 5, p. 67.

²²“Ibid.”

Of her books she penned these lines:

“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.” ²³

[127] That which Mrs. White set forth in her writings might be an account of a vision given to her shortly before she wrote, or her testimony might have been based on many visions given to her over a long period of time. Her mind had been enlightened by the visions and at the appropriate time she presented the message from the enlightened mind. But remember, Mrs. White never claimed infallibility nor verbal inspiration.

Listen to what she wrote about this in 1867:

“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.” ²⁴

We must not claim for Mrs. White that which she did not claim for herself.

Perhaps I could best illustrate it in this way. To me Christ is the Great Architect, building a kingdom with many mansions in the capital city of that kingdom. He is also the designer of the character of the people He wants in that kingdom. So as the Great architect He has a “blueprint” of His kingdom and of the people, the kind of people He wants with Him throughout eternity. Then, like all great architects, He has a book of specifications, detailed specifications, which deal with the blueprint, which give in greater detail everything that has to do with the development of His kingdom. Christ is the Architect. The Bible is the blueprint. The writings of the Spirit of prophecy are the detailed specifications.

²³“The Colporteur Evangelist, 36.

²⁴“The Review and Herald, October 8, 1867, in “Testimony of Jesus,” p. 87.

I think if you will analyze that thought a little more carefully you will see in it tremendous possibilities. And now when we sit down with these books—the *Conflict of the Ages* series, for example—and read from the beginning of *Patriarchs and Prophets* to the end of *Great Controversy*, I think you will see what I mean. There are the detailed specifications which greatly magnify the blueprint in the Scriptures, all of which comes from the mind of the Great Architect. Personally I like the detailed specifications. They do not take the place of the blueprint, but they go along with the blueprint in a remarkably interesting and vital way.

Maybe I should stop here to give you in her own words the purpose of the *Testimonies*. This is taken from Volume 5 of the [Testimonies for the Church 5:665](#):

“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.”

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This is what Elder Ashlock told me last night about his father. He said that his father loved the simplicity of the message given in the writings of the Spirit of prophecy. Those great truths found in the Bible, are presented in such a simple way, in such beautiful thoughts, that anyone who reads them will be greatly impressed by the message, by the thought in the message, by the inspiration that comes through the reading and the studying of the message.

I believe, dear friends, it is only as we put those messages in our hearts and in our minds that they can hew us, and fashion us, and

mould us, and make us into the kind of people God wants in His everlasting kingdom.

Chapter 10—Ellen G. White’s Message on Health

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To introduce the thought of this study I should like to turn to the 34th Psalm and begin reading with the 12th verse.

“What man is he that desireth life, and loveth many days, that he may see good? Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile. Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it. The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and His ears are open unto their cry. The face of the Lord is against them that do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth. The righteous cry, and the Lord heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles. The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit. Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth him out of them all. He keepeth all his bones: not one of them is broken. Evil shall slay the wicked: and they that hate the righteous shall be desolate. The Lord redeemeth the soul of His servants: and none of them that trust in Him shall be desolate.”

First of all I should like to pursue further the thought of the last study in connection with Ellen G. White’s own attitude toward her writings and her works. From all that we have found thus far I think we can all come to the conclusion that she was a very sensible, very humble, very good person.

Mrs. White was well aware of the dangers that might come to the cause through those who do not fully understand the work given her to do. Therefore, she set forth in her writings much instruction as to how we should relate ourselves to her works and use them in our daily lives. In her own relationship to her work she has given us an example of what we should be and do.

I have brought together six points on the wrong use of the *Testimonies* which I invite you to consider in connection with this topic.

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Now you say, "You should speak positively," which is generally true, but sometimes we need to state things negatively. In this particular situation I would rather use the negative approach because I believe we shall put our finger on some things which are definitely wrong, and at times bring untoward, even unfavourable results, to the cause of God. Again I want to talk very plainly, very frankly, just heart-to-heart. This is not a sermon, but only a very simple study on relationships.

Mrs. White maintained a very sensible, well-balanced, middle-of-the-road attitude in everything she taught, and in everything she did. That may seem strange when you think of some people who have developed an attitude toward the writings of the Spirit of prophecy that is anything but sensible. The fault is not with Ellen G. White nor with her writings. The fault must be somewhere else.

First, the advice of Mrs. White is not to use the *Testimonies* as proof for unbelievers.²⁵ In other words, when we go out to teach the truth to the people of the world, or people outside the church, she counsels that we should use the Bible and not the *Testimonies*. We can agree with that good counsel, for we can be sadly misunderstood when we lay the Bible aside, take the *Testimonies*, and teach our truths from them. Such a procedure would give a wrong impression, which she herself never gave. Her advice was to use the Bible in teaching the message to unbelievers.

Second, she cautioned not to use the *Testimonies* as a test of fellowship.²⁶ Your belief in the visions, dreams, revelations, and writings of the Spirit of prophecy is not to be a test of fellowship. If someone has accepted the Lord Jesus as his Saviour, if he has followed along in accepting the Bible doctrines and the teachings of the Scriptures, but hesitates for more light with regard to the Spirit of prophecy, visions, dreams, and revelations, Mrs. White tells us plainly not to make that a test of church fellowship. Rather, if this individual in accepting the doctrines of the Scriptures will accept the doctrines of prophets and the teachings of the prophets of the Old and New Testament, and shall manifest a willingness to be led in the study of Ellen G. White's work no matter how long it takes that

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²⁵White, Ellen G., "[Testimonies for the Church 1:119, 120](#); [Testimonies for the Church 5:669](#)."

²⁶[Testimonies for the Church 1:327-329](#),

individual to come to a conclusion, he should not be denied church membership. That is a very remarkable statement, and one which I am sure we do well to remember.

Third, she advised not to use the visions as a rule to measure all. ²⁷ Do not use the testimonies, the visions, as a rule to measure other people. That, too, is very good advice. For so frequently we use the *Testimonies* not to measure ourselves, but to measure some one else. She has put this thought in a very interesting paragraph in the [The Review and Herald, August 27, 1889](#), and I think this bears rereading:

“There are many whose religion consists in criticizing the habits of dress and manners. They want to bring every one to their own measure. They desire to lengthen out those who seem too short for their standard, and to cut down others who seem too long. They have lost the love of God out of their hearts; but they think they have a spirit of discernment. They think it is their prerogative to criticize, and pronounce judgment; but they should repent of their error, and turn away from their sins.... Let us love one another. Let us have harmony and union throughout our ranks. Let us have our hearts sanctified to God. Let us look upon the light that abides for us in Jesus. Let us remember how forbearing and patient He was with the erring children of men. We should be in a wretched state if the God of heaven were like one of us, and treated us as we are inclined to treat one another.”

I think that is a rich gem, and how aptly it describes me, and maybe some of you in our tendency to judge others by ourselves.

It is so easy to take some of the writings of the *Testimonies* and say, “Now, brother, you have got to do so and so in order to bring yourself into harmony with the pattern. You are either too long or too short. There is something wrong with you.” And so we try to correct the brother. Mrs. White, on the other hand, tells us not to use the *Testimonies* as a rule to measure all.

Fourth, she counsels us not to use the *Testimonies* as an iron [132]

²⁷White, Ellen G., “[Testimonies for the Church 1:382, 383](#).”

rule or a club. ²⁸ And that, too, is good advice. The *Testimonies* were not written for the purpose that I should read or find a certain paragraph and hasten out to Brother So-and-So's house, and say, "Brother, here it is; this is exactly what Mrs. White wrote for you. Now you listen, Brother, and I am going to give you just exactly what you need today." Have you ever had that experience? Have you ever heard of somebody doing it that way? Oh, it is so easy to use the *Testimonies* as a club for someone else. God never intended it to be so. He intended that the club, if used at all, should be used on self. God is going to hew, and fashion, and mould. He has not given that task to me nor to you. And therefore, I do well to remember that the *Testimonies* are not given in my hand to be used as a club over someone else.

Fifth, she cautions us not to take the extreme meaning of what she has been shown in the visions. ²⁹ That, too, is good counsel and advice. In connection with that may I present a paragraph from the book *Ministry of Healing*. The whole section is found on pages 318 to 324, but I shall give only one paragraph or two:

"Those who have but a partial understanding of the principles of reform are often the most rigid, not only in carrying out their views themselves, but in urging them on their families and their neighbours. The effect of their mistaken reforms, as seen in their own ill health, and their efforts to force their views upon others, give many a false idea of dietetic reform, and lead them to reject it altogether.

"Those who understand the laws of health and who are governed by principle, will shun the extremes both of indulgence and of restriction."

Mrs. White never intended that we should take the extreme view on anything. She wants us to be in the middle of the road.

Sixth, she admonishes us not to use the *Testimonies* to give force to certain subjects to impress upon others. ³⁰

[133] And how often we find it being done. Not so long ago a well-

²⁸White, Ellen G., "[Testimonies for the Church 1:369](#)."

²⁹White, Ellen G., "[Testimonies for the Church 1:166](#)."

³⁰White, Ellen G., [Manuscript 23, 1911](#).

intentioned, and I think a very sincere and devout, brother sent his manuscript to me. He had gathered from the writings of Ellen G. White many, many paragraphs to set forth his idea of what he thought the church ought to be today. He made a very careful but subjective selection, carefully avoiding that which preceded and followed the sentence or paragraph he wanted to use. He selected only that which he could use to emphasize the point that he wanted to make.

When I finished reading his manuscript, about 150 pages, I sent it back to him. "Brother," I wrote, "if I were you, I would never publish it! In the first place, you have not given a correct view of Mrs. White's teachings on these topics. In the second place, you have not used the writings as Mrs. White would have us use them—on ourselves and not on others. And in the third place, your generalizations are too general and, therefore, untrue in most cases. If you want other criticisms, and I have a page of them, I shall be glad to send them along, but I think this is enough to let you know that I do not favour your publishing this manuscript, or ever having it go into print."

About two weeks later, this brother wrote back and said that mine was the only adverse criticism of his very good manuscript, and therefore it is already in the hands of the printers, and will be off the press very soon. Well, I feel very sorry for that brother. His own reputation in the past is against him. His own experience in the past is absolutely contrary to the very thing he is trying to teach others. He is a poor example of what he is trying to teach.

I say again, the *Testimonies* were written for us individually and not for me to use on someone else. Most certainly we misrepresent and frequently misinterpret the writings of the Spirit of prophecy when we take a sentence here and a sentence there, a little paragraph here and a little paragraph there, and then put them together out of their context. Thus they are made to teach what the Spirit of prophecy did not have in mind at all, but what somebody wants to put over on the brethren. It is not the correct way to use the writings of Ellen G. White.

That brings me now to the question as to just how we ought to use them, and some of the cautions that we should take in their use. I mentioned at the beginning that some of us are prone to criticize the habits of dress, manner of eating, and everything else of the *other*

person. That appears to be the most important part of the religion of those individuals.

I am especially serious about this, and I shall tell you why. Back in 1910, when the truth first came to our family, I was only a small boy, but very much interested in all that I was hearing from a good lay brother who was doing missionary work. We were coming along very nicely in the acceptance of these messages that he was giving to us from week to week, and just as we were reaching the point of decision, there came to our town a very well-intentioned Adventist lady. She was so zealous and so earnest and so sincere that everyone admired her, but she lacked tact and understanding.

She made it her business to come to our house just at meal time, be it dinner, breakfast or supper—not every day, but each visit was at meal time—not an hour before, not an hour after, but just in time to be invited to join the family as we sat down to eat. And, of course, being good Pennsylvania-Dutch people, we had a good table spread with the good things of southern Pennsylvania. This lady never refused to sit down, and have the meal with us.

When the whole family was seated around the table we thanked God for the food and asked His blessing upon it. Then she looked over the table, and very seriously said, “That should not be on the table of a good Seventh-day Adventist. No Seventh-day Adventist would eat that! This certainly is not proper. Why, Sister, if you begin to be an Adventist and eat things like that, you will never go to heaven!” Thus she spent the whole time of the meal hour criticizing everything that was on the table. My dear friends, that is not right. My mother was very anxious and much concerned during every one of those meal occasions. The result was that every member of my family turned against the truth except my mother, an older sister, and I. We have not been able to break down the prejudice that was thus created by that well-intentioned, but very unwise and untactful lady.

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Brethren and sisters in the church, we must learn *how* to use the *Testimonies*, and we must know *where* to use the *Testimonies*. We can turn people against this truth and harden their hearts by a misuse of them. I think that is a very serious thing, for my family cannot be reached by this message even today, and that is over forty years ago. This experience turned them against this truth. I speak very seriously and very earnestly out of a very personal family experience.

I accepted the truth in spite of what the sister did, not because of what she did or said. I cannot emphasize it too strongly. Ellen G. White would never use such a method. I am confident of that. Neither should we. You should learn the proper use of the *Testimonies*, and remember that they are written primarily for you yourself.

A year or so ago I was on a camp ground in the United States, and a good brother came rushing up to me one day. He said, "Elder Rebok, do you eat three meals a day?" I answered, "Yes, Brother, I eat three meals a day." To which he replied, "You will never get into the kingdom of heaven if you eat more than two meals a day." "Well, now," I countered, "I am not so sure about that. Where did you ever get hold of that idea?" "Why," he said, "it is in the *Testimonies*. Mrs. White wrote it." I asked, "Could you tell me just where that is found? I would like to read it." He hesitated and stammered, "Well, but, Brother, I can't remember the book, nor the chapter, nor the page, but it's there. If you eat more than two meals a day you will never be in the kingdom of heaven!"

"Well," I said, "I think I can read that to you." We were very close to the book tent, and so we went over to that big tent. I picked up a volume entitled *Medical Ministry*, and turned to 284. This is what I read:

"It is plain that two meals a day are better than three."

"Why," he shouted, "of course, that is the very thing. "Now that [136] shows you that what I said is right, and still you eat three meals a day?" I said, "Yes, sir," He replied somewhat triumphantly, "Brother, your name is just wiped off the page. There is no hope for you at all!" Then I looked at him, and said very calmly, "But, listen to the rest of the paragraph:"

"I believe and practice this, but I have no 'Thus saith the Lord' that it is wrong for *some* to eat the third meal."

Now I smiled, "Brother, that means me. But that is not all. Listen to the rest of the paragraph:"

“We are not to be as the Pharisees, bound about by set rules and regulations.”

His face changed. He said, “Brother, is that in there?” and I replied, “Not only that. Let me read a little more:”

“God’s Word has not specified any set hours when food should be taken. We are to be careful not to make laws like the laws of the Pharisees, or to teach for doctrines the commandments of men. Let your regulations be so consistent that they will appeal to the reason of those even who have not been educated to see all things clearly.”

I looked at the poor man and said, “Brother, what do you get out of the whole passage?” “Well,” he shook his head, “I don’t know what to say about that. I’ve been taught that anybody who eats more than two meals a day just can’t be saved, and that the Lord is going to judge every individual as to how many meals a day he eats; if he eats two, he will be saved; if he eats more than two, he will not be saved.”

In pity and with a sad heart I said to him, “Brother, you are all wrong. That is not the teaching at all.” He was very much perplexed, and wanted to know more about it. “Well,” I assured him, “when I go back to the office in Washington I shall gather together all of the instruction that I can find on the two-meal-a-day question and send you a copy.”

[137] I went back to the Ellen G. White Publications office and found some fourteen pages of very interesting material on that subject alone. Now I believe, brethren, that it is right and proper that we should be fair to all in dealing with such questions. We should be consistent and well-balanced in our convictions and in our promoting of such ideas. To that dear brother the number of meals eaten by each and every church member was a very serious problem, and to me it was a very serious matter when he was condemning me to the nether regions—over the third meal that I had been in the habit of eating.

I am of the opinion that when we deal with any topic in the Spirit of prophecy we should not be satisfied with one word, or one

sentence, or one paragraph. We should bring together everything that is said on that subject, and then look at all the counsel and instruction. Until we have done that, we are not qualified to pass judgment on anybody or anything, indeed we are not qualified to bring judgment even on ourselves. This ill-advised and unfortunate way of using the writings of the Spirit of prophecy is so serious that I want to emphasize it again and again. When we talk to others about the teachings of the Spirit of prophecy, let us be sure that we know what she says and what she teaches.

Let me read just a few very interesting paragraphs from this collection on the number of meals Seventh-day Adventists should eat each day.

[Education, 205](#):

“In most cases, two meals a day are preferable to three.” And I know some of our very, very fine people who eat but two meals a day. It is good for them. *“Supper, when taken at an early hour, interferes with the digestion of the previous meal. When taken later, it is not itself digested before bedtime. Thus the stomach fails of securing proper rest. The sleep is disturbed, the brain and nerves are wearied, the appetite for breakfast is impaired, the whole system is unrefreshed, and is unready for the day’s duties.”*

That sounds very sensible indeed.

Again I read in the book [The Ministry of Healing, 321](#),

“The practice of eating but two meals a day is generally found of benefit to health, yet under some circumstances, persons may require a third meal. This should, however, if taken at all, be very light, and of food most easily digested.” [Italics mine.]

That, too, seems to be very reasonable. I read in [Counsels on Health, 156](#). [138]

“*Most people* enjoy better health while eating two meals a day than three; others, under their existing circumstances, may require something to eat at supper-time; but this meal should be very light. Let no one think himself a criterion for all—that everyone must do exactly as he does.

“Never cheat the stomach out of that which health demands, and never abuse it by placing upon it a load which it should not bear. Cultivate self-control. Restrain appetite; keep it under the control of reason.” [Italics mine.]

You see, the brother was going about with a mistaken idea of his duty and a wrong conception of the message. Everybody he met was asked the same question, “Do you eat three meals a day?” Of course there were others like me, and he put the same condemnation on all of them that he put on me. That, my friend, is not what Mrs. White says at all.

She frankly and freely counsels, “Let no one think himself a criterion for all, that everyone must do exactly as he does.” Well, I like that kind of instruction, and I have made it a practice to allow each person to settle such questions between himself and God. It is entirely up to that person. It is not any of my business how many meals a day he eats. My business is to find out what agrees best with *me*, and do the thing that is best for *me* under *my* own personal peculiar circumstances.

To make very sure of my position in this matter I approached Elder D. E. Robinson, who lived in Mrs. White's home for many years, and I asked him, “How many meals a day did Mrs. White serve in her home?” “Two meals a day at the table, and then she frankly told each one, ‘Now if you feel the need of something light in the evening, you may feel free to go to the pantry or to the icebox and help yourself!’” He added “and this I always did.” “Furthermore,” he said, “everybody else in that household did the same.”

[139] Mrs. White ate only two meals, but she was old and was not engaged in heavy physical labour. She found that she did not need that extra food, so she got along very well on her two meals, but she never forbade the rest of her helpers to eat the third. She did say, “If

you eat the third meal you do well to eat a light meal in the evening.” That is my own personal habit, and I find that I get along very well on it. By looking at my one hundred and ninety pounds you might conclude that I would do well to get along on two meals, at least for a while. But somehow I like the way she puts her counsels and instructions, and I shall follow the plan which seems to agree with my physical habits and meets my need to maintain good health.

Here is another very interesting bit of instruction which comes from Volume 4 of the [Testimonies for the Church 4:501, 502](#). In writing these testimonies she would refer to Brother H, or Brother A, or Brother T because the instruction was directed to some particular person, and yet have its application to others in a similar situation. It is evident that the course of Brother H had not been what it should have been. Of him she says,

“His likes and dislikes are very strong, and he has not kept his own feelings under the control of reason. Brother H, your health is greatly injured by over-eating, and eating at improper times. This causes a determination of blood to the brain. The mind becomes confused, and you have not the proper control of yourself. You appear like a man whose mind is unbalanced. You make strong moves, are easily irritated, and view things in an exaggerated and perverted light. Plenty of exercise in the open air, and an abstemious diet, are essential to your health. You should not eat more than two meals a day. If you feel that you must eat at night, take a drink of cold water, and in the morning you will feel much better for not having eaten.”

You see, that was the specific instruction to an individual who needed such counsel. There may be a number of Brother H's around the world. When I see them pile up one plate after another, I begin to wonder whether I should say anything to Brother H, but I refrain, for that is not my business. I am sure you know that one of the greatest weaknesses among Seventh-day Adventists generally is over-eating. Our women have learned how to prepare such delicious and tasty dishes that most of us tend to over-eat. But I shall not make it my

business to go around and tell which one is over-eating and which one is not! God has given to you and me alike the same instruction, and you can read and interpret it as well as I.

I came across a very interesting letter written in 1901, under our File No. 145. In it was this paragraph:

“With regard to the diet question, this matter must be handled with such wisdom that no overbearing will appear. It should be shown that to eat two meals is far better for the health than to eat three. But there must be no authoritative forcing seen. No one connected with the sanitarium should be compelled to adopt the two-meal system. Persuasion is more appropriate, than force.” ³¹

This again was written to a very specific individual, in a very specific institution, and for a very specific reason. Yet it has a caution in it which we do well to heed.

In 1902 she wrote a letter No. 200, in which she said:

“In regard to the third meal, do not make eating but two meals compulsory. Some do best healthwise when eating three light meals, and when they are restricted to two, they feel the change severely.” ³²

I once had that experience, and I came to a conclusion that those who live on two meals a day are generally the poorest examples of real health reform among us as a people. They ate more in their two meals than the ordinary person in three moderate meals.

We must be consistent. We must be sensible. We must live according to reason. If Ellen G. White was anything at all, she was reasonable, sensible, and took good care of those about her.

We could read much more on this subject, but there are other subjects far more important. I use it only as an example of how we can become extremists in our viewpoints and misuse the writings of the servant of the Lord. None of us want to do that I am sure.

³¹White, Ellen G., “[Counsels on Diet and Foods](#), 177.

³²[Counsels on Diet and Foods](#), 178.

Mrs. White then describes another class who in their desire to set a right example go to the opposite extreme. Concerning them she says:

“Some are unable to obtain the most desirable foods, and instead of using such things as would best supply the lack, they adopt an impoverished diet. Their food does not supply the elements needed to make good blood. Their health suffers, their usefulness is impaired, and their example tells against rather than in favour of reform in diet.

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“Others think that since health requires a simple diet, there need be little care in the selection or the preparation of food. Some restrict themselves to a very meagre diet, not having sufficient variety to supply the needs of the system, and they suffer in consequence.”³³

I was in a home several years ago, where they had a kind of a mixing machine. The lettuce went in at the top, the cabbage, the carrots, the tomatoes, and the potatoes all went in the top—about everything that you could imagine, and all raw. Out it came in a sort of thick liquid. The lady took a glass of that mixture, and handing it to me, said, “Here is your dinner.” I drank it along with the rest of the family. When it came time for the next meal, about the same things went in at the top, were all ground up, and out came the liquid. Again she handed me a glass and said, “Here is your supper.” Well, now, brethren, that may or may not be health reform. For me, I consider it health *deform*, and deeply regret the reproach which such practices bring upon the greatly needed health message.

Ellen G. White never used such methods in her home. The people who lived with her for years tell of the bountiful table of well selected and well prepared foods. There was always an abundance for all, carefully selected, carefully prepared, and carefully served in the most proper and right way. No, my brothers and sisters, health reform does not demand that we become extremists in anything. It expects that we shall be good, sensible people, able to reason

³³White, Ellen G., “[The Ministry of Healing](#), 318.

from cause to effect, ready to choose that which is wholesome, and discard that which is harmful.

[142] From the examples cited thus far it becomes apparent that we must read everything which Mrs. White has written on any given aspect of health reform before we are qualified to speak with authority as to just what she taught and advocated. This becomes more apparent as we deal with such questions as to eggs, milk, butter, cheese, flesh, and the like.

It is high time that we faced these problems and dealt with them frankly and fairly, so as to do justice to the one who is so frequently misquoted, misinterpreted, and misunderstood. Again I say, that on all of these questions we must take our position right by her side, giving due consideration to every statement, not going to either extreme, not running ahead of her nor falling so far behind that we are out of step with her.

To make sure of our position on all of these much discussed issues let us classify her instruction in three columns, or groups: First, the instruction which sets forth the ideal, that which is best, most positive, most strict—the highly desirable. Second, the instruction which recognized the exceptions, the emergencies, the conditions which do not permit of the ideal, the perfect, and which call for a second best, the best you can do under existing conditions. Third, those statements which seem to be a summarization, or a conclusion of the whole matter.

To my mind that is a fair, a reasonable, and a sensible approach to these questions which are now proving so troublesome and perplexing to some; and even becoming obstacles and stumbling blocks to others. When all of the instruction on any given topic is studied, Ellen G. White is found to present what must be recognized as a well-balanced, reasonable, and highly satisfactory solution or exposition.

My appeal to all Seventh-day Adventists everywhere is that we might use such a sane and sensible approach to all of the counsel and instruction contained in the writings of Ellen G. White. By thus taking our position by her side, we can and would be correct in our interpretation, and a harmony of thought and action would result.

Let us apply this principle first to the question regarding the eating of eggs. Taken from Volume 2 of the [Testimonies for the](#)

[Church 2:400](#), we read, “Eggs should not be placed upon your table.” Without giving heed to the setting of this statement it seems to be all inclusive, and has a finality which is beyond compromise. And [143] some of our folks say, “Therefore, eat no eggs.”

In that second column or group of qualifying statements I find this:

“It is true that persons in full flesh and in whom the animal passions are strong need to avoid the use of stimulating foods. Especially in families of children who are given to sensual habits, egg should not be used.”

Now that is quite different from the first sentence. The first sentence said, “Eggs should not be placed upon your table.” Now let us continue:

“But in the case of persons whose blood-making organs are feeble—especially if other foods to supply the needed elements cannot be obtained—milk and eggs should not be wholly discarded. Great care should be taken, however, to obtain milk from healthy cows, and eggs from healthy fowls, that are well fed and well cared for.” ³⁴

We now turn to Volume 9 of the [Testimonies for the Church 9:162](#) for her final summarizing statement regarding eggs:

“While warnings have been given regarding the dangers of disease through butter, and the evil of the free use of eggs by small children, yet we should not consider it a violation of principle to use eggs from hens that are well cared for and suitably fed. Eggs contain properties that are remedial agencies in counteracting certain poisons.”

Now suppose we had stopped on the first sentence. Suppose we had stopped on the first two sentences. Then I would not be

³⁴White, Ellen G., [“The Ministry of Healing, 320.](#)

doing justice to the teaching of the Spirit of prophecy on this subject. It means that I must have the whole picture before me in order to understand the significance and the meaning of the instruction given.

Brethren, sisters, I appeal to you once again. Let us be sure that we have the whole picture, the whole body of instruction, before we pronounce a judgment upon anyone. It seems to me that we should be most careful to use the writings of the Spirit of prophecy in the way that Ellen G. White intended they should be used.

[144] Frankly what was the situation which called forth the positive statement on page 400 of Volume 2? A brother and his wife were having trouble with their boys. Their boys had gotten into some habits that were not good for them, affecting their health and their mentality. They went to Mrs. White and said, "Mrs. White, we need help, we need instruction, we need counsel." Then they explained their problem to her. She replied, "I have instruction for just such a situation as that." Today we find that instruction is found in Volume 2 of the *Testimonies*. The chapter in which that particular sentence is found is entitled "Sensuality in the Young." You will find the whole picture set forth, and the reason for that sentence, which so many of our people lift right out of its context. They use it as a basis for everybody, everywhere, and declare that the eating of eggs is wrong. You see, you must read the whole chapter, beginning on page 390 in order to get the clear picture.

More than that, you should read the chapter in *Ministry of Healing*, and also the chapter in Volume 9 of the *Testimonies*, in fact, read everything that has to do with eggs before you begin to tell anybody else what to do about eggs.

Dear old Doctor Daniel Kress, over in Australia, way back about 1900 and 1901 was a very careful health reformer, and in every sense a fine, true Christian gentleman. He had taken an extreme view of health reform and had brought upon himself a very serious case of pernicious anæmia. Doctor Kress was going down physically, very fast, and his prospects of living were becoming rather uncertain. Mrs. White, who was in California, was given a vision in which Dr. Kress' condition was shown to her and the reasons for his impaired health were revealed to her. Of course he was not using meat nor was he using eggs, milk, butter, or cheese. In vision she was shown that he should return to the use of dairy products and he should use raw

eggs in grape juice every day for it would save his life. Doctor Kress, in telling the story, told us that he was completely amazed at such a thing coming from Mrs. White. He followed the counsel, turning from his extreme interpretation of health reform and regained his health. The dear old doctor still lives and was able to give fifty years of service after the time he thought he would die.

Let us turn to another food problem and take a brief glance at the instruction on dairy products—milk, cream, and butter. Here, too, is a question which vexes many of our people. Again we must take our stand by the side of Ellen G. White if we would rightly understand and represent her views on this subject.

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We begin with the positive statements:

“The light given me is that it will not be very long before we shall have to give up any animal food. Even milk will have to be discarded. Disease is accumulating rapidly. The curse of God is upon the earth.”³⁵

“Tell them that the time will soon come when there will be no safety in using eggs, milk, cream, or butter, because disease in animals is increasing in proportion to the increase of wickedness among men.”³⁶

Disease in the animals is the reason given for these statements. The contamination of the source, and the method of handling, would seem to justify the discontinuance of dairy products from one's diet. Before coming to a conclusion we turn to the qualifying instruction, and we must give it due consideration because it, too, came from the pen of Mrs. White.

“God has furnished man with abundant means for the gratification of an unperverted appetite. He has spread before him the produce of the earth—a bountiful variety of food that is palatable to the taste and nutritious to the system. Of these our benevolent heavenly Father says we may freely eat. Fruits, grains, and vegetables, prepared in a simple way, free from spice and grease of

³⁵White, Ellen G., “Australasian Union Conference Record,” July 28, 1899.

³⁶White, Ellen G., “[Testimonies for the Church 7:135](#).”

all kinds, make, *with milk or cream*, the most healthful diet. They impart nourishment to the body, and give a power of endurance and a vigour of intellect that are not produced by a stimulating diet.”³⁷ [Italics mine.]

Further we read:

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“The time *may come* when it will not be safe to use milk. But if the cows are healthy and the milk thoroughly cooked, there is no necessity of creating a tune of trouble beforehand.”³⁸ [Italics mine.]

“As for myself, I have settled the butter question. I do not use it. *This question should easily be settled in every place where the purest article cannot be obtained.* We have two good milch cows, a Jersey and a Holstein. *We use cream*, and all are satisfied with this.”³⁹ [Italics mine.]

It was in 1909 at a General Conference Session that Ellen G. White preached a powerful sermon on health reform. This sermon now appears in *Testimonies*, Volume 9, and I consider it as a sort of summarization of her teachings on this important topic. Every Seventh-day Adventist would do well to read and analyze it. From it we take several paragraphs:

“Food should be prepared in such a way that it will be appetizing as well as nourishing.... Vegetables should be made palatable *with a little milk or cream*, or something equivalent.... Some, in abstaining from milk, eggs, and butter, have failed to supply the system with proper nourishment, and as a consequence have become weak and unable to work. Thus health reform is brought into disrepute....

“The *time will come when we may have to discard some of the articles of diet we now use, such as milk*

³⁷White, Ellen G., “[Christian Temperance and Bible Hygiene](#), 47 (Quoted in [Counsels on Diet and Foods](#), 92).

³⁸White, Ellen G., [Letter 39, 1901](#); quoted in “[Counsels on Diet and Foods](#), 357.

³⁹White, Ellen G., [Letter 45, 1903](#); quoted in “[Counsels on Diet and Foods](#), 351.

*and cream and eggs; but it is not necessary to bring upon ourselves perplexity by premature and extreme restrictions. Wait until the circumstances demand it, and the Lord prepares the way for it.”*⁴⁰ [Italics mine.]

“Milk, eggs, and butter should not be classed with flesh meat. In some cases the use of eggs is beneficial. The time has not come to say that the use of milk and eggs should be wholly discarded. There are poor families whose diet consists largely of bread and milk. They have little fruit and cannot afford to purchase the nut foods. *In teaching health reform, as in all other gospel work, we are to meet the people where they are. Until we can teach them how to prepare health reform foods that are palatable, nourishing, and yet inexpensive, we are not at liberty to present the most advanced propositions regarding health reform diet.”*⁴¹ [Italics mine.]

When the health message is studied in this way duty and responsibility become apparent to every one. There is no need for extreme views, for narrow bigotry, nor for pharisaical restrictions, nor for any to attempt to gain salvation by works. [147]

⁴⁰White, Ellen G., “Testimonies for the Church 9:162.

⁴¹White, Ellen G., “Testimonies for the Church 7:135.

Chapter 11—My Attitude Toward the Life and Work of Ellen G. White

Seldom do we travel in any part of the world today, and talk about the Spirit of prophecy, but that some people come and say, “Now tell us all about the meat question. What did Mrs. White really have to say regarding the eating of flesh foods?”

It is a good question. Sometimes I am inclined to think that we are more exercised about it than we should be. It gives me the impression that the food question is a great cross in the lives of many of our people, for they talk and fret so much about it. When I became an Adventist in 1910, and learned that flesh food was not a part of the Seventh-day Adventist diet, we immediately cast it out of our house and out of our experience. Our family had been eating some kind of flesh food three times a day—breakfast, dinner and supper—and yet it was dropped from our dietary immediately. We did not understand all the reasons why. We were simply told we should not eat it. I did not take the time to read all of the instructions for myself, but when we were told that it is not a part of a Seventh-day Adventist’s life, we cancelled it out, along with everything else objectionable.

We had lived next door to the manager of the moving picture theatre. He had two small children, and he wanted them to see the pictures every night, so I took them every night, and never paid a cent for the years we lived beside those people. Yet when this truth came to me, and I found that the theatre does not fit into the life of a Seventh-day Adventist, I stopped that immediately. So one thing after another was given up, and I find that I am not the loser for having given up any or all of these things. Indeed they have no place or part in my happy Christian life. God does not ask us to give up anything that is good for us. He asks us only to give up those things that are not good for us. Thus one thing after another promptly disappeared from our lives and from our tables until we thought we were living in harmony with God’s teachings.

The sad part of it is that having given up so much I actually became a guilty one so far as real health reform was concerned, but in a different way. Perhaps different from anything that you have ever heard or done. Giving up all these things, tea and coffee and flesh foods and all such, I became guilty in other things which are equally important in the full health message.

For some reason or other, I do not know why, I thought it my duty to get up at three o'clock in the morning and begin my day's duty and work. I felt that I had so much to get done, and so little time to do it, that I must begin at three o'clock in the morning. For a number of years I did that conscientiously, and of course worked like a slave all day long because I thought it must be done.

As a good, conscientious Seventh-day Adventist I thought it was my duty to work harder than anybody else, but when I married a lady who did not like such early risers, I changed my habits and got up at 4:30. In fact, all through my twenty-three years of work in China it was either 4:30 or 5:00 o'clock when my day began, and it ended about eleven at night.

Then to make matters still worse I came to think that I had to worry for everybody on that school campus. I became the official worrier for everybody, and with that kind of a programme—up at 4:30 or 5:00 in the morning, to bed at eleven o'clock at night, and worrying about everybody's problems between eleven and four o'clock in the morning—it was not long until my stomach gave way, and I suffered for about eight years.

Nobody ever told me that I was a poor example of health reform. I just lived that kind of a life. I never thought of taking time out for a rest, relaxation, or vacation. As a matter of fact, a vacation or a holiday was for me a waste of time and a terrible bore. I just could not stand it. I had to have something to do every minute, or I was of all men most miserable. With no hill leave, or anything of that kind, from 1917 to 1940, I was a good subject for a permanent return to the United States, and home they sent me and my family.

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Having landed in the United States of America I went to our own White Memorial Hospital, and paid a lot of money for X-rays, and all the regular and special examinations, but I was not much impressed by what the doctors said. Honestly I paid no attention to it, but kept going until the fall of 1940 when I reached the place

where I could not stand erect and straighten up. With constant pain in the abdomen I had to walk like a bent-over old man, and finally had to go to a doctor.

This time I went to a doctor who was not a Seventh-day Adventist, but a specialist in internal medicine, and a professor at the George Washington University Medical College. He looked me over and said, "Well, Mr. Rebok, so you are a Seventh-day Adventist. Don't you believe in God? Don't you pray?" Somewhat perplexed, and a bit ashamed, I said, "Surely." He inquired, "But don't you think God hears your prayers?" "Well," I mumbled, "I think so." To which he thoughtfully replied, "But you don't act like it. You would not be in the condition you are today if you believed in God, and if you knew how to pray, and how to work."

Remember he was not an Adventist. Then he said, "Now, of course, I know that in the diet that I am going to give you, you would prefer not to eat meat." "That is right," I agreed, "if I can get a perfectly balanced diet without it." He assured me that I could get a perfect diet without meat, and then he proceeded to give me the simplest kind of a diet you could ever imagine. He went further and prescribed, "You must stay in bed until six o'clock in the morning. You must be in bed before ten o'clock at night. You must lie down for twenty minutes of rest at noon when you come back from your work, and before you eat." He said that I must do this, and I must do that until he had given me a complete programme of activity, and a simple, well-balanced diet to live on.

[151] It came the nearest to being what I find described in the Ellen G. White books of anything I could imagine. No cakes, no pies, no sugar, and no sweets of any kind. No meat, no condiments—none of these things. He said, "Of course, I know there is no use to tell you about tobacco and liquor. I know you do not use them. If you did, they, too, would all go." When all was said and done he gave me my programme on which I was to live for two years.

After I had been faithfully carrying out this programme without a deviation in any way whatsoever for over a year, I said to him, "Have you ever read our Seventh-day Adventist books on health?" The doctor replied, "No, I have never seen them." "Well," I said, 'what you have given me to eat, and the daily programme on which you have placed me, corresponds more closely to the pattern set

forth in our books than anything I have ever seen before.” At the end of two years I was completely recovered, and have had no return of that trouble since 1940.

What was the cause of all my trouble? In the first place, I did not know how to work. In the second place, I did not know how to relax. Third, I did not know how to take proper physical exercise that would really build up and strengthen the body. We had no problem or questions regarding food, but I must admit that I seldom ever thought about the seven factors in the complete health message, and especially the seventh, which is “Trust in divine power.” Somehow or other I had just taken that for granted, but we must become more aware of God’s presence and power in our daily lives.

Living on that simple programme of work and exercise and rest with the simplest kind of food in the most simple combinations, I found that I could live happily and keep perfectly well. All of that was in the books from the time I accepted this truth in 1910, but I tell you honestly, my friends, most of us allow it to remain in the books unheeded and certainly seldom carried out in all of its detail.

I am convinced that Mrs. White has given us a programme of health that includes all phases of healthful living. You will find it stated in one sentence on page 127 of the book *Ministry of Healing*. I wish you would memorize it. If it is not memorized, then remember where it is found. “Pure air, sunlight, rest, exercise, proper diet, the use of water, and trust in divine power, these are the true remedies.” Our health message is all wrapped up in that sentence, and it includes all seven phases of living, and not just one. We can be ever so careful in what we eat, but if we lack the other six essential factors, which are of equal importance, we shall not be living true health reform. So I can but appeal to you at this time to learn what health reform really means and all that is included in it.

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Now we come to the question of flesh foods. Someone asks, “Can you prove from the Bible that you should not eat meat?” My answer is “No. We cannot prove it from the Bible.” Therefore, I never use the Bible to prove that I should not eat meat. My appeal is to science, and to the fact that disease among animals is so prevalent, and the preparation and marketing of meat and flesh is so uncertain, that we do well to find safer sources of food.

I read in [Counsels on Diet and Foods, 380, 381](#):

“Among those who are waiting for the coming of the Lord, meat eating will eventually be done away; flesh will cease to form a part of their diet. We should ever keep this end in view, and endeavour to work steadily toward it. I cannot think that in the practice of flesh eating we are in harmony with the light which God has been pleased to give us.”

Again we read the following caution:

“There are those who ought to be awake to the danger of meat eating, who are still eating the flesh of animals, thus endangering the physical, mental, and spiritual health. Many who are now only half converted on the question of meat eating will go from God's people to walk no more with them.”⁴²

“Vegetables, fruits, and grains should compose our diet. Not an ounce of flesh meat should enter our stomachs. The eating of flesh is unnatural. We are to return to God's original purpose in the creation of man.”⁴³

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“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?”⁴⁴

“It is for their own good that the Lord counsels the Remnant Church to discard the use of flesh meats, tea, and coffee, and other harmful foods. There are plenty of other things on which we can subsist that are wholesome and good.”⁴⁵

Thus it becomes apparent to all that God would have His people eat a diet as near to the original ideal diet as is possible. The advan-

⁴²White, Ellen G., “[Counsels on Diet and Foods](#), 382.

⁴³[Counsels on Diet and Foods](#), 380.

⁴⁴White, Ellen G., “[Counsels on Diet and Foods](#), 380.

⁴⁵[Counsels on Diet and Foods](#), 381.

tages and blessings are clearly outlined. Just as far as possible we should live by the ideal, the best.

To be absolutely fair and unbiased on this matter of meat eating we should present the passages which recognize emergencies, special cases and situations. These are known by some and they are frequently used as justification for using flesh foods. We present them in order to have the whole picture before us and to enable us to come to right conclusions.

The compilers of the book [Counsels on Diet and Foods, 481](#) set forth some principles which guided Ellen G. White in her dietetic practices:

“First: ‘The diet reform must be progressive.’⁴⁶

“Second: ‘We do not mark out any precise line to be followed in diet.’⁴⁷

“Third: ‘I make myself a criterion for no one else.’⁴⁸

Mrs. White writes of her own experience in these words:

“I accepted the light on health reform as it came to me. It has been a great blessing to me. I have better health today, notwithstanding I am seventy-six years old, than I had in my younger days. I thank God for the principles of health reform.”⁴⁹

“Light came to me, showing me the injury men and women were doing to the mental, moral, and physical faculties by the use of flesh meat. I was shown that the whole human structure is affected by this diet, that by it man strengthens the animal propensities and the appetite for liquor.

“I at once cut meat out of my bill of fare. After that I was at times placed where I was compelled to eat a little meat.”⁵⁰

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⁴⁶White, Ellen G., [“The Ministry of Healing, 320.](#)

⁴⁷White, Ellen G., [Testimonies for the Church 9:159.](#)

⁴⁸White, Ellen G., [Letter 45, 1903.](#)

⁴⁹White, Ellen G., [Counsels on Diet and Foods, 482, 1904.](#)

⁵⁰[Counsels on Diet and Foods, 497.](#)

The compilers of *Counsels on Diet and Foods* add this note, “At times compelled to eat a little meat when other food was not available—699.” On page 394 we find this paragraph No. 699:

“Where plenty of good milk and fruit can be obtained there is rarely an excuse for eating animal food; it is not necessary to take the life of any of God’s creatures to supply our ordinary needs. In certain cases of illness or exhaustion it may be thought best to use some meat, but great care should be taken to secure the flesh of healthy animals. It has come to be a very serious question whether it is safe to use flesh food at all in this age of the world. It would be better never to eat meat than to use the flesh of animals that are not healthy. When I could not obtain the food I needed, I have sometimes eaten a little meat; but I am becoming more and more afraid of it.”

There is another paragraph which gives some light on possible exceptions to the general rule which Mrs. White sets forth as good practice for Seventh-day Adventists:

“Some honestly think that a proper dietary consists chiefly of porridge. To eat largely of porridge would not ensure health to the digestive organs; for it is too much liquid. Encourage the eating of fruit and vegetables and bread. A meat diet is not the most wholesome of diets, and yet I would not take the position that meat should be discarded by everyone. Those who have feeble digestive organs can often use meat, when they cannot eat vegetables, fruit, or porridge. If we would preserve the best health, we should avoid eating vegetables and fruit at the same meal. If the stomach is feeble, there will be distress, the brain will be confused, and unable to put forth mental effort. Have fruit at one meal and vegetables at the next.”⁵¹

⁵¹White, Ellen G., “[Counsels on Diet and Foods](#), 394, 395.

For a summarization of the principles and counsels given in 1909 we read:

“If we could be benefited by indulging the desire for flesh foods, I would not make this appeal to you; but I know we cannot. Flesh foods are injurious to the physical well being, and we should learn to do without them. Those who are in a position where it is possible to secure a vegetarian diet, but who choose to follow their own preferences in this matter, eating and drinking as they please, will gradually grow careless of the instruction the Lord has given regarding other phases of the present truth, and will lose their perception of what is truth; they will surely reap as they have sown.”⁵²

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“We do not mark out any precise line to be followed in diet; but we do say that in countries where there are fruits, grains, and nuts in abundance, flesh food is not the right food for God’s people.”⁵³

“We are not to make the use of flesh food a test of fellowship, but we should consider the influence that professed believers who use flesh foods have over others. As God’s messengers, shall we not say to the people, ‘Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.’ ... Erroneous eating and drinking result in erroneous thinking and acting.”⁵⁴

Now note this sound counsel given to workers in a new field.

“Among the people in general [in Australia], meat is largely used by all classes. It is the cheapest article of food; and even where poverty abounds, meat is usually found upon the table. Therefore there is the more need of handling wisely the question of meat eating. In regard to this matter there should be no rash movements. We should consider the situation of the people, and the

⁵²Counsels on Diet and Foods, 402, 403; Testimonies for the Church 9:156, 157.

⁵³Counsels on Diet and Foods, 404; Testimonies for the Church 9:159.

⁵⁴Counsels on Diet and Foods, 404, 405; Testimonies for the Church 9:159, 160.

power of life long habits and practices, and should be careful not to urge our ideas on others, as if this question were a test, and those who eat largely of meat were the greatest of sinners.

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“All should have the light on this question, but let it be carefully presented. Habits that have been thought right for a lifetime are not to be changed by harsh or hasty measures. We should educate the people at our camp meetings and other large gatherings. While the principles of health reform should be presented, let the teaching be backed by example. Let no meat be found at our restaurants or dining tents, but let its place be supplied with fruits, grains, and vegetables. We must practice what we teach. When sitting at a table where meat is provided, we are not to make a raid upon those who use it, but we should let it alone ourselves, and when asked our reasons for doing this we should in a kindly manner explain why we do not use it.” ⁵⁵

“I have never felt it was my duty to say that no one should taste of meat under any circumstances. To say this when the people have been educated to live on flesh to so great an extent would be carrying measures to extremes. I have never felt that it was my duty to make sweeping assertions. What I have said I have said under a sense of duty, but I have been guarded in my statements, because I did not want to give occasion for any one to be conscience for another.” ⁵⁶

“While working against gluttony and intemperance, we must recognize the conditions to which the human family is subjected. God has made provision for those who live in the different countries of the world. Those who desire to be co-workers with God must consider carefully before they specify just what foods should and should not be eaten. We are to be brought into connection with the masses. Should health reform in its most

⁵⁵White, Ellen G., *Counsels on Diet and Foods*, 462.

⁵⁶*Counsels on Diet and Foods*, 462, 463.

extreme form be taught to those whose circumstances forbid its adoption, more harm than good would be done. As I preach the gospel to the poor, I am instructed to tell them to eat that food which is most nourishing. I cannot say to them: ‘You must not eat eggs, or milk, or cream. You must use no butter in the preparation of food.’ The gospel must be preached to the poor, but the time has not yet come to prescribe the strictest diet.”⁵⁷

Now what would you make out of all that advice and instruction? Is it right to eat meat under any circumstances? Would God permit flesh foods at all under any conditions? He outlines first the ideal, that which is best and good for us all, and then He seems to make provision for those who live in some parts of the world where that ideal diet is not available. Likewise, He makes provision for those who, because of some special physical condition, might find it necessary to use flesh foods rather than combinations of vegetables and fruit, and milk and sugar, and other things that under certain circumstances may not agree with certain ones.

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To me this is very sensible. God tells us the best thing to do, and He wants us to do it, and then He makes provision where you cannot do the best. In my reading I came across this paragraph, and I think it sums it all up so far as what to eat is concerned:

“Health reform is an intelligent selection of the most healthful articles of food prepared in the most healthful, simplest form.”⁵⁸

It seems to me to be a very reasonable statement of what we should eat, where and when. Dear brethren and sisters, if we will follow that instruction, we will be safe and in harmony with the very best counsel. That is the primary purpose in all of the writings. What we have presented is only a small part of the mass of instruction we have in her writings.

Unfortunately, some of our people have tended to make the food question the all important thing in connection with the writings of

⁵⁷White, Ellen G., “[Counsels on Diet and Foods](#), 463, 464.

⁵⁸Taken from Ellen G. White’s *Diary*, 1894, p. 37; quoted in [My Life Today](#), 132.

the servant of the Lord. I think it is very unfortunate because it gives us a wrong impression, and it tends to cause many of us to lose an interest in all of the other subjects which are so vitally important.

At this juncture I wish to give you my own conception of the Ellen G. White writings, and the philosophy that comes out of the writings as I see it today. Perhaps if I read several texts of Scripture, I can best explain my own personal reactions to the great mass of instruction. The first text is [Daniel 7:18](#), which says,

“But the saints of the most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever.”

[158] Now as I have read the *Conflict of the Ages* series, and many of the other volumes, I have come to the conclusion that what Mrs. White wants me to do, above everything else, is to be one of the saints of the most High. That seems to be her primary objective. Her appeal to me is constantly to be among those who will stand before the throne of God, who will be among the overcomers, who will have developed a character worthy of a place in God's kingdom.

I put with that the 22nd verse of the same chapter,

“Until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom.”

The 27th verse:

“And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey Him.”

Four times in this chapter we have mention of the everlasting kingdom and the kind of people to whom the kingdom will be given. The 14th verse:

“And there was given Him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve Him: His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.”

Reading through the Bible and the many volumes and articles prepared by Ellen G. White, there stands out in all of them the thought of the everlasting kingdom. This seems to be held before God’s people here in this world as the great objective, and in the 7th chapter of Daniel four times the thought is mentioned that this kingdom is to be given to the saints. Three times out of the four it is preceded by the thought of a judgment which must come before the second coming of Christ, and the establishment of the kingdom. Therefore, God has set up a judgment by which He will determine who is ready to enter into His kingdom, and who shall be called “the saints of the most High.”

This sets before me personally my great objective, namely, the everlasting kingdom. It gives me the basis of judgment, the standard by which God will determine whether or not I am qualified to enter into that kingdom and spend eternity with Him. Put with it now the sixth chapter of Matthew, the 33rd verse,

“But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.”

There is nothing more important to me as a Christian, than the kingdom of God, and the preparation necessary that I might be called one of the saints of God. It is first and primary in my life. Therefore, I allow the thought of the kingdom to take possession of me, my mind, my heart, my body, everything is wrapped up in that one purpose—to be ready for the kingdom.

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Now I put with it [1 Corinthians 6:9-11](#):

“Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor

abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.”

This text gives us a list of the people who will not be found in God's kingdom, “And such were some” of us until we were washed, until we were sanctified, or made whole, until we were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God. It is this experience that everyone of us must enjoy before we shall be qualified for a place in God's kingdom.

He tells us again the kind of people who will not be there, and I suppose it must be important, for several times in the New Testament we have this list enumerated in order that we make no mistake.

Galatians 5:19-21: “Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.”

The Bible sets before us the kind of men and women whom God *does not* want in His kingdom. It likewise sets before us the kind of men and women whom God *does* want in His kingdom.

[160] “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.” **Verses 22-24.**

So if you and I would cultivate these virtues, these characteristics, found in the kind of people that God wants in His kingdom, it will be done by crucifying the lusts of the flesh.

Something will have to come into our lives that will help us to appreciate the fact that the kingdom of God is all important, and that there is nothing in the world more important than God's kingdom, then everything else will fade into insignificance. Nothing will I allow to stand between me and His kingdom. I must reach that place in my thinking in order that I might appreciate the writings of the Spirit of prophecy. They are designed to help me put the kingdom of God first, and to put out of my life all of the other things which are not tolerated in His kingdom.

With that thought in mind I would like you to read one more passage. [2 Peter 3](#), beginning with the 10th verse:

“But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of Him in peace, without spot, and blameless.”

My dear friends, when I completed my very intensive study of this subject, the Spirit of prophecy, I stopped on that verse. It seems to me that if I can understand the meaning of that verse, in relationship to all of the Ellen G. White writings, there is nothing that I will hold back from God when He makes clear to me just what He expects of me in order that I may have a part in His kingdom. That becomes my duty and my pleasure.

This was the verse which appeared in the *Washington Post* at the time of the explosion of the first atom bomb, when a whole city was wiped out of existence, when buildings and material things

seemed to disappear into nothingness. The man who draws the cartoon for the *Post* drew a picture of the earth going into pieces, and in the background he wrote the words of this text, "Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat." It was a very impressive thing to appear on the front page of the *Washington Post*, and be placed in thousands and thousands of homes. It gave Seventh-day Adventists a text for the Sabbath sermon following that terrible experience.

I want to tell you, dear friends, the people of the world today are greatly concerned over the atom. Tomorrow may be a golden age for the men who know how to control themselves, but you and I know that it is not to be golden, until after there has been black and bleak destruction. When I think of these things, and I try to keep them in my mind, then I begin to understand the meaning and the significance of the writings of Ellen G. White. For they are designed to help me know where I am today in this world's history, the kind of a man I ought to be in the light of the fact that I am living in the very last days, and what God would have me to become. It is God who sends the messages to mould and fashion, to hew and shape me after the divine similitude, and according to the divine pattern and standard.

Dear friends, that is what I would like to emphasize in this study. May I bring to you a few more of the rather interesting things contained in the writings. Since I have carefully and thoughtfully made my decision that nothing will stand between me and God and His kingdom, far be it from me to allow a piece of beefsteak to keep me out of heaven; far be it from me to allow any kind of poisonous drugs to keep me out of heaven; far be it from me to allow a cup of tea, or a cup of coffee, or anything of that sort to keep me out of the kingdom of heaven. That is what the writings of the servant of the Lord have come to mean to me.

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When some of our people get all fussed up and terribly exercised about what they should eat and what they should not eat, I am constrained to think that they are still fighting a battle within, that they have not yet fully surrendered to the Lord Jesus, and that they have gotten their eyes fixed on the wrong thing. If we understand the kingdom of heaven, if we understand the times in which we are

living, if we understand the nearness of the end of time, if we understand what kind of men and women God wants in His kingdom, there is nothing that we will not sacrifice or give up, in order that we might *be* that kind of men and women.

Now you say, is there a time when we could or should properly use flesh foods? Well, as I have travelled through the different parts of the world, I must confess I have very seldom found myself in a place where it seemed necessary to resort to flesh foods. Several times in China I have found myself where they had taken the vegetables out of the garden, after having fertilized them in their own way with night-soil or human excreta, and then stirred them around in a little dirty water, and put them in a pan with a little grease at the bottom, moved them around for a minute or two, and put them in a dish, and handed them to me to eat. Frankly I could not eat them, for that would not have been in accord with health reform. I would in that way be getting some types of animal life which I could not take into my stomach without paying a price in dysentery or cholera or something of that type, and therefore I would not and did not eat such vegetables.

Yes, I have been in a position where there was nothing to eat but rice and fried eggs—three times a day for eight or ten weeks at a time. That, I must admit, got a little tiresome, because there was nothing else I could eat. I did not dare touch the vegetables, for I knew they were not safe. And in such a situation I think the Lord expects us to use good common sense, and when we are in a situation like that we should do the best we can. Remember the following definition given by Mrs. White herself, “Health reform is an intelligent selection of the most healthful articles of food prepared in the most healthful way.” And I believe, dear friends, the Lord has made provision for such emergencies, the difference in climate, and the various geographical sections of the world field.

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But now you say, Are you giving us liberty to eat flesh foods anytime, anywhere? No, you will not find such a statement in the chapter in Volume 9 of the *Testimonies*. She makes provision only for the exception. The trouble is that if I have made meat and diet the all important thing in my life, I may be inclined to think that wherever I am there will be an emergency all the time, everywhere. That I am sure would not be in harmony with the instruction. Again

I say, God has made provision for this old world in which we find ourselves today.

I wish, dear friends, above everything else, that on every compound such as this, or in every church such as this, in every centre where our people live and gather in church services, that somebody would take upon himself or herself the burden of teaching our people how to prepare good, wholesome foods, and then we shall not need to be like the sister I met at a camp meeting last summer. She came to me in desperation. She wrung her hands, and said, "Elder Rebok, I am so tired of hearing about food, I never want to hear about it, or see it again. I am anxious that the Lord will come soon, so that I do not have to worry about what to eat and what not to eat." "Well," I said, "Sister, you have made a mistake. God never intended that you should worship your stomach and make it the all important thing in your life. That should be the least of your worry, and it will be when you have made the preparation for your entrance into God's kingdom, the one and only objective of your sojourn in the world."

I believe some of us perhaps have been thinking too much about what we eat and what we do not eat. I have learned from experience that I can get along on a very, very simple diet, and I marvel at the simplicity of it, and yet there is a perfect balance in all of the elements which I need for my body. God has made ample provision. It is for you and me to find out what we can do about it and how.

[164] There is another subject which means much to our boys and girls. It has to do with the question of sports. Here again I have followed my plan of dividing up the instruction in three columns. The first column presents the ideal, or the strongest possible statement on the question; the second column brings the balancing statements; and then the third column sets forth the summarizing statements. This I have done in the matter of sports. Listen!

"A view of things was presented before me in which students were playing games of tennis and cricket. Then I was given instruction regarding the character of these amusements. They were presented to me as a species of idolatry, like the idols of the nations."⁵⁹

⁵⁹White, Ellen G., *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, 350.

“How much time is spent by intelligent human beings in horse racing, cricket matches, and ball playing! But will indulgence in these sports give men the desire to know truth and righteousness? Will it keep God in their thoughts? Will it lead them to inquire, How is it with my soul? All the powers of Satan are set in operation to hold the attention to frivolous amusements and he is gaining his object.”⁶⁰

“The public feeling is, that manual labour is degrading, yet men may exert themselves as much as they choose at cricket, baseball, or in pugilistic contests, without being regarded as degraded. Satan is delighted when he sees human beings using their physical and mental powers in that which does not educate, which is not useful, which does not help them to be a blessing to those who need their help. While the youth are becoming expert in games that are of no real value to themselves or to others, Satan is playing the game of life for their souls, taking from them the talents that God has given them, and placing in their stead his own evil attributes.”⁶¹

It looks as though there is no place for the game of ball or any other sports of that nature that a Seventh-day Adventist Christian can engage in. Is that right? Now listen again while I read the counsel in the middle column.

“I do not condemn the simple exercise of playing ball; but this, even in its simplicity, may be overdone.”⁶²

Now what shall we do about that? Again we find Mrs. White to be very human and very sensible. She did not condemn the throwing of a ball. She did not condemn the hitting of a ball. She did not condemn running, after you have hit the ball. What then did she

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⁶⁰Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 456.

⁶¹White, Ellen G., *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, 274, 275.

⁶²White, Ellen G., *The Adventist Home*, 499.

condemn? She warns against the overdoing of even the very best of things, against the making of something of that kind so all important in the life that everything else fades into insignificance.

Brothers, sisters, when you put the instruction all together, there is a place for the boy and his ball. There is a place for the boy and his bat. The question is, how far? and when? May I say, dear friends, that the book, *The Adventist Home* has a whole section on recreation and sports and amusements, and it sets forth a balanced picture so that our young people in reading it will know what they can do with sports and what they should not do. Again I say, I love these writings because they are so sensible, so reasonable. There is a balanced picture in it all.

Seventh-day Adventists need periods of rest and relaxation. As a people we tend to be so serious in our task and so intense in our work that we do not take periods away from our work. This is all good, but too many of our people forget that the body is in need of time for recreation. Therefore, to live health reform in all of its phases we must be consistent and use good judgment.

The writings of Ellen G. White set forth a programme of living which will bring honour to God in all that we do as good Seventh-day Adventist Christians. I must give heed to every phase of her counsel and instruction, for only in so doing can I be a consistent, well-balanced representative of the health message.

Chapter 12—What Manner of Persons Ought We to Be? [166]

The past two weeks have given me an opportunity to think through this very important topic of divine guidance in the remnant of God's church. It has done my soul good to review the evidences and to think through the many wonderful experiences which God has seen fit to give us as a people. Again I am forced to the same conclusion. I believe in these five great facts of faith upon which Christianity is based. I believe that God has seen fit in times past, and in modern times, to speak through holy men, men chosen by Him to become messengers to bear His message to the people of the world, primarily for the church.

As I think about it today, I am more convinced than ever that we have the truth for this time, and that God has been good to the remnant church—to us who are assembled here today. The text which I would like to leave with you on this, my last opportunity to study this subject at this time, is the text found in [2 Peter 3:9-14](#).

The second coming of Christ has become a great obsession with me, and I find a longing in my heart that Christ might come very quickly. As I travel about and meet people everywhere, see the conditions which are prevailing in various parts of the world, I am convinced that time is very short. In my travels as I mingle with men of the world, and talk with them about conditions prevailing in the world today, I find without exception that thinking men are greatly concerned, and fearful for today and for tomorrow. These men have no such hope as I have in my heart—a hope born from the study of the Scriptures, and of the messages sent by God's servant.

I believe we have come to a time when our hope for the second coming will soon be fulfilled. With that in mind, I invite you to think about the 11th verse of [2 Peter 3](#), as translated by Weymouth: [167]

“Since all these things are thus on the verge of dissolution, what sort of man ought I to be in all holy living and godly conduct?”

That is not exactly the way the passage reads, but that is the way it reads to *me* today. What sort of a man ought I to be, and I hope that each one of you will put the personal pronoun in that place, and make it first person, singular number. It means just that.

As I have been thinking through the instruction given by the servant of the Lord, I have come to this conclusion again that the instruction is for me personally, and the appeal is to me as to what kind of a person I am going to be from today on. It is not my business primarily to think about you and your condition—the kind of a person that you ought to be. That is your problem. My problem is, what kind of a person I ought to be. If each of us will answer that question for ourselves, I feel confident that we shall be ready for this great event which is described here in such graphic terms.

On this vital question I turn now to the counsel from the servant of the Lord, and as I read the counsel for myself I hope that each one of you will make a personal application. Ellen G. White says,

“I make myself a criterion for no one else.”⁶³

“Let no one think himself a criterion for all, that everyone must do exactly as he does.”⁶⁴

“If there are those who are better in health when eating three meals, it is their privilege to have three.”⁶⁵

“We are not to be as the Pharisees, bound about by set rules and regulations.... We are to be careful not to make laws like the Pharisees, or to teach for doctrines the commandments of men.”⁶⁶

“Those who have a partial knowledge of the principles of reform are often the most rigid, not only in carrying out their view themselves, but in urging them on their families, and their neighbours. The effect of

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⁶³White, Ellen G., [Medical Ministry](#), 285.

⁶⁴White Ellen G., [Counsels on Health](#), 156.

⁶⁵White, Ellen G., Letter No. 30, 1903, quoted in [Counsels on Diet and Foods](#), 178.

⁶⁶White, Ellen G., [Medical Ministry](#), 284.

their mistaken reform, as seen in their own ill-health, and their efforts to force their views upon others, give many a false idea of dietetic reform, and lead them to reject it altogether.”⁶⁷

“Shun the extremes, both of indulgence and of restriction.⁶⁸ ... These extremes frequently do more harm in a short time than could be undone by a lifetime of consistent living.”⁶⁹

“It is impossible to make an unvarying rule to regulate everyone’s habits, and no one should think himself a criterion for all.”⁷⁰

“Some are continually anxious lest their food, however simple and healthful, may hurt them. To these let me say, Do not think that your food will injure you; do not think about it at all. Eat according to your best judgment; and when you have asked the Lord to bless the food for the strengthening of your body, believe that He hears your prayer, and be at rest.”⁷¹

“Carefully consider your diet. Study from cause to effect. Cultivate self-control. Keep appetite under the control of reason. Never abuse the stomach by over-eating, but do not deprive yourself of the wholesome, palatable food that health demands.”⁷²

It has been my privilege while here in India to live in the home of your Division secretary. Each day they have very kindly passed to me a dish containing honey, and if I am not mistaken, I think it comes from Assam, which makes it even more delectable. Therefore, it is especially good, but unfortunately, each time I have had to pass that dish of honey by, and I shall give you the reason why.

Many years ago I found that by eating honey, even so small an amount as a teaspoonful, I could give myself a real old fashioned stomach ache for about three days. Therefore, this instruction is

⁶⁷White, Ellen G., *The Ministry of Healing*, 318.

⁶⁸*The Ministry of Healing*, 319.

⁶⁹*The Ministry of Healing*, 324.

⁷⁰*The Ministry of Healing*, 319.

⁷¹White, Ellen G., *The Ministry of Healing*, 321.

⁷²*The Ministry of Healing*, 323.

[169] very good for me. “Carefully consider your diet. Study from cause to effect.” This I have done and no one can persuade me knowingly to eat honey. Now you may eat it. You may enjoy it. You may not have the reaction that I have. But, since I have that reaction, I would not want you to force your idea on me that honey is the best food in the world, no matter where it comes from.

I think, dear friends, that is true of many foods, and I have learned over a period of years of studying my own health habits, what is good for me and what is not. There are a number of fruits and vegetables which do not agree with me. I cannot with safety put them inside my body. So I pass them by with this good instruction, “Keep your appetite under the control of reason.” However, I would not want to force my idea regarding honey on somebody else, because I notice that many people enjoy honey very much indeed.

“The narrow ideas of some would-be health reformers have been a great injury to the cause of hygiene.”
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“Those who are governed by principle will be firm and decided in standing for the right; yet in all their associations they will manifest a generous, Christlike spirit and true moderation.” 74

“Health reform must not be urged in a radical manner.... We must be careful to make no innovations, because under the influence of extreme teaching there are conscientious souls who will surely go to extremes. Their physical appearance will injure the cause of health reform; for few know how to properly supply the place of that which they discard.... Thus health reform is brought into disrepute.” 75

Now the strangest thing about the very radical in this matter, and those who are most insistent in passing their ideas on to the other person is that they are usually thin, emaciated, scrawny—just the opposite of what I would like to be as an example of health.

⁷³White, Ellen G., *The Ministry of Healing*, 323.

⁷⁴*The Ministry of Healing*, 324.

⁷⁵White, Ellen G., “*Counsels on Diet and Foods*, 352, 353.

Therefore, with Mrs. White I would suggest that if that is what your health reform has made of you, you had better not talk about it, for you are a poor specimen of the health messages. I wish that all strong advocates of health reform could at least be specimens of health.

What manner of a person should I be? Let that be the thought which each and everyone of us will keep in our minds as we go from this series of studies on health and on the instruction from the Spirit of prophecy. [170]

I close this part of my message with this sentence, “The God who gives His beloved sleep has furnished them also suitable food to sustain the physical system in a healthy condition,” and I thank God for that, I find very few places in the world which do not enjoy the blessings from heaven of a fine and bountiful supply of good, wholesome, nourishing food. There are only a few places in the world that I have found so far where I would have to digress from my habits of eating which I have enjoyed for over forty years.

It is possible for me to be advocating healthful living and at the same time not be a very good example of my preaching. Seventh-day Adventist preachers generally are the poorest examples of healthful living of any group I have come across in all the world. The reason is that they have not learned the real meaning of the full health message. The majority do not eat meat. They do not drink tea and coffee, and a lot of things that we might mention, but they are the hardest working group of people I think you will find anywhere.

In fact, very few of them think of taking physical exercise as a part of their daily programme, while Mrs. White tells them that working in a garden is as much a part of the preacher’s work as to preach a sermon. Frankly, how many of our ministers believe that and carry it out? She also tells us that “we should have regular periods of sleep and rest and relaxation.” Judging by the activities of the past two weeks, I have been associating with a group of committee men who have not been living the health reform message. Now, of course, that is putting it very strong and very straight, but healthful living includes all of that. Dear friends, I appeal to you today that all of us become more sensible in this business of healthful living.

[171] Yes, for a long time I lived that tense, intensive way. About two years ago I began to have very strange feelings in my back. It felt like needles all over my back, and I assure you it was very uncomfortable, very disagreeable, and so I went to a doctor. I asked him, "Is there something wrong? I can't see back there, but there is a peculiar feeling that causes me trouble and discomfort."

He asked me to describe my feelings, and then said, "Tell me how you live and what your daily programme is." I told him. Then he looked at me very seriously and said, "My brother, my advice to you is to resign your present work, stop your current way of living, begin living the full health message, if you know what that is!"

Very humbly and somewhat sheepishly I asked him, "What do you want me to do?" He replied, "I want you to put into your programme two hours a day out in the garden, or out in the open air doing some real, useful physical labour. I want you in bed from ten o'clock at night until six o'clock in the morning, and sleep and rest." Then he gave me the whole programme of healthful living. About that time the brethren said, "Now you may drop out of the Seminary, and join the White Publications office." Thus it came about that I had the privilege of some sixteen months actually living the full health message for the second time in my life. It was no time at all until I had a beautiful garden around my house. We had trees and grass and flowers growing in profusion, and it became a sort of showplace for the people from the city who came out to the country to visit us from time to time.

Yes, I think the health message is a most wonderful message for me. I have decided to live it out as carefully as possible, including not only what I eat, but how I use my time, my strength, and energy. Believing that Christ is coming soon, that this world is on the verge of dissolution, the apostle writes, "What sort of a man should D. E. Rebok be?" And I have decided, dear friends, to study my physical nature and try to bring it into complete harmony with the full instruction that has come through the Scriptures and through the writings of the servant of the Lord.

But there is another part of a man's being. Man does not just eat. He does not live to eat, but rather I am told that a man ought to eat in order to live; that his living is primary, and eating is only a means to an end. There is something far more important than my

physical being. And I want to emphasize that part in these words [172]
from several passages of Scripture:

[Romans 14](#), and I shall begin reading with the 15th verse, and I read it from Weymouth:

“Still, if your brother is pained by the food you are eating, you are no longer following the guidance of love. Do not by your food ruin a man for whom Christ died. Therefore do not let what is a boon to you and others bring reproach, for the kingdom of God does not consist in eating and drinking, but in uprightness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit; and whoever in this way serves Christ, pleases God and is approved by men. Therefore let us aim at whatever makes for peace, and the spiritual upbuilding of one another.”

This phase of my living is equally important with the physical, namely, my character, my moral life, the kind of an individual I really am. I find it described in [1 Corinthians 10:31](#) in these words:

“Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.”

Whatever I do includes much more than what I eat, and what I drink. My eating and drinking has become just a sort of necessity; in fact, we spend very little time at home thinking about eating and drinking. My wife says I am very easily satisfied, and therefore our problem of eating is not a big problem. But she admits that there is another angle to my living that is not so easily disposed of, and that is the way I talk, the way I conduct myself, my attitude of mind and body, the way I deal with my fellow men, the way I mingle with my fellow workers, the kind of an example I live before the people in the church and the people out of the church. She tells me that this is the place upon which I need to put some emphasis, and I agree with her.

[Colossians 3](#) gives me the method by which I may heed the instruction from her and from the servant of the Lord, for both of them seem to agree that I have some things to care for along this other

line, namely, my character—whether or not the Christian virtues are being developed, cultivated, in my daily life and experience. To me, dear brethren and sisters, this is a very important part of my living.

[173] I read in [Colossians 3:1-4](#):

“If however you have risen with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, enthroned at God’s right hand. Give your minds to the things that are above, not to the things that are on the earth. For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ appears—He is our true Life—then you also will appear with Him in glory.” (Weymouth.)

This is the great objective of my life today, to somehow learn to live in such a way that I may become the sort of a man that Christ is, so that when He comes I shall be like Him, and He will recognize me as one of His own, and at that day I shall have the courage to look up into His face and recognize Him as my personal Saviour and my King of kings. This then is the kind of instruction that I now read for myself:

“Therefore put to death your earthward inclinations—fornication, impurity, sensual passion, unholy desire, and all greed, for that is a form of idolatry. It is on account of these very sins that God’s wrath is coming, and you also were once addicted to them, while you were living under their power.” (Weymouth.)

Is that the end of it? No. If we have had that type of earthly or earthward inclinations in the past, the instruction is, Put them to death. Cut them off. Get rid of them.

Continuing:

“But now you must rid yourselves of every kind of sin—angry and passionate outbreaks, ill-will, evil speaking, foul-mouthed abuse—so that these may never soil your lips. Do not speak falsehoods to one another, for you have stripped off the old self with its doings, and have clothed yourselves with the new self which is

being remoulded into full knowledge so as to become like Him who created it.” (Weymouth.)

We now go back and think of some of those texts which we have read in order that we may be hewed by the prophets, moulded and fashioned by them. How can I get rid of all these things that would tend to pull me down and keep me tied to the earth—such things as anger, passionate outbreaks, evil speaking, ill-will, and foul-mouthed abuse? How can I get rid of them? The answer is, by being moulded and fashioned by the prophets. There is the specific purpose for having the gift of prophecy in the ancient church, and in the modern.

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In that new creation there be neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave nor free man: and I would like to add a few others. There will be neither Indian nor Chinese, Japanese nor Javanese, nor Australians. There will be nothing of that kind. There will be no division by race or creed or colour. There will be no geographical divisions among God’s people, who are living in harmony with the instruction given through the prophet. “But Christ is all, and in all,” and what a difference that makes in every man who allows the Lord Jesus Christ, by faith, to come in and take up his abode in the heart.

Yesterday a representative from the city government came out here to this estate, and he looked around while we were waiting for Brother Israel, and he said, “Sir, have you been in India very long?” I replied, “No, only two weeks.” He said, “Have you seen India?” I hesitated in my answer, “I have seen Poona. No, I have not seen too much of Poona—I have seen the Salisbury Estate.”

“Well,” he said, “you have not yet seen India.” I agreed. He continued, “As a matter of fact, when you are here on this estate you are not seeing India as she is.” I frankly asked him, “What makes the difference?” He did not answer, but I can give you the answer. It is Jesus in the heart of a man or woman, a boy or a girl, which makes the difference. I thank God for what I see on this estate. I see men and women, boys and girls, who have had this very experience about which I am talking—“Christ is all, and in all”—that makes the difference. Oh, that we might see that difference made in millions of the people in this great country in which we are today!

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“Clothe yourselves” [you see over there he says to put off, to get rid of, and now he turns to the other side of it, and says put on or] “Clothe yourselves therefore, as God’s own people holy and dearly loved, with tenderheartedness, kindness, lowliness of mind, meekness, long-suffering; bearing with one another and readily forgiving each other, if any one has a grievance against another.” ⁷⁶

Is not that a wonderful way to live? That is what it means to be the sort of a man that Christ will welcome into His kingdom. The kind of a person who, when he is roughly treated or abused, and who if slapped on one cheek, can with a smile offer the other and say: “Brother, do it to this one also.” The kind of a man who, when he is reviled, or when something is said against him, can stand with a smile and say: “Brother, that is nothing compared to the way they treated my Master, my Saviour.” The kind of a man who, when sharp words are spoken to him, can smile and return a soft answer. The kind of a man who, when he is cheated or deceived can smile and say, “Brother, do not worry about that. I know you were in difficulties, let me give you more than I am duty bound to give.”

It is that kind of a person, dear friends, that I want to be, and I find it in my heart today to be that sort of an individual—holy and dearly loved, tenderhearted and kind, lowly in mind, meek and longsuffering; willing to bear with the mistakes of others, and readily forgiving them.

I came across this paragraph in my reading, and I want to share it with you:

“As children of God, we should be constantly gaining in fitness for the heavenly mansions which Christ told His disciples He was going away to prepare for them. He who lays hold upon the righteousness of Christ may become a perfect man in Christ Jesus. Working from a high standpoint, seeking to follow the ex-

⁷⁶Colossians 3:12, 15. (Weymouth.)

ample of Christ, we shall grow up into His likeness, possessing more and more refinement.”⁷⁷

I like that paragraph, and I said to myself, “That is the kind of an experience I want in my daily life, gaining in fitness for *my* heavenly mansion which He is preparing over there for *me*.” Is that making it too realistic? Is that making it too common, bringing it down on my level of understanding?

“All who would enter the city of God must during their earthly life set forth Christ in their dealings. It is this that constitutes them the messengers of Christ, His witnesses.”⁷⁸

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It is my aim to be there, dear friends, and I plan to be in that city of God, in His everlasting kingdom. Mrs. White says if I would enter the city of God, I must, during my earthly life set forth Christ in all of my dealings.

I came across another very interesting paragraph along the same line:

“Religion means the abiding of Christ in the heart, and where He is, the soul goes on in spiritual activity, ever growing in grace, ever going on to perfection.”⁷⁹

It is that kind of an experience that will come to us as we read and study and meditate upon the messages from the servant of the Lord. We must pass over some of these quickly for lack of time.

“Some of us have a nervous temperament, and are naturally as quick as a flash to think and to act; but let no one think that he cannot learn to become patient. Patience is a plant that will make rapid growth if carefully cultivated. By becoming thoroughly acquainted with ourselves, and then combining with the grace of God a firm determination on our part, we may be conquerors,

⁷⁷White, Ellen G., “Testimonies to Ministers,” p. 150.

⁷⁸White, Ellen G., [Testimonies for the Church 9:23](#).

⁷⁹White, Ellen G., [The Review and Herald, May 24, 1892](#).

and become perfect in all things, wanting in nothing.”

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That is a good paragraph. It somehow or other describes so many of us. It describes me! Of course, it is so easy to let go and give vent to that temper that is down inside. It seems to be so close to the surface, and breaks forth so easily when that explosion inside takes place. Then I try to explain, “You see, I am that way by nature. My father was that way. He was that kind of a man, and so I am just that way.” Is that all it takes to get rid of it? Oh, no! I cannot blame it on my father, nor on my mother either. The instruction is that when I feel that I would give vent to my feelings from inside and think as quick as a flash, and act in the same way, it is then that I need to take hold of myself.

Mrs. White puts it in this way:

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“When tempted to say sarcastic things, refrain. Censure no one, condemn no one. Let the life argue for Jesus, and the lips be opened with wisdom to defend the truth. The consistent life, the long forbearance, the spirit unruffled under provocation, is always the most conclusive argument and the most solemn appeal. We are often brought into positions that are trying, where human nature longs to break forth, but in such cases, be still, do not retaliate.”⁸¹

Let me add just one more, and then I shall draw my conclusions.

“The largest share of life’s annoyances, its heartaches, its irritations, is due to uncontrolled temper. In one moment, by hasty, passionate, careless words, may be wrought evil that a whole lifetime’s repentance cannot undo. O, the hearts that are broken, the friends estranged, the lives wrecked, by the harsh, hasty words of those who might have brought help and healing! ... In

⁸⁰White, Ellen G., [Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists](#), 134.

⁸¹White, Ellen G., “Morning Talks,” given in 1883, p. 467.

his own strength man cannot rule his spirit. But through Christ, he may gain self-control.”⁸²

I cannot refrain from reading one more:

“When unkind, discouraging words are spoken to you, do not retaliate.”⁸³

I have often told my wife that if I could just learn to hold back when something happens to me, when somebody speaks in a rather sharp, caustic way; if I could just learn to hold back, there would be no argument, there would be no trouble. My difficulty, and I think some of you are somewhat like me, is that when someone speaks to me in that kind of a voice, my tendency is to give it back, twice as strong and twice as hard as he gave it to me. Is that the way it is in your experience? Some of us, I know, are like that, but the instruction is, “When unkind, discouraging words are spoken to you, do not retaliate.”

There will never be a fight so long as just one man is wanting to engage in the fight. It takes at least two, and for me as a Christian, I cannot with safety be that second person.

“Do not reply unless you can return a pleasant answer. Say to yourself, ‘I will not disappoint my Saviour.’ The Christian woman is a gentlewoman. On her lips is ever the law of kindness. She utters no hasty words. To speak gentle words when you are irritated will bring sunshine into your heart, and make your path more smooth. A schoolgirl, when asked for a definition of meekness, said, ‘Meek people are those who give soft answers to rough questions.’” Mrs. White quotes that and includes it in her message. She then concludes: “Christ says, ‘Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.’ They will be fit subjects for the kingdom of heaven; for they are willing to be taught.”⁸⁴

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⁸²White, Ellen G., *The Signs of the Times*, May 25, 1904.

⁸³White, Ellen G., *The Review and Herald*, April 7, 1904.

⁸⁴White, Ellen G., *The Review and Herald*, April 7, 1904.

My brother, my sister, that part of our living, our being, must be cultivated and strengthened, for the question asked by Peter is, "What sort of a man ought I to be in view of the fact that we are living on the verge of eternity—on the verge of the dissolution of this old world?" For one, I want to consecrate myself to God anew today, thank Him for His messages given through the prophets of old and the prophet of modern times, that I might know how to live, and be the kind of man that God wants me to be.

God has given us His Word. He has given us the messages through His servant, Ellen G. White, with no other purpose than to cause us to desire in our hearts to be made into men and women fit for an entrance into His Kingdom.

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