



Light



Through the



Storm

Revised

Ian Whitlock. B. Min. & L. Gaussen. D.D.

*This Book is Lovingly Dedicated to My Wife
Susan Dawn Whitlock*

*In Recognition of her dedication and willingness
to sacrifice in order to follow truth and be faithful
to her Master. Her devotion to Jesus has been a
gift from God to me.*

What Others Have Said Regarding This Book

"I [am] just sitting here, amazed....The more I read, the more unbelievable it is....you have so much great material here....This is one powerful book.....You have done such an anointed work....and I have found that I've had to reread entire sections because I get so enthralled....This message needs to go to those who have questions, because this has answers! (Cathy Ross Timmons, formerly of the *Ross Report*, past missionary to the South Pacific, and former editor of *Landmarks Magazine*)

"Your book is definitely a treatise in Love.....This is the work of a true disciple...truth matters more than anything else." (Gloria Young, Retired Former Pastor's Wife)



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Introduction to the Revised Edition

When originally writing the first edition of this work I considered discussing two different points but upon reflection decided not to include them. However, after releasing the book it became clear that it would have been desirable if I had included the extra material. I therefore have done so and thus revised the book. The revision is rather small. It entailed an addition of material to the chapter *Cloud of Witnesses* in this book, a quote to page 347, in Appendix C in the section “Alleged Mistakes in the Bible” one additional point is added, another book recommendation for further reading, and a few more Bible texts. Those same added texts I have also put in the main book in a couple of places. Even though the new material is small I believe that it may be helpful to some and therefore have added it. It is our prayer that you will be blessed as you read our story.

Pastor Ian M. Whitlock



Called to Serve¹

“Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.” (John 8:12)

The cold fall air nipped at John’s neck as he walked briskly down the path from the woodshed to their little home, where he knew his wife Lily and small daughter were waiting. As he walked, he hardly glanced at the beautiful trees that profusely surrounded their wilderness home or noticed the bite of the cold fall air on his neck. He had worked hard to get this homestead together. It had taken him around ten years of his life, and it still was not done, but he was getting close to finished. A thrill of satisfaction went through him as he realized that he and his wife were finally really following the country living message of God’s last-day prophetic, Ellen G. White. His mind raced, thinking about all he needed to get done and how little time he had to do it. The year before, he had felt the call, once again, to the ministry. He and his wife had spent much time in prayer and were determined to follow the calling no matter where it led. They had found a very prominent, older, and experienced Adventist minister who had been the former head of a school of theology to study under. In faith, John had quit his job in order to have time to

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finish his training. Recently, this minister had told him that with the time he had already spent in Bible College, along with other studies he had done, he was ready to enter the independent Adventist ministry while he finished his studies of the biblical languages. So they had started a ministry.

But from the first, there had been problems. John's health had broken down to the point they wondered if he would live. He somehow had managed to limp along and now was trying to strengthen their new ministry.

"Oh why, God," he thought, "don't you heal me? I am trying to follow your calling. How can we do all the things we need to do to continue in ministry?"

John felt his nerves tense as he thought of all the additional things he had to get done in a limited time frame before winter hit the homestead. How could he get it all done, especially in his physical shape, let alone do his ministerial duties? ²

He opened the front door. A waft of warm air hit his face, and the wonderful smell of food cooking made him feel hungry. How lucky he was to have such a wonderful wife.

"Hello, Honey!" Lily said as he took off his boots. "Supper is almost ready," she flashed one of her loving smiles at him. Soon they were all gathered around the table and thanking the Lord for his loving provision for their daily needs. As the meal progressed, the conversation turned to what they should study next for family devotions. "What book by Ellen White haven't we studied yet for family worship?" asked Lily.

"I don't think we have read *Early Writings*; why don't we read it?" John said.

So it was that as the little family gathered around the family altar, they reverently opened the book *Early Writings* and began reading.

After they had finished, John broke the silence, "How blessed we are as Adventists and God's last day people to have all these writings of God's last day prophetess to study. Why, I think of all the non-

² In Historic Independent Adventism, they often do not have a pastor in their churches. Men entering into the ministry usually start ministries. Some Independent Adventists do not even believe in churches having pastors. They think pastors should only be evangelists and not "hover" over the churches. This idea comes from their interpretation of certain statements made by Ellen White.

Adventists who don't have her books and only have the Bible, and I feel sorry for them."

"I know what you mean," said Lily.

"Do you remember how many inspired writings of hers we have as a people to give us extra light?" John asked. Lily thought for a moment. John liked the way her upper brow wrinkled when she thought deeply.

"As I recall, there are some twenty-five million words, and the messages those words represent are in forty-three bound volumes and in four thousand articles. Hasn't God given us an abundance of material that will throw light on our path and cause us to live better lives than any other Christian group in the world?"³ asked Lily.

"Indeed, He has," replied John. Happily, the little family prayed their prayers and went off to bed, confident that indeed they were blessed by a loving and wonderful God.

³ *Divine Guidance in the Remnant of God's Church* by Denton Edward Rebok, p.15



The Storm

John's head jerked up in surprise as he stared at Lily, who sat on the couch reading once again for worship from the wonderful book *Early Writings*. Several weeks had passed, as John and the little family had struggled with his health, getting ready for the severe winter in their country home, and trying to fulfill their ministerial duties. All this time, they had continued to read and enjoy the book *Early Writings*. But now John's thoughts were interrupted by the words his sweet wife had just read. They filled his heart with surprise. Could he really be hearing correctly? Certainly not, he thought. His wife was continuing to read without any disturbance. Her cute voice made him hesitate to interrupt her. He loved to listen to it, and certainly, if he had heard right, she would be saying something, wouldn't she? He looked at her again; she still looked undisturbed on the couch, reading with her two braids framing her face. John always thought they made her look like a schoolgirl. But now his mind was on other things. He cleared his throat and said, "Dear, can you read that paragraph again?"

"Why, sure," she said. As she read, it seemed to John like her voice cut through the air like a knife. "Pilate trembled as he heard that Christ had risen. He could not doubt the testimony given, and from that hour, peace left him forever. For the sake of worldly honor, for fear of losing his authority and his life, he had delivered Jesus to die. He was now fully convinced that it was not merely an innocent man of whose blood he was guilty, but the Son of God. Miserable to its close was the life of Pilate. Despair and anguish crushed every hopeful, joyful feeling. He refused to be comforted and died a most miserable death. Herod's heart had grown still harder; and when he heard that Christ had risen, he was not much troubled. He took the life of James, and when he saw that this pleased the Jews, he took Peter also, intending

to put him to death. But God had a work for Peter to do and sent his angel to deliver him. Herod was visited with the judgments of God. While exalting himself in the presence of a great multitude, he was smitten by the angel of the Lord and died a most horrible death.”⁴

John saw a question on her face as she finished reading. John’s heart was turning somersaults. “How can this be true?” he asked earnestly “Honey, how can what you read be true?” It is a well-attested historical fact that no one will deny, that the Herod who killed John the Baptist and who played a part in the crucifixion of Christ and the Herod who killed James and was eaten of worms were two different Herods and not the same as she says.”

Lily looked up; shock was in her eyes, mirroring what he felt in his heart. He hated and feared to even think such thoughts, let alone say them; but how could one truly study the Word without being open to use the logic that God gave? Was it not He who said, “Come now, and let us reason together”?⁵ While faith had a part, certainly reason did too.

Suddenly Lily said, “Hey John, there is a footnote here. I don’t know why I didn’t notice it before.”

“Read it!” cried John as he leaned forward to hear. “Thank God,” he breathed, “someone has already noticed this and has put the answer in a footnote. It would make sense since these writings have been around since the eighteen hundreds.”

Once again, his wife began to read:

“It was Herod Antipas who took part in the trial of Christ, and Herod Agrippa I who put James to death. Agrippa was nephew and brother-in-law of Antipas. Through intrigue, he secured the throne of Antipas for himself, and on coming to power pursued the same course toward the Christians that Antipas had followed. In the Herodian dynasty, there were six persons who bore the name of Herod. It thus served in a measure as a general title, the individuals being designated by other names, as Antipas, Philip, Agrippa, etc. So, we might say, Czar Nicholas, Czar Alexander, etc. In the present instance, this use of the term becomes more natural and appropriate inasmuch as Agrippa, when he put James to death, occupied the throne of Antipas, who a little before had been concerned in the trial of Christ; and he

⁴ *Early Writings*, p. 185-186

⁵ Isa. 1:18

manifested the same character. It was the same Herodian spirit, only in another personality, as "the dragon" of Revelation 12:17 is the same as the dragon of verse 3, the real inspiring power in each being the dragon of verse 9. In the one case, he works through pagan Rome; in the other through our own government."⁶

Lily finished and looked up. Once again, her questioning eyes met his. "How could they put this in as an answer?" he thought. Earnestly he asked, "Do you think that answers the question?"

Slowly she shook her head. "I just can't see how it does. It states the problem very well, but the answer seems to make no sense." John could hear the turmoil in her voice. "I too feel it falls far short of helping. I wish it was the answer, but it just doesn't seem to be. For instance, they are essentially saying that the name Herod, in this case, does not represent a particular Herod but just the office of king. Well, just assuming for a moment, for the sake of argument, that it indeed was the case. Then one should be able to put the word Herodian office in the text, and it should all make sense and solve the problem. But try it, and I think you will find it does not work," John said. Lily quickly exclaimed, "Oh, let's try it and see what happens!"

""[Herodian Dynasty/Office's]... heart had grown still harder; and when [Herodian Office Dynasty] heard that Christ had risen, [Herodian Office/Dynasty] was not much troubled. [Herodian Office/Dynasty] took the life of James, and when [Herodian Office/Dynasty] saw that this pleased the Jews, [Herodian Office/Dynasty] took Peter also, intending to put him to death.

""But God had a work for Peter to do and sent his angel to deliver him. [Herodian Office/Dynasty] ... was visited with the judgments of God. While exalting [Herodian Office/Dynasty] in the presence of a great multitude, [Herodian Office/Dynasty] was smitten by the angel of the Lord and died a most horrible death.""⁷

"You see," said John, "it doesn't make sense, for as you can see, in the last sentence it says, '[Herodian Office/Dynasty] was smitten by the angel of the Lord and died a most horrible death.' That would mean that the Herodian Office/Dynasty ends. But it did not end. In reality, there was another Herod after Herod Agrippa. So, even reading it like the footnote wants us to get us into a historical untruth, doesn't it?"

⁶ *Early Writings*, p. 185-186

⁷ *Early Writings*, p.185-186

"Yes, I fear you are right," Lily said. John continued, "I greatly wish that the footnote would suffice, but no matter how much I wish it to, it falls far short of providing a satisfactory answer, for it also seems to do violence to the English language. For instance, look at the first sentence. It says, 'Herod's heart had grown still harder; and when he heard that Christ had risen, he was not much troubled.' No question which Herod is being spoken of here. Obviously, it was the one who was king when Christ was put to death. The next sentence says, 'He took the life of James, and when he saw that this pleased the Jews, he took Peter also, intending to put him to death.' It is noteworthy that this sentence does not begin with the noun, Herod, but rather the pronoun, 'He,' indicating that it refers not just to a Herod but the subject of the last sentence who, as we have seen, is the Herod at the time of Christ's death. The footnote is so unconvincing that it reminds me of a defense lawyer who has run out of any real defense for his client and is scraping the bottom of the barrel to find something to present." John could see the fear and sorrow on her face and felt like their world was collapsing. Lily said softly, "You know John, maybe Ellen White is right and history is wrong; because she is a prophetess."

John sighed as he said, "Maybe that's so. I am afraid we're going to have to study into this and find an answer. But it is getting quite late and we should be thinking of bed." Slowly the bewildered family knelt in prayer and asked God for help to guide them through the storm.



The Storm Deepens

That night, John could not rest. The next day was no better. He could think of nothing else than the horrible problem he and his family were facing. He knew there had to be an answer somewhere, and he set out with a dogged determination to find it. "Lily," John said, "I have been thinking about what you said last night about Ellen White being right and history wrong. I think we should start with finding an answer to that question first."

"But how can we, John?" Lily looked at him with a troubled face. "Well," John said, "let's start by finding out if she stood by what she says here in *Early Writings* or if she later changed her stance on what happened when she learned what the historians claim took place. If she changes, then we will know for sure that history is correct on there being two Herods."

Lily's face lit up. "That's a good idea, John," she said. Quickly they began the search. Finally, Lily cried out, "I have found our answer." Slowly she read:

"Now about that time Herod the king stretched forth his hands to vex certain of the church. The government of Judea was then in the hands of Herod Agrippa, subject to Claudius, the Roman emperor. Herod also held the position of tetrarch of Galilee. He was professedly a proselyte to the Jewish faith and apparently very zealous in carrying out the ceremonies of the Jewish law. Desirous of obtaining the favor of the Jews, hoping thus to make secure his offices and honors, he proceeded to carry out their desires by persecuting the church of Christ, spoiling the houses and goods of the believers, and imprisoning the leading members of the church. He cast James, the brother of John, into prison and sent an executioner to kill him with

the sword, as another Herod had caused the prophet John to be beheaded.'⁸

"Well, I guess there goes that idea. For here in her later life she seems to have corrected herself to match known history," Lily said.

John could hardly believe his eyes or ears. How could this be happening? Surely they and their families, going back generations in Adventism had not been deceived. Surely there must be an answer that harmonized with the Bible and history. "Lily we have got to get to the bottom of this. There has to be an answer somewhere. I don't believe we have been deceived but we must also not have a prejudiced mind if we are to find the truth. We must be open to whatever we find to be truth or we will not find it. We will just find what we want to find. Like Jesus said: 'If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.'⁹ We have to do and accept truth for truth's sake, and only then will the Holy Spirit help us to see truth. We must love the truth for being the truth and love it more than anything else. For this is what He would have us do and what we must do if we are to find truth. Like it says here, and John began to read from his Bible:

""Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie.""¹⁰

"Are we willing to **love the truth** and search for it like hidden pearls as the Master has asked us to? Are we going to, with God's help, love truth and seek it so the Holy Spirit can guide us on our search?"

Lily looked up into his face. Tears were in their eyes. "Oh, we must, John, we must," she said. "Let's kneel down and tell the Lord all about it," John said. "Father, we come before you with one of the biggest problems of our lives. We don't believe we have been deceived, but we don't have an answer to this problem regarding Sister White. Oh, Father, you know how much we love Ellen White and how much we want to find an answer that will vindicate her, but Lord, help us to keep our minds open to you. Help us to love truth more than anything

⁸ Acts of the Apostles, p. 143

⁹ John 7:17

¹⁰ 2 Thess. 2:9-11

else in the world. Lord, send your Holy Spirit to lead us into your truth, and whatever that may be, we promise to follow it no matter where it leads. In Jesus' name, Amen."

Slowly they got up from their knees. "As you know," John began, "the book, *Early Writings*, which came out in 1882, is a combination of earlier works of Ellen White. The passage that is giving us our problem was originally printed in 1858 in the book *Spiritual Gifts* Vol. 1. We have the original facsimile of *Spiritual Gifts*. Let's see if we can find that passage and if that footnote was there to explain it or if it was added years later."

They grabbed the volume from the bookcase and began to search. Soon they found it on page 71. "Look," said Lily, "the problem statement of hers is here word for word, but the footnote is absent."

"Well, I guess there's no question it was added years later in *Early Writings* when someone noticed that it contradicts history," John said.

"Yes, and it is doubtful that anyone could read *Spiritual Gifts* and not get complete assurance that the same Herod who had Jesus beaten was the one who killed James and imprisoned Peter," said Lily.

"I just wish we had her here to ask for an explanation. Certainly, she had something better than that footnote. After all, she did not write the footnote. That was added," John said.

"She didn't write it," Lily said, "but it is common knowledge that she had to okay every such addition to her works, and it was done in her lifetime. ¹¹ Surely, she would have amended it if she had a better answer. Doesn't that make it as good as her explanation?"

John arose from where he was sitting on the sofa as he admitted that it did seem like it did. "I am going to my study and delve into the books we have on Ellen White. We have quite a few, and surely someone else has run into this and found the answer." Days turned into weeks as John studied, trying to find answers in all the wonderful material he had. He started by looking into older books on Ellen White, such as *Ellen G. White and Her Critics* by Francis D. Nichol; *A Prophet Among You*, which was used as a denominational text for years in training our ministers; and many others. Finding no answer, he finally turned to

¹¹ William Fagal, Director, Ellen G. White Estate Branch Office, Andrews University, in an e-mail on the Herod Mistake—cover-up posted on the White Estate website as of 2019.

newer works and pamphlets on Ellen White, most of which were put out or endorsed by the White Estate. The more he studied, the more disturbed he became, for to his shock he was running into a strange and new doctrine regarding inspiration. At least it was a new doctrine as far as the majority of Adventist laity and ministers of the 19th and most of the 20th century were concerned. John thought about his and his wife's four and six generations of Adventist ancestors. Some had even been missionaries for the church. He couldn't help thinking what they would have thought of this new doctrine. He personally had read much of Adventist history and theology and never ran into this doctrine of inspiration. Why was it not taught in most of the older texts on Ellen White, he wondered? He thought of all the apostasy and new theology that had caused so much trouble in Adventism in the last seventy years or so. He had wondered at first if this could be just another outgrowth of all the apostasy away from the teachings of Ellen White, but with further research, he didn't see how this could be. He got up from his chair in deep thought and went to where his wife was working in the kitchen. John felt he could hardly share with his dear wife what he seemed to have found. Truthfully, he could hardly believe it himself. "Dear," he said, "I have to share with you something I have run across in my research." Slowly, she put down her kitchen work and they made their way to the living room.

"What is it, John? You look so disturbed."

"I am," he said. "As you know, I have been researching our questions about Ellen White and trying to find answers."

"Yes," she said, nodding her head. "I know you have spent a lot of time on it and wondered what you were finding out. I have been praying so hard you would find an answer for us." Her eyes looked up at him almost pleadingly. He bit his lip. This was not making it any easier. Oh, if only he could bring her such an answer, but all he had was another mystifying fact. His thoughts were interrupted by her voice. "What have you found and what is disturbing you, dear?" she asked.

"It's just this," he said. "I have found that most of our older books on prophets, inspiration, etc., teach that the words are not dictated by the Holy Ghost but that the prophet receives thoughts that are inspired, while the words are chosen by the prophet. The Holy Spirit will influence words enough to assure inerrancy (no mistakes). Thus, there is an inerrant inspiration, and therefore the Bible is inerrant as well."

"As I have said, I found no answers in the older books, so I started looking at our newer books on the subject, and while they don't

discuss our particular problem, they do seem to present a different view on inspiration that may answer our questions.”

“Oh John, that sounds good! What is it?” she cried.

“It’s simply this. Let me read to you from *Basic Principles of Understanding Ellen G. White’s Writings*, which is put out by the White Estate and written by Herbert E. Douglass, author of *The Messenger of the Lord*, which was produced in the 1990s to be the standard textbook on the gift of prophecy in our colleges. Listen to this:

“‘Ellen White saw the big picture, the basic concepts, the overall sweep of the forces of good and evil played out in human history. Her task was to fill in this big picture through research in the biblical story and in common sources of historical information. Just as God did not give Daniel words to describe the beast of Daniel 7, so he did not give Ellen White the historical dates and events to fill in the great controversy story...[S]o Mrs. White did what all prophets do when they had a message that had to be conveyed in human words and comprehended by historically oriented men and women. Thus, we look to Luke ¹² ¹³ not necessarily for historical accuracy for all statements made, but for his contribution to the big picture, the message about the ministry of Jesus. Would there be instances of possible errors? Probably...there are certain minor points of accuracy

¹² It is strange that this writer mentions not looking at Luke for historical accuracy in light of the fact that the book of Luke has undergone close study and proved itself to be an extremely accurate history even in the incidentals of detail. This, of course, is not surprising to us since it is inspired. For more info on this, we refer the reader to the book *The New Evidence* by Josh McDowell, the edition printed in the late 1990s. While not necessarily endorsing all that McDowell has written in his book, he presents this fact and most things quite well.

¹³ Yet another example which shows the accuracy of Luke and how critics have been proven wrong is: “...[I]n Acts 13:7 Luke speaks of ‘the deputy’... (the proconsul) of Cyprus. Roman provinces were of two classes, imperial and senatorial. The ruler of the imperial provinces was called a ‘proprietor,’ of a senatorial province a ‘proconsul.’ Up to a comparatively recent date, according to the best information we had, Cyprus was an imperial province and therefore its ruler would be a ‘proprietor,’ but Luke calls him a ‘proconsul.’ This certainly seemed like a clear case of error on Luke’s part, and even the conservative commentators felt forced to admit that Luke was in slight error, and the destructive critics were delighted to find this ‘mistake.’ But further and more thorough investigation has brought to light the fact that just at the time of which Luke wrote, the senate had made an exchange with the emperor whereby Cyprus had become a senatorial province, and therefore its ruler a proconsul; and Luke was right after all, and the literary critics were themselves in error. Time and time again further researches and discoveries, geographical, historical, and archaeological, have vindicated the Bible.” (*Difficulties and Alleged Errors and Contradictions in the Bible*, p. 23, R. A. Torrey)

or inaccuracy, of which human research suffices to inform men, and on which, from want of that research, it is often the practice to speak vaguely and inexactly. Such are sometimes the conventionally received distances from place to place; such are the common accounts of phenomena in natural history, etc. Now in matters of this kind, the evangelists and apostles were not supernaturally informed but left in common with others, to the guidance of their natural faculties. The treasure is ours, in all its richness: but it is ours as only it can be ours – in the imperfections of human speech, in the limitations of human thought, in the variety incident first to individual character, and then to manifold transcription and the lapse of ages. In other words, the human phase of the divine-human communication system will be beset with accessional discrepancies—simply because of human finiteness.... Prophets do not necessarily become authorities on historical data. Their inspirational value lies in their messages, not in some of the details that are incidental to the big picture.”¹⁴

John looked up from his notes. “As I said this might explain some of the things we have found in Mrs. White’s writings. Of course with the Herod issue it is not just an incidental mistake that is involved, but affects the central message and consequently the thoughts she is conveying in the lesson of what God did to Herod because of what he did to John the Baptist and Jesus. It’s hardly an incidental item. But, it might explain it anyway for it would appear from another quote I found that mistakes are not limited to minor things but at times larger things are also included. In fact, look at what I just read to you. While stating that it only affects minor incidental things because they claim that thoughts are only inspired and not words, notice that after carefully building their case and sweeping along the reader they quietly include this statement: ‘The treasure is ours, in all its richness: but it is ours as only it can be ours—in the imperfections of human speech, in the limitations of human thought, in the variety incident first to individual character, and then to manifold transcription and the lapse of ages.’¹⁵ They have included the ‘limitations of human thought’ and in so doing show that though they say she is thought inspired, they don’t in reality believe this affects the thoughts of the prophet to the extent of keeping them pure and free from error. Then they extend it to ‘individual character.’ Again, their theory of inspiration seems to indicate that it does not have enough power to

¹⁴ *Basic Principles of Understanding Ellen G. White’s Writings*, p. 1, 2.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

keep the personal character (which would naturally include weaknesses and fleshly failings, for that is part of everyone's character) of the prophet from contaminating the word of God to us."

"Oh, John," Lily breathed, "certainly this can't be true! It is against basic historic Christian doctrine and everything we have ever been taught. Oh, I can't believe that the White Estate and our colleges would teach such things." Shock was in her eyes, and John felt the pain returning to his own heart as he looked at his sweet wife. "Let me share a little more of what I have found." John flipped open his notes and scanned down the page till he found the one he wanted and slowly began to read:

"In the mid-nineteen-fifties, T. Housel Jemison, an associate director of the White Estate, wrote a book entitled, *A Prophet Among You*.... But, in recent decades, much has been learned regarding inspiration/revelation; hence, in 1989, the board of Trustees of the Ellen G. White Estate authorized the production of a new book. Sponsors included not only the White Estate but the General Conference Department of Education and the Board of Higher Education. Herbert E. Douglas was selected as the author."¹⁶

"This book was started in 1989 and replaced the older book *A Prophet Among You* that had been the college text on the subject. The new textbook came out in 1998. As you will recall, Herbert E. Douglas, the author of this new book, was also the author of the previous statement we read defining inspiration and teaches the same ideas in this book. He teaches that inspired writings are not inerrant (without error). This present quote seems to indicate that as a whole the denominational understanding or consensus of inspiration has or is changing. For they say, 'in recent decades, much has been learned regarding inspiration/revelation.'" Another statement is from the author of *Prophets are Human*, a book written by Dr. Arthur Patrick. In an interview with him in the South Pacific Record, a denominational paper, after discussing what he considers mistakes in her writings, it says:

"So, Ellen White's authority is now understood as being more specific than the all-knowing authority given her writings a few decades ago?

¹⁶ Preface of *The Messenger of the Lord*, by Herbert E. Douglass

Yes. This circumstance has made us more aware of the essence of her writings.’¹⁷

“It is important to remember that Dr. Patrick was the former director of the Ellen G. White Seventh-day Adventist Research Center for the Australasian Division. Here we see the church changing its stance on inspiration. Also, this sheds light on what the previous quote meant by saying, ‘But, in recent decades, much has been learned regarding inspiration/revelation.’”

“Wow, that’s amazing,” said Lily.

John continued. “As near as I can tell, after examining our main books on defending Ellen White, some of the first books to promote this new view of inspiration publicly in regard to her were two almost identical books written by Denton E. Rebok in the 1950s. In his book *Believe His Prophets* on p. 196, he says:

“‘Ellen G. White never claimed verbal inspiration for either her own writings or the Bible itself.’ And this:

“‘Therefore, even the authors of the Scriptures are subject to possible human error and inaccuracy. The remarkable thing is that there are so very few inaccuracies in all the twenty-five million words written by Mrs. White. If you ever find anything in Mrs. White’s writings that to you seems, without doubt, to be a mistake—a historical inaccuracy, a mistake in geography, arithmetic, or chronology—just remember that Mrs. White never claimed infallibility, and that her inspiration is in no wise affected by such a slip of the pen.’¹⁸

“This was written in 1956. A year earlier, the same author put out *Divine Guidance in the Remnant of God’s Church*, where the same new thoughts on inspiration were taught. However, the absolute earliest book that had any real circulation among the laity of the church that I found, which seems to slightly hint at these new ideas, was written in 1944 and called *The Testimony of Jesus* by Francis McLellan Wilcox. However, all the other books of the time period that I looked at seemed to hold to the traditional Adventist and Christian view of the inerrancy of inspiration. This includes the well-known text *A Prophet Among You* that was used for years to train our ministers starting in the nineteen fifties and the previous text to it for training our ministers, *The Abiding Gift of Prophecy*, which came out in 1936. Even

¹⁷ *South Pacific Record*, Feb. 28, 2004, p. 10

¹⁸ *Believe His Prophets* by Denton E. Rebok, p. 196-197

though the author of it, A. G. Daniells, seems to have privately held grave questions as to Ellen White's writings (something we will discuss more fully later), his book on the subject gave no hint of this or that Mrs. White's writings were not inerrant (without error)." Just then, the phone rang, and Lily went to answer it. John went outside to attend to chores his mind still turning over and over the great problem that confronted them. "Oh, Lord!" he prayed, "guide us into truth!! No matter where it leads. Please don't let us be deceived. Guide our steps. Amen."

"... God, that cannot lie, ..." Titus 1:2 see also Heb. 6:18 "...It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Mat.4:4

"God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar..." Rom. 3:4

"Given the large portion of the New Testament written by him, it's extremely significant that Luke has been established to be a scrupulously accurate historian, even in the smallest details. One prominent archaeologist carefully examined Luke's references to thirty-two countries, fifty-four cities, and nine islands, finding not a single mistake." (*The School of Biblical Evangelism*, Lesson Fifty Four)

"Any attempt to reject its [Luke's book of Acts] basic historicity even in matters of detail must now appear absurd. Roman historians have long taken it for granted." (Classical historian, A. N. Sherwin-White, *Roman Society and Roman Law in the New Testament*, p. 189, quoted in *An Unshakable Faith*, p. 168, David Cloud, 2015)

"God does not inspire His prophets and then permit them to record His words erroneously. Such a view charges God with permitting his sacred Word to be defiled....It would make nonsense of God's Word if scripture did not contain truth alone....Our theologians who teach the fallibility of God's Word have departed from Protestantism." (Adventist authors, Dr. Russell R. Standish & Dr. Collin D. Standish, *The Greatest of All the Prophets* p. 102-103)



The Mysterious Revelation

The next day, John did the necessities on the homestead and tried to find time for study as well. Finally, the day was over, and the little family gathered to discuss the day's events. As John settled himself into the extra fluffy couch, he noticed that Lily's eyes had a strange glint in them. Was it a tear or something else? Poor girl, there were so many unsettling questions. If only he could find answers. Real answers that would bring life back to what it used to be. He sighed. Since yesterday, he just hadn't had time to do much research. He really needed to find answers!

Lily's voice cut into his thoughts. "Honey, you know all you told me yesterday brought back to my memory something I discovered years ago in Ellen White's writings that bothered me at the time, but I put it out of my mind and kind of forgot it. I did some research and found the troubling item."

"Oh no! Lily, not another problem!!" John said, "We already have too many of those." John felt his neck tightening up.

"I know," Lily looked at him with a worried expression. "But, Honey, take a look at this. We can't just bury our heads in the sand and ignore these things. We must get answers. Those that we share our faith with may ask us these questions, and we must have answers. Don't forget Paul says: 'Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.'" ¹⁹

John straightened a little. "I'm sorry, darling. I guess the strain is getting to me. You're right, of course. We mustn't ignore problems just because we have no answers. Like I said when we started this investigation, we must love truth and go wherever it leads us. But it is

¹⁹ 2 Timothy 2:15

so easy to forget, in the desire for answers that vindicate what we have known to be true. Go ahead and show me.”

Lily slowly began to read:

““I then saw the Word of God pure and unadulterated, and that we must answer for the way we received the truth proclaimed from that Word. I saw that it had been a hammer to break the flinty heart in pieces, and a fire to consume the dross and tin, that the heart might be pure and holy. I saw that the Apocrypha was the hidden book, and that the wise of these last days should understand it.””²⁰

Lily finished and looked up at John. His face was filled with shock!! Startled, she wondered if perhaps she shouldn't have shared it with him. Maybe it was too much. After all, his health was not the best. But she must tell him what else she had found. It was too late to not tell him now. “John,” she said, “I have done a little research into this and have found some interesting facts. Arthur L. White seems to have known of this and in 1969 prepared a statement regarding it. He really had no answer except to say things in the early days were uncertain. Yet, is this not in the vault? And knowing the care that W. C. White later stated that his mother took with such things, would not she or James have seen and okayed this before filing it away? We know of at least two instances where an angel warned Mrs. White to fire her secretary to prevent possible corruption of her writings. Would God not also have warned her of this and had her correct it if it was wrong? Where is God's preservation of His Word? Other writings of hers from the early days we trust – why not this?

“It should not be overlooked,” Lily continued, “what Arthur White's statement points out, that around this time James White, in publishing one of Ellen White's visions, cited the Apocrypha to back it up. This indicates an attitude towards the Apocrypha that would agree quite well with these recorded visions regarding it. One wonders how any true Protestant minister of the time could be found doing such a thing. Also, there are two other visions that we have record of that seem to have had the same message regarding the Apocrypha. One is in Ms 5 and, in my opinion, is even more pointed in regard to the Apocrypha. As one reads it, one must remember that Apocrypha means hidden

²⁰ Manuscript 4, 1850, Oswego, New York; also in 16 Manuscript Release (emphasis mine)

book. Indeed, in Ms. 4, 1850, that I just read, as you will recall, she herself called the Apocrypha the hidden book. So every time the term hidden book is used in the following quote, it is referring to the Apocrypha. With this in mind, let's read what it says:

“Taking the large Bible (containing the Apocrypha): Pure and undefiled, a part of it is consumed, holy, holy, walk carefully, tempted. The Word of God, take it (Marion Stowell), bind it long upon thine heart, pure and unadulterated. How lovely, how lovely, how lovely. My blood, My blood, My blood. O the children of disobedience, reprov'd, reprov'd. Thy word, thy word, thy word, a part of it is burned unadulterated, a part of the hidden book, a part of it is burned (the Apocrypha). Those that shall despitely tread [treat?] that remnant would think that they are doing God service. Why? Because they are led captive by Satan at his will. Hidden book, it is cast out. Bind it to the heart (4 times) bind it, bind it, bind it, (laying the Bible on Oswald Stowell) let not its pages be closed, read it carefully. Snares will be set on every side, take the strait truth, bind it to the heart (3 times) let everything be cast out.”²¹

“The other is included in Arthur White's statement (SEE MR. NO. 1148) and signed by three witnesses. It says:

“THE HIDDEN BOOK

In a report signed by three early believers, reference is made to the Hidden Book as Ellen White uttered certain words in vision. Here is the account: "At another time, at a meeting held at Brother Curtis' in Topsham, Maine, she was taken off in vision, and arose to her feet, took the large family Bible from the table, and held it on her hand some time at an angle of forty-five degrees, and said the Hidden Book was not there. When someone asked if the Apocrypha was not in the Bible, Brother Curtis remarked it was not. She talked some time about the Hidden Book. No one knew but Bro. Curtis' family that the Apocrypha [Apocrypha] was not there."

Mrs. S. Howland

Rebecca Howland Winslow

Frances Howland Lunt'²²

²¹ Manuscript 5-1849 Topsham, Maine (emphasis mine)

²² Manuscript Release No. 1148

"The content is not as detailed, but it is plain that the Apocrypha was on her mind and in her visions during this time period. This vision definitely appears to be different from the one mentioned in Ms 5 1849 because it has a Bible that did not contain the Apocrypha, and the one mentioned in MS 5 has the Apocrypha. It should be noted that this fact was a central memorable part of this meeting/vision according to the three witnesses, and it is not even mentioned in the detailed transcription of the vision related in MS 5. Also, John, notice that the name of the man whose home the meeting was held in and who owned the Bible in the signed witnessed account is not mentioned in the Ms 5 vision, which would seem unlikely when his statement regarding the Bible not having the Apocrypha was such a central part of the meeting. This causes me to feel that even though both visions took place in Topsham, Maine, the signed witnessed account included in MR. No. 1148 is a different vision in the same town. However, even if one counts this signed witnessed account as the same as the one in Ms 5, one still has two documents, Manuscript 4 1850 and Manuscript 5 1849, reporting two different visions taking place in two different towns, saying essentially the same thing. It would seem highly unlikely that there could be a typo error of this magnitude, let alone one that is doubled in two different manuscripts. After all, would it not seem strange for the Whites to decide to save for posterity a manuscript if it was faulty, let alone two or three different manuscripts all with the same mistaken theological teaching if it was not actually what she taught at that time?

"More to the point, John, is the foundational principle alluded to above. If these manuscripts are wrong, where is the preservation of God's inspired writings? And if God could not preserve these inspired writings from 1850 to the 1960s correctly, when Arthur L. White made his statement, how can we trust that God could preserve the Bible over the ages? God did not allow the manuscripts of the Bible to be corrupted so close to the original autographs as to leave no trace of the pure manuscripts of scripture or be unable to identify them. Forgive me if I can't help wondering how well Arthur White's explanation would hold up before a jury with the standard of beyond reasonable doubt? Worse yet, if one reads this statement of his in its entirety, they will see that he indicates that we should keep this all quiet and under wraps. While I am sure Arthur White meant well, the Bible seems to endorse another philosophy. Matt. 10:27 says:

"What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light: and what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the housetops.' Cannot truth bear scrutiny? Who loves darkness and secrecy?"

“Wow!!!” said John, “that is a lot to digest! I just can’t believe what I am hearing!! Alas! The more we research, the worse it becomes!!! I feel like my world is falling apart with what we are finding! What are we to do?!!!!!!

“The first thing to do is to remember what Paul says,” said Lily:

“‘And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.’²³

“We must not worry about trying to justify our preconceived ideas and beliefs. Instead, we need to have a love of and desire for truth no matter where it leads. Then we won’t be so shaken by all this. We need to trust God to lead us into truth. God knows all about this. He can give us answers even to this mysterious revelation.”

“...Many are but little acquainted with the manner in which these forgeries have obtained the situation they hold in the Bibles of Roman Catholics and even of Protestants, or with the impiety of their contents. It is proved that the Apocrypha is not a part of God’s word, and that, instead of being a book of useful though uninspired instruction, it is a book of imposture and destructive delusion.” (*The Books of the Old & New Testament Proved to be Canonical*, fourth edition , P. 18, By ROBERT HALDANE, Esq., 1832)

“We recognize that the principles set forth in the Spirit of Prophecy writings [Ellen White] do not change with the passage of the years, that time and trial have not made void the instruction given, and the instruction that was given in the early days of the message is to be held as safe instruction to follow in these its closing days.”

²³ 2 Thess. 2:8-10

(From the Adventist Book: *The Spirit of Prophecy Treasure Chest*, p. 125)

“The history of the Old Testament canon in the Christian church following the apostolic age centers in the question about the acceptance or rejection of the Jewish Apocrypha. Though these books were rejected by the apostles and the Christian writers up to the middle of the 2d century, and indeed, even by the Jews themselves, these spurious writings unfortunately found a welcome in the Christian church toward the end of the 2d century. From that time on they were never banned from the Catholic Church. The Reformers took a firm stand in rejecting the Apocrypha, but after their death the Apocryphal books found entrance once more into some Protestant churches, although they were finally ejected from most of them in the 19th century.”
(*Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, 1979 edition, introduction)

“REASONS FOR REJECTING THE APOCRYPHA Definition (Webster): ‘Certain writings found in the Septuagint Version of the Old Testament, but not a part of the Hebrew Bible. They are accepted as canonical by the Eastern Church and the Roman Catholic Church, but rejected by Protestants.’

1. The Hebrew canon does not contain them, though to the Hebrews were committed the oracles of God. (See Romans 3:2) 2. The Lord and His apostles, though quoting the Old Testament so frequently, never quoted the Apocrypha. Philo never refers to it. Josephus in his historical writings rejects it. Jerome, in translating his great version, the Vulgate, refused to acknowledge it. 3. The writers themselves never claim inspiration. They confess rather their own lack of the prophetic gift, as in the age before or in that to come. (Compare 1 Mac. 4:46; 9:27; 14:41) ... 4. They teach false doctrine, not conformable to the Scriptures. (See Isaiah 8:20;

Galatians 1:8.) Among others, note these examples: Tobit 6:1-8 sanctions quackery. Judith 19:10, 13, and chapters 10 to 13, teach deceit. Wisdom 8:19, 20, teaches purgatory and reincarnation. Baruch 3:4 and 2 Maccabees 12:43-45 teach prayers of and for the dead. 5. 'They utterly want the progressive plan and mutual interconnection of the Old Testament and New Testament Scriptures. Historical errors, inaccuracies, and evidently fictitious stories and speeches occur!'-... For examples, compare Baruch 6:2 with Jeremiah 25:12; Bel and the Dragon, especially verse 27, with Daniel 6, verse 10." (*Fundamentals of Bible Doctrine*, p. 14, Published in 1931. It was the basic doctrines text book at the college level for training Seventh-day Adventist laymen as well as Adventist ministers well into the 1950's.)



Peter, Thomas, and the Kings

Over the next several days, John feverishly tried to get answers. But the more he studied, the more disturbed he became. Finally, at the end of an especially frustrating day, he decided it was time to share the results of his investigation with Lily. Once again, the family joined in worship. *Early Writings* had been temporarily put aside, and the Bible had taken its place as the book to read for family worship. After worship, the children were tucked in bed, and John and Lily settled on the couch. “Lily,” John said, “I really have to share with you what I have discovered over the last few days.”

“Oh yes, please do,” Lily said. “Well,” John began, “I was reading more from one of the books defending Ellen White, trying to get answers when I came across a new anomaly. Listen to this:

“‘The love of Christ constraineth us,’ the apostle Peter declared. This was the motive that impelled the zealous disciple in his arduous labors in the cause of the gospel. It was the impulse that moved the great apostle Paul. And no less is the need today that the followers of Christ feel the same constraining power and respond to its influence with the same zeal and devotion.’”²⁴

“John,” said Lily, “wasn’t it Paul that declared ‘The love of Christ constraineth us’ in 2 Cor. 5:14?”

²⁴*Review and Herald*, October 30, 1913.

John sighed. "Yes, I am afraid it was, and that is the point. She was wrong in the fact of who wrote it. But inspiration does not make mistakes. I found another one as well. In the first edition of *Desire of Ages* we read:

"When the Greeks inquired of Philip concerning Jesus, he did not seize upon the opportunity of introducing them to the Saviour as an honor and joy, but he went to tell Andrew. Again, in those last precious hours before the crucifixion, the words of Philip were such as to discourage faith: 'Lord, we know not whither Thou goest; and how can we know the way?' Jesus answered, 'I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life. If ye had known Me, ye should have known My Father also.' Again the response of unbelief: 'Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us.'" ²⁵

"Well, what is wrong with that?" asked Lily. "It seems like a beautiful passage."

"Yes, it does," agreed John, "but there is just one problem. It's a false statement and contradicts the Bible. The Bible says it was Thomas rather than Philip. Look up John 14:5-8."

Lily grabbed her Bible and quickly turned its worn pages. Slowly she read:

"Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way? Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him and have seen him. Philip saith unto him, Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us.'" ²⁶

Slowly, Lily closed her Bible and sighed. "Yet another one."

"Yes, I know," said John, "it is discouraging to find another one! But don't fail to notice how this mistake affects the thoughts regarding the spiritual lesson she is presenting. Now let's look at how she corrected it in the subsequent edition of *Desire of Ages*, which is the standard edition of today.

"When the Greeks inquired of Philip concerning Jesus, he did not seize upon the opportunity of introducing them to the Saviour, but he

²⁵ *Desire of Ages*, p. 338 (First Edition)

²⁶ John 14:5-8

went to tell Andrew. Again, in those last hours before the crucifixion, the words of Philip were such as to discourage faith. When Thomas said to Jesus, "Lord, we know not whither Thou goest; and how can we know the way?" the Saviour answered, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life.... If ye had known Me, ye should have known My Father also." From Philip came the response of unbelief: "Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us." John 14:5-8. So slow of heart, so weak in faith, was that disciple who for three years had been with Jesus."²⁷

"Let me write it out for you, Honey." Quickly, he wrote out both quotes. "Now look at this. I am going to underline the changed parts in the new edition so you can compare the two quotes. One can see this is not just a mere printer's mistake. For the context fits so well with her attributing it to Philip as she does in the first edition. The whole page is all about Philip both before the mistake and after as well."²⁸ Also notice that if she had written it correctly and the printer was at fault and left something accidentally out in the first edition, they would have had to leave out not just the section 'When Thomas said to Jesus' but also the section farther down that says: 'From Philip came' which would be quite unbelievable for an accident."

Lily frowned. "It seems that instead of finding answers, we are finding more and more questions."

"I know!! I just don't know what to do!!!" John exclaimed. Lily brushed her hair out of her face and cleared her throat. "I hate to say it, but I have done a little studying of my own and have to add yet two more to our list."

"You're kidding me!" cried John. "Well, let's hear it. If it doesn't rain, it pours."

Lily walked across the room and took a pad of paper from her desk and flipped through the pages until she found what she was looking for. Slowly, she began to read:

""Constantine, while still a heathen, issued a decree enjoining the general observance of Sunday as a public festival throughout the Roman Empire. After his conversion, he remained a staunch advocate

²⁷ *Desire of Ages*, p. 293 (Standard Modern Edition)

²⁸ See Appendix A for a copy of the whole page from the First Edition of *Desire of Ages*.

of Sunday, and his pagan edict was then enforced by him in the interests of his new faith.’²⁹

“‘The first public measure enforcing Sunday observance was the law enacted [A. D. 321] by Constantine, two years before his profession of Christianity. This edict required townspeople to rest on the venerable day of the sun but permitted countrymen to continue their agricultural pursuits. Though originally a heathen statute, it was enforced by the emperor after his nominal acceptance of the Christian religion.’³⁰

“One can see, John, that Ellen White is saying that the Emperor Constantine had not professed Christianity or had his “nominal conversion” at the passing of his Sunday law of 321 AD. Yet, this is not true, as anyone who has studied these times knows. Listen to what the Encyclopedia Britannica has to say, Lily said:

“‘**Career and conversion**.... Constantine... invaded Italy in 312 and, after a lightning campaign, defeated his brother-in-law Maxentius at the Milvian Bridge near Rome.... Throughout his life, Constantine ascribed his success to his conversion to Christianity and the support of the Christian God. The triumphal arch erected in his honour at Rome after the defeat of Maxentius ascribed the victory to the “inspiration of the Divinity” as well as to Constantine’s own genius. A statue set up at the same time showed Constantine himself holding aloft a cross and the legend “By this saving sign I have delivered your city from the tyrant and restored liberty to the Senate and people of Rome”.... Constantine’s adherence to Christianity was closely associated with his rise to power. He fought the Battle of the Milvian Bridge [312] in the name of the Christian God, having received instructions in a dream to paint the Christian monogram (Χ) on his troops’ shields. This is the account given by the Christian apologist Lactantius.’³¹

“As you can see, this dates his conversion to around the time of the Battle of the Milvian Bridge in 312 A.D., long before the first Sunday Law of 321 A.D. that Ellen White claims was two years before his

²⁹ Vol. 4 *Spirit of Prophecy* (1884 Great Controversy) p. 55

³⁰ Vol. 4 *Spirit of Prophecy* (1884 Great Controversy) p. 391

³¹ As of 2020: <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Constantine-I-Roman-emperor/Commitment-to-Christianity>

nominal conversion/profession of Christianity. Another book states this fact even more clearly:

“In 312 A.D., Constantine’s army faced his enemy, Maxentius, who stood between him and the throne of the Roman Empire. It was during this battle that Satan seduced Constantine and gave him a vision in the heavens showing the sign of the cross and the words, “in this sign conquer.” ... As a result of this battle, Constantine claimed that his conversion to Christianity had taken place. He publicly issued his Edict of Toleration in 313 A.D.’ ³² Other sources confirm this as well.” ³³

“Wow!” said John. “That is amazing! I mean, this is a mistake that she is making when she is relating inspired commentary of how history has fulfilled prophecy, not to mention it is her most fundamental book that relates how prophecy will work out in the end times. Yet she has made a mistake in simple history. How can we be sure she got things right regarding future events when she couldn’t get this right about simple past events?”

“I don’t know, John. In the later editions of this book, when she had more secretarial help and had years to take note of mistakes, she removed these statements from her book. However, her own statements on her inspiration make it plain that this edition of her book is just as inspired as the others. Indeed, this edition is still in print and used. We Adventists have always considered it as inspired. But, listen to the next mistake that I found.” Lily once again began to read her notes:

“Chedorlaomer, king of Elam, had invaded Canaan fourteen years before and made it tributary to him. Several of the princes now revolted, and the Elamite king, with four allies, again marched into the country to reduce them to submission. Five kings of Canaan joined their forces and met the invaders in the vale of Siddim, but only to be completely overthrown.’ ³⁴

³² *The Force*, Alberto Part Four, Dr. Alberto Rivera, p.20

³³ One of those other sources says: “...the emperor Constantine, soon after his remarkable, and as some suppose, miraculous conversion to Christianity in the year 312, took the religion of Christ to the unhallowed embraces of the state....” (*The History of Romanism*, John Dowling, p. 30)

³⁴ *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 134-135 (emphasis mine)

"Now notice that she says that 'the Elamite king, with four allies' invaded and 'Five kings of Canaan joined' to meet the invaders; so, five kings against five kings. Now look at what the Bible says:

“‘And it came to pass in the days of Amraphel king of Shinar, Arioch king of Ellasar, Chedorlaomer king of Elam, and Tidal king of nations; that these made war with Bera king of Sodom, and with Birsha king of Gomorrah, Shinab king of Admah, and Shemeber king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela, which is Zoar.’”³⁵

“As one can see, it is four kings against five kings according to the Bible, rather than five kings against five as *Patriarchs and Prophets* has it.”

John leaned forward in his seat, looking intently at his wife. He didn't like the thoughts that he was entertaining. But he couldn't help but wonder if Ellen White was indeed the prophetess they had thought she was. Why couldn't they get answers? Why did more and more problems surface? Oh, what were they to do? He and Lily just stared at each other. John wondered if the same thoughts were going through her mind as his. He finally said, “This research hasn't given me much time for developing the ministry, and my mind is so full of questions that an Adventist minister should not have. Then, of course, in addition, there are my health issues. I feel I must step back from the pulpit and cancel, at least temporarily, my ministry in Adventism.”

Lily looked intently into his eyes as she said, “You know, I checked our e-mail today, and there was an invitation for you to speak at that large independent SDA church down south. It would be a wonderful opportunity to get better known, not to mention there was talk of you perhaps being chosen as the Bible worker or pastor.”

“I know,” said John, “but what am I to do? I must be honest. What kind of a Christian would I be to attempt to preach Ellen White when I have these doubts? I just can't do that.”

“Yes, I guess you are right,” Lily said, burying her head in her hands. After a few minutes, John got up and put his arm around his special friend and wife. Slowly they arose and started to their room to get some much-needed rest.

³⁵ Genesis 14:1-2 (emphasis mine)



Things and More Things to Try our Souls

Lily sat up straighter from where she had been sitting. Her neck and head had a slight ache. She shook her head, trying to calm it and clear her mind. It didn't seem like John was doing so well at getting to the bottom of things. Although she knew he was researching the subject, all he could she had decided that if she was indeed his helpmeet, she should do some research herself. So here she was, searching for answers. She just couldn't believe what she had just read. Slowly, she began to read it again to see if perhaps she had missed something.

"The disciples had not yet fully joined themselves to Jesus to be co-laborers with him. They had witnessed many of his miracles, and their minds had been enlightened by the discourses they had heard from his lips; but they had not entirely left their employment as fishermen. Their hearts were filled with grief by the death of John, and they were troubled with conflicting thoughts. If the life of John had been permitted to end so ingloriously, what would be the fate of their Master, when the scribes and Pharisees were so bitter against him? Amid their doubt and fear, it was a relief for them to return once more to their fishing and, for a brief space, find in their old employment a diversion from their anxiety.... The discourse ended, Jesus turned to Peter and bade him launch out into the deep and let down his net for a draught. But Peter was thoroughly disheartened; not only was he sorrowful because of the death of John the Baptist, and his mind tortured with unbelief in consequence of that event, but he was discouraged in regard to his temporal prospects.... Jesus said to them, 'Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.' Immediately after

this, they left their nets and boats and followed the Saviour. These humble fishermen recognized the divine authority of Jesus, and forthwith gave up their regular occupation and left their worldly possessions in obedience to the command of their Lord.”³⁶

It was still the same. Lily reached for her Bible and turned to Luke 5:4, 9-11:

“Now when he had left speaking, he said unto Simon, Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught. When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord. . . . For he was astonished, and all that were with him, at the draught of the fishes which they had taken: And so was also James, and John, the sons of Zebedee, which were partners with Simon. And Jesus said unto Simon, Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men. And when they had brought their ships to land, they forsook all, and followed him.”³⁷

She thumbed through the chapters to Luke 7:18:

“And the disciples of John showed him of all these things. And John calling unto him two of his disciples sent them to Jesus, saying, Art thou he that should come? or look we for another? When the men were come unto him, they said, John Baptist hath sent us unto thee, saying, Art thou he that should come? or look we for another?”³⁸

A tear streaked down her face. “How could an inspired prophetess get so much wrong?” she thought. “Did she even bother to write these chapters with the Bible open before her?” Ellen White was asserting that the final calling of the disciples took place in Luke chapter 5 and that John the Baptist was dead at this time for the disciples were sorrowing over it. While in Luke chapter 7 it says that John was so alive that he sent his disciples to ask Jesus a question. Here she had wanted to help John solve all these problems but had only worsened it. How she hated to tell him this new development. Then a thought hit her: “I wonder what her later book *Desire of Ages* says about it.” She soon had it and started looking for the incident. Soon she found it and read:

“The discourse ended, Jesus turned to Peter, and bade him launch out into the sea, and let down his net for a draught. But Peter was

³⁶ 2 *Spirit of Prophecy*, p. 182-185

³⁷ Luke 5:4, 9-11

³⁸ Luke 7:18-20

disheartened. All night he had taken nothing. During the lonely hours, he had thought of the fate of John the Baptist, who was linguishing alone in his dungeon. He had thought of the prospect before Jesus and His followers, of the ill success of the mission to Judea, and the malice of the priests and rabbis. Even his own occupation had failed him; and as he watched by the empty nets, the future had seemed dark with discouragement.”³⁹

“She changed it again,” she thought, “changed it when she remade the book into the *Desire of Ages* making it match the Bible.” She took her Bible in her hands and turned to Prov. 24:21-22:

“...meddle not with them that are given to change: for their calamity shall rise suddenly; and who knoweth the ruin of them both?”

Then, thumbing its well-worn pages, she stopped at Prov. 30:6:

“Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar.”

Slowly, she laid her Bible back down with a sigh and dishearteningly went back to her housework, sorrowfully thinking of what she would have to tell her husband that night.

But that night, John had his own experiences to share, and before she had a chance to tell him hers, he launched into relating his. “And Honey,” John spoke with enthusiasm, “you will never guess what I found today.”

“Another problem?” Lily asked.

“Why yes, I suppose it isn’t that surprising anymore, is it?” John went on. “Anyway, let me read it to you:

“‘Jacob’s wrong, in receiving his brother’s blessing by fraud, is again brought forcibly before him, and he is afraid that God will permit Esau to take his life. In his distress, he prays to God all night. An angel was represented to me as standing before Jacob, presenting his wrong before him in its true character. As the angel turns to leave him, Jacob lays hold of him, and will not let him go. He makes supplications with tears. He pleads that he has deeply repented of his sins and the wrongs against his brother, which have been the means of separating him from his father’s house for twenty years. He ventures to plead the promises of God and the tokens of his favor to him from time to time

³⁹ *Desire of Ages*, p. 245-249

in his absence from his father's house. All night, Jacob wrestled with the angel, making supplication for a blessing. The angel seemed to be resisting his prayer by continually calling his sins to his remembrance, at the same time endeavoring to break away from him. Jacob was determined to hold the angel, not only by physical strength but by the power of living faith. In his distress, Jacob referred to the repentance of his soul, the deep humility he had felt for his wrongs. The angel regarded his prayer with seeming indifference, continually making efforts to release himself from the grasp of Jacob. He might have exercised his supernatural power, and forced himself from Jacob's grasp, but he did not choose to do this. But when he saw that he prevailed not against Jacob, to convince him of his supernatural power, he touched his thigh, which was immediately out of joint. But Jacob would not give up his earnest efforts for bodily pain. His object was to obtain a blessing, and pain of body was not sufficient to divert his mind from his object. His determination was stronger in the last moments of the conflict than at the beginning. His faith grew more earnest and persevering until the very last, even till the breaking of the day. He would not let go his hold of the angel until he blessed him. And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me. The angel then inquired, What is thy name? And he said, Jacob. And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel; for as a prince hast thou power with God, and with men, and hast prevailed."⁴⁰

"Now notice a couple of things in the above. If you look here, I have written it out so you can more easily compare this verse with the next one I will read to you. Notice first in the bold print that Jacob's experience with the angel starts with the angel standing before Jacob making a presentation. Then the angel turns to leave. Immediately, Jacob grabs the angel and will not let him go. And thus begins the wrestling, the angel trying to free himself and go, and Jacob exerting every effort to prevent it. At the same time, Jacob and the angel seem to be talking. Then the angel puts forth his hand and touches Jacob's thigh and puts it out of joint. Now let's see what she wrote when she remade the expanded sequel years later to this book. She says in *Patriarchs and Prophets*:

"Solitary and unprotected, Jacob bowed in deep distress upon the earth. It was midnight. All that made life dear to him were at a distance, exposed to danger and death. Bitterest of all was the thought

⁴⁰ 1 *Spirit of Prophecy*, p. 118-119

that it was his own sin which had brought this peril upon the innocent. With earnest cries and tears he made his prayer before God. **Suddenly a strong hand was laid upon him. He thought that an enemy was seeking his life, and he endeavored to wrest himself from the grasp of his assailant. In the darkness the two struggled for the mastery. Not a word was spoken**, but Jacob put forth all his strength, and did not relax his efforts for a moment. While he was thus battling for his life, the sense of his guilt pressed upon his soul; his sins rose up before him, to shut him out from God. But in his terrible extremity he remembered God's promises, and his whole heart went out in entreaty for His mercy. The struggle continued until near the break of day, when the stranger placed his finger upon Jacob's thigh, and he was crippled instantly. The patriarch now discerned the character of his antagonist. He knew that he had been in conflict with a heavenly messenger, and this was why his almost superhuman effort had not gained the victory. It was Christ, "the Angel of the covenant," who had revealed Himself to Jacob. The patriarch was now disabled and suffering the keenest pain, but he would not loosen his hold. All penitent and broken, he clung to the Angel; "he wept, and made supplication" (Hosea 12:4), pleading for a blessing. He must have the assurance that his sin was pardoned. Physical pain was not sufficient to divert his mind from this object. His determination grew stronger, his faith more earnest and persevering, until the very last. The Angel tried to release Himself; He urged, "Let Me go, for the day breaketh;" but Jacob answered, "I will not let Thee go, except Thou bless me." Had this been a boastful, presumptuous confidence, Jacob would have been instantly destroyed; but his was the assurance of one who confesses his own unworthiness, yet trusts the faithfulness of a covenant-keeping God."

41

"Now, as I said before, darling, I have written this quote as well as the last one out here for you to see. Notice the bold and the underlined sections. You will notice that I have tried as much as possible to correlate the underlined in the one quote with the underlined in the other quote and the bold print with the bold print. So, in other words, one can compare the underlined with the underlined and the bold with the bold in the two different quotes. Do you remember the points we noticed in the first of these two quotes?"

⁴¹ *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 194-197

Lily's intent eyes looked at him as she responded, "I think so, but maybe you should tell me again."

"Sure," John said. "First, you will notice that the first quote says that the angel starts with a presentation, then the angel turns to go. At that point, Jacob grabs onto the angel, and they start wrestling: the angel trying to go and Jacob using all his strength to try and prevent it. Now, on the second quote, what do we see in relation to that?"

Lily looked at the two quotes for a moment, then said, "Why, John, we don't see that at all! There is no presentation nor does the angel try to go, and Jacob prevent it. Quite the opposite, for Jacob is not aware of the angel until, '**Suddenly a strong hand was laid upon him.**' Rather than him grabbing onto the angel, as in the first quote, the angel grabs onto him. It happens suddenly and '**He thought that an enemy was seeking his life, and he endeavored to wrest himself from the grasp of his assailant.**' Rather than all night Jacob trying to detain an angel who is trying to get away and begging him to forgive him because Jacob knows he is a supernatural being, we have in the second quote Jacob trying to get away from an unknown assailant in the night. Also notice the second quote says '**Not a word was spoken.**' While the first quote mentions talking the whole night between the two. Also, I notice that it says in the second quote: 'The struggle continued until near the break of day, when the stranger placed his finger upon Jacob's thigh, and he was crippled instantly. '**The patriarch now discerned the character of his antagonist.**' So, in the first quote Jacob knew all along Who this Man was he was wrestling and in the second quote he didn't know until his thigh was touched at dawn. Wow, what a difference."

"Yes," John said, "it is quite a difference! This would be important even if this were a little item, for even the smallest item is important when something is supposed to be inspired. But this is far more than an insignificant item. It affects the whole story in quite a meaningful way. Which account is the correct one? Which one is inspired? Which way did it really happen? In the first quote she even starts off by stating 'I was shown.'"

Lily leaned forward, "But John I found something as well today."

"Oh, what's that?"

"Well, I discovered that Mrs. White got it wrong as to when the disciples were called in relation to the death of John the Baptist." And Lily proceeded to relate the whole thing to her husband who sat in spellbound silence. Finally when she finished he said, "Well, I guess I

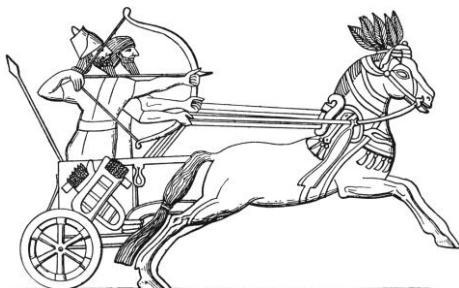
have ceased to be surprised that much anymore. I just can only wonder what we might find next. Just then their little daughter who had been sleeping awoke crying and Lily went to help her.

“Therefore the LORD will cut off from Israel head and tail, branch and rush, in one day. The ancient and honourable, he is the head; and the prophet that teacheth lies, he is the tail.” Isa. 9:14-15

“And there came forth a spirit, and stood before the LORD, and said, I will persuade him. And the LORD said unto him, Wherewith? And he said, I will go forth, and I will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. And he said, Thou shalt persuade him, and prevail also: go forth, and do so.” 1 Kings 22:21-22

“Have not I written to thee...That I might make thee know the certainty of the words of truth; that thou mightest answer the words of truth?...” Prov. 22:20-21

“Thy testimonies are very sure.... Ps. 93:5 “Thy testimonies... are...very faithful...Thy word is very pure: therefore thy servant loveth it.... Thy commandments are truth. Concerning thy testimonies, I have known of old that thou hast founded them for ever.... Thy word is true from the beginning: and every one of thy righteous judgments endureth for ever....” Ps. 119



The Mystery of the Syrians/Assyrians

John stood up from where he had been praying. It had been a while since he and Lily had last discussed Ellen White. John had done more research over the last several days. And now, having finished his devotions, he sat down and stared at his notes. There it was. The first of a couple of mistakes related to the Syrians and Assyrians. “Of course,” John told himself, “None of the mistakes were too serious if they came from an ordinary author, but coming from one who claimed her books were inspired, it was quite different.” He couldn’t help thinking of the statement Ellen White made in her book *Colporteur Ministry*:

“In my books, the truth is stated, barricaded by a ‘Thus saith the Lord.’ The Holy Spirit traced these truths upon my heart and mind as indelibly as the law was traced by the finger of God upon the tables of stone...”⁴²

As he looked again at his notes, he read:

“For a time after this, Israel was free from the attacks of the Syrians. But later, under the energetic direction of a determined king, Hazael, the Syrian hosts surrounded Samaria and besieged it... The horrors of prolonged famine were driving the king of Israel to desperate measures when Elisha predicted deliverance the following day. As the next morning was about to dawn, the Lord ‘made the host of the

⁴² Letter 90, 1906 (*Colporteur Ministry*, p. 126)

Syrians to hear a noise of chariots, and a noise of horses, even the noise of a great host;" ⁴³

Then he glanced down farther and read the Bible's infallible and inerrant account of the same incident.

"And it came to pass after this, that Benhadad king of Syria gathered all his host, and went up, and besieged Samaria." ⁴⁴

There it was. She got the wrong king and contradicted the Bible. Then he thought, "Maybe they reigned together as king." But no, for the Bible says:

"And it came to pass on the morrow, that he [Hazeal] took a thick cloth, and dipped it in water, and spread it on his [Benhadad's] face, so that he died: and Hazeal reigned in his stead." ⁴⁵

Slowly, John shook his head. No, there was no other reasonable explanation. She just got it wrong. Then he scanned farther down the page and read:

"Great was the glory of the Assyrian realm; great was its downfall. The prophet Ezekiel, carrying farther the figure of a noble cedar tree, plainly foretold the fall of Assyria because of its pride and cruelty. Ezek. 31:1" ⁴⁶

It sounds so beautiful, John thought. But unfortunately, it is not correct. For Assyria fell in 612-609 B.C., and Ezekiel wrote this prophecy in 586 B.C. John remembered that years designated B.C. get larger as they go farther back in time and smaller as they get closer to our time. He also recalled that the Bible starts Ezekiel's ministry with Ezekiel being a captive in Babylon, which is dated 593 B.C., and the *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary* on Chapter 31 of Ezekiel gives the date for this particular vision as given to Ezekiel as 586 B.C. In other words, Ezekiel was not prophesying Assyria's downfall as Ellen White claimed, but rather was using the kingdom of Assyria as an example in warning Egypt. John looked once more at the chart on the Assyrian kings that shows when the kingdom of Assyria came to an end (see below).

⁴³ *Prophet and Kings*, p. 258

⁴⁴ 2 Kings 6:24

⁴⁵ 2 Kings 8:15

⁴⁶ *Prophets and Kings*, p. 365

Adad-nirari III	810-782 BC
Shalmaneser IV through Ashur-nirari V	782-746 BC
Tigiath-pileser III	745-727 BC
Shalmaneser V	727-722 BC
Sargon II	722-705 BC
Sennacherib	705-681 BC
Esarhaddon	681-669 BC
Ashurbanipal	669-627 BC
Last kings of Assyrians	627-609 BC

Then he read what the *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary* said on this prophecy in the Bible:

Ezekiel CHAPTER 31

1 A relation unto Pharaoh, 3 of the glory of Assyria, 10 and the fall thereof for pride. 18 The like destruction of Egypt.

1. *The eleventh year.* Of Jehoiachin's captivity (see on ch. 1:2); the month date falls **in June, 587 or 586** (see p. 572). The present prophecy was given about two months after the previous one (ch. 30:20). In prophetic allegory and in stirring poetic parallel, the prophet describes the fall of the great nation of Egypt.

2. *Pharaoh.* Hophra, or Apries, noted for his arrogant pride (see on ch. 29:3).

The Assyrian. Heb. 'Ashshur, "Assyria." A change of one letter of the consonantal Hebrew and a change in pointing to 'ashweka give the reading "I will liken thee." The sentence would then read, "Behold, I will liken thee to a cedar in Lebanon" (see RSV).

However, we cannot be sure that such changes are justified. It is possible to understand the allegory if the reference to Assyria is retained. **The history and downfall of Assyria would then be set forth as an example of the history and overthrow of Egypt.** With the change in the text, the application would be direct.

John noticed that the above Bible commentary quote said: “The history and downfall of Assyria would then be set forth as an example of the history and overthrow of Egypt.” Indeed, one finds upon looking at the context of Ezekiel 31 that he is using Assyria as a past example to prophesy to Egypt what will happen to them. Ezekiel always refers throughout the chapter to Assyria in the past tense. Desperately, John’s mind twirled. “Just a moment,” he thought. “I hadn’t thought about it before, but this has an extra dimension to it. This is a prophecy that she is supposed to be infallibly interpreting, and she got it wrong. What implication does that have for her other prophetic interpretations of the prophecies of the Bible or any other passage of Scripture? Of course, if she gets even the smallest detail wrong as an inspired prophet, it opens up the likelihood of getting just about anything wrong. But to actually see her get it wrong when interpreting a prophecy in the Bible is most disturbing.”

She had stated under the authority of “inspiration,” according to her, an amplified interpretation of the Bible and gotten it wrong. If she got this wrong, what else might she get wrong? John’s thoughts were going a mile a minute. As he finished reexamining this latest mistake, he realized that despite the fact he was a fourth-generation and Lily a sixth-generation Adventist, and even with his full knowledge of Adventist history and theology, he needed to reach out for some help. He was just not finding answers but rather was more and more beginning to wonder if he and his forbearers had been deceived. Indeed, could it be that he and his wife were no better off than the Mormons with their Joseph Smith? John pushed the thought out of his mind. No! No! No!! He must reach out for some outside help, but where to find it was the question. With so few solid and sound scholastic minds in Historic Adventism, where could he turn? He must talk to Lily and see if she had any ideas. John couldn’t help noticing that his wife seemed to be doing some research again on her own, and he wondered what she might be finding. Something had to be done. But just what to do, John was not certain.



A Traitor and a City

John sat down beside his wife for their customary time together after their little children were tucked in bed.

Lily seemed to have an excitement in her eyes. Eagerly she said, "Guess what I have found in my research."

"Did you find the answers to all these problems?" John asked.

"No, but I have found more of them. Listen to this:

"Enoch first received instruction from Noah [Adam], and he observed the law of God, and served him with singleness of heart. He became so pure in character that the Lord communicated his will to him, and through holy vision revealed the great events connected with Christ's second appearing, and also the wickedness that would prevail just prior to the end." ⁴⁷

"Notice that it has the name Adam in brackets. This means that someone, other than Ellen White, was certain that the name Noah was a mistake and guessed that Adam would be a better choice. It is probably impossible for us to know if she absentmindedly put Noah instead of Adam or if she really did indeed mean Noah. It really does not matter that much. For either way, it is a mistake in her inspired writings, teaches error, and contradicts the Bible. There really is no reason to believe that she did not intend to write what she wrote. Normally, we assume that one writes what they mean unless there is strong evidence to believe otherwise, and such evidence seems to be lacking in this instance. In any case, the Bible is clear that God ensures

⁴⁷ *Review and Herald*, April 29, 1875

the accuracy of his inspired writings, which in this statement of hers is sadly lacking,” said Lily.

“But I don’t see what the problem is. I mean, why couldn’t it have been Noah that instructed Enoch?” asked John.

“Because it is impossible! It would contradict the Bible. The Bible’s chronology makes it clear that Enoch lived 622 years after creation. He was translated 987 years after creation. Noah was born 1,056 years after creation. In other words, Noah was not older than Enoch but rather had not even been born when Enoch was translated. Therefore, it is impossible that Noah instructed Enoch. This is of such certainty that even those involved with publishing Ellen White’s writings felt compelled to correct it by putting a possible alternative in brackets. This is an admission that she made a mistake and was wrong. That is tantamount to admitting she is not a true prophet. For according to the traditional understanding of God’s people, going back as far as one can trace and according to the Bible, inspiration can contain no mistakes if it comes from God.”

“I see,” said John. “So it is a mistake. How am I to find answers to these problems when all we do is find more and more of them?”

“I am sure I don’t know. It is a real problem, all right!” said Lily. “But listen to another item I found:

“‘When the Saviour’s hands were bathing those soiled feet, and wiping them with the towel, the heart of Judas thrilled through and through with the impulse then and there to confess his sin.’”⁴⁸

“Now let’s see what this says:

“‘As Christ celebrated this ordinance with His disciples, conviction came to the hearts of all save Judas.’”⁴⁹

“Here we seem to have yet another contradiction.”

“Here we go again,” said John.

“Yes, I know what you mean,” said Lily. “But in the first quote, she says Judas had an impulse to confess, and in the second he seems to have lacked any conviction at all, let alone an impulse to confess. Remember:

⁴⁸ *The Desire of Ages*, p. 645

⁴⁹ *Evangelism*, p. 275

““Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.’”⁵⁰

“And also look what *Steps to Christ*, another of her books, has to say on this subject:

““That power is Christ. His grace alone can quicken the lifeless faculties of the soul and attract it to God, to holiness.’”⁵¹

“And this as well:

““Christ is the source of every right impulse. He is the only one that can implant in the heart enmity against sin. Every desire for truth and purity, every conviction of our own sinfulness, is an evidence that His Spirit is moving upon our hearts.’”⁵²

So, John, the impulse to do right that Judas had that Ellen White describes in her first quoted statement above, according to the Bible and her other book *Steps to Christ*, would have come from God since it was an impulse to do right and thus can be described as no other than conviction to do right. Thus, there is no way around the fact that she is contradicting herself. Both of her statements cannot be true. Which way did it happen? Which one is inspired? How can we know? “Now look at what else I came across.”

“Oh no,” said John, “not more!”

“Just one more: Back when Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed, Lot, as he fled, begged the angel to save the city of Zoar so he could flee there. But listen to what Mrs. White says about this city:

““Lot dwelt but a short time in Zoar. Iniquity prevailed there as in Sodom, and he feared to remain, lest the city should be destroyed. Not long after, Zoar was consumed, as God had purposed. Lot made his way to the mountains, and abode in a cave.’”⁵³

“God told Lot He would not destroy Zoar. So would God break His word? It would seem that Zoar was in existence centuries later. For God, in the time of Moses, said:

⁵⁰ James 1:17

⁵¹ *Steps to Christ*, p. 18

⁵² *Steps to Christ*, p. 26

⁵³ *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 167.

"And the south, and the plain of the valley of Jericho, the city of palm trees, unto Zoar.' (Deuteronomy 34:3)

"And Jeremiah said:

""From the cry of Heshbon even unto Elealeh, and even unto Jahaz, have they uttered their voice, from Zoar even unto Horonaim, as an heifer of three years old: for the waters also of Nimrim shall be desolate.' ⁵⁴

"Isaiah said:

""My heart shall cry out for Moab; his fugitives shall flee unto Zoar, an heifer of three years old: for by the mounting up of Luhith with weeping shall they go up; for in the way of Horonaim they shall raise up a cry of destruction.' ⁵⁵

"One notices that the Bible says in Gen. 19:22:

""Haste thee, escape thither; for I cannot do anything till thou be come thither. Therefore the name of the city was called Zoar.""

""The city was renamed Zoar because of Lot taking refuge in it and it being spared. It would seem one would hardly bother to rename a city that was destroyed, much less have the name take hold and come into common use. Gen. 14:8 makes it plain that the name before Lot took refuge in it was Bela.

""Also, we never find Zoar mentioned in the lists the Bible gives of the cities that were destroyed. For example, notice its absence from the following list the Bible gives of the destroyed cities:

""And that the whole land thereof is brimstone, and salt, and burning, that it is not sown, nor beareth, nor any grass groweth therein, like the overthrow of Sodom, and Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboim, which the LORD overthrew in His anger, and in His wrath.' ⁵⁶

""According to Wikipedia, as of 2019, there is historical evidence that the city of Zoar was around into the Christian era, although sometimes called by different names. 'Josephus and Ptolemy mention it ("Ant. Jud.", XIII, xv, 4; "Bell. Jud.", IV, viii, 4); Ptolemy (V, xvi, 4); Saint Jerome in the Onomasticon; and Eusebius mentions it also.

⁵⁴ Jeremiah 48:34

⁵⁵ Isaiah 15:5

⁵⁶ Deut. 29:23

Ancient writers seem to have spoken of it clear up to the 1100s AD.’⁵⁷ So it would seem Zoar was not really destroyed as Ellen White claimed.”

John was aghast! “I have heard my whole life that Zoar was destroyed, and now you tell me it was not! To learn I was told a story of Lot that was not true is very disturbing!! Here I thought I was reading inspired writings, but I am beginning to feel like I have been reading historical novels based on the Bible.”

Lily looked surprised. “I hadn’t thought of it in that light,” she said, “but I guess it does begin to seem that way.”

John then shared all the problems he had found out about the Syrians and Assyria since they had last compared notes. As he ended, Lily breathed, “Now I can understand why you look so discouraged.”

“Yes, I am,” said John. “We need help. I don’t know how to get it.”

“Well,” Lily softly said, “I think we should choose four from among the most orthodox, conservative, and intellectual Adventist ministers and send them each a letter explaining our problem and asking for help.”

“That’s a good idea! Let’s do it. However, I hope they don’t just tell me that the answer is this new doctrine that inspiration is fallible and can err,” John said.

“I know,” Lily sighed, “but we might get some help.”

“All right,” John said, “let’s do it!” So, John went to his study to get a start on a very important letter!

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

And as he sat upon the Mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world? And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man

⁵⁷Wikipedia, article on Zoar, as of 2019.

deceive you.... many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. ... For there shall arise... false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if *it were* possible, they shall deceive the very elect.

Mathew 24



It's all in Your Head

John had worked and reworked his letter to the ministers. He wanted to get it perfectly across to them his questions and also that he really wanted answers. He was quite happy to believe in Ellen White. He was not trying to find a way to get rid of her in order to justify some cherished sin or get rid of some unwanted testimony. He was not after Ellen White; in fact, he had started this journey to find answers that would vindicate her, but the more he researched, the more troubles he found. Finally, he was satisfied and sealed the envelopes for mailing. Then he turned to his studies for the day. That night he shared with Lily what he had found. "Honey, listen to this from a book on Ellen White I came across:

“Phrenology was the "science" of the human mind developed by two German physicians, ... According to phrenological theory, the human brain was made up of a number of different "organs," each corresponding to an exotically named mental "faculty" like amativeness, acquisitiveness, or philoprogenitiveness. The organs governing man's "animal" propensities were located in the back and lower part of the head, while the organs of intellect and reason occupied the frontal region. Since the relative strength of any propensity could be determined by measuring the size of its matching organ, it was not difficult for the initiated to "read" a person's character by carefully examining the skull. ...[T]he vegetarians, phrenologists, water-cure doctors, and anti-tobacco, anti-corset, and temperance people were so often crossing paths, they began to look like participants in a single reform movement.’⁵⁸

⁵⁸ Dr. Ronald Numbers, PhD, *Prophetess of Health*, pp. 67-70.

“And listen to this:

“**Phrenology**, the study of the conformation of the skull as indicative of mental faculties and traits of character.... Phrenology enjoyed great popular appeal well into the 20th century but has been wholly discredited by scientific research.”⁵⁹

“Well,” said Lily, “what has that to do with anything?”

“Just this,” said John, “Ellen White condemned it. Listen to all of her statements of condemnation:

“‘I was directed to this scripture as especially applying to modern spiritualism: Colossians 2:8: ‘Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.’ Thousands, I was shown, have been spoiled through the philosophy of **phrenology** and animal magnetism, and have been driven into infidelity. If the mind commences to run in this channel, it is almost sure to lose its balance and be **controlled by a demon.**’⁶⁰

“‘The sciences of **phrenology**, psychology, and mesmerism are the channel through which he [Satan] comes more directly to this generation and works with that power which is to characterize his efforts near the close of probation.

“‘**Phrenology** and mesmerism are very much exalted. **THEY ARE GOOD IN THEIR PLACE**, but they are seized upon by Satan as **his most powerful agents to deceive and destroy souls**. His arts and devices are received as from heaven, and faith in the detector, the Bible, is destroyed in the minds of thousands. Satan here receives the worship which suits his Satanic majesty. Thousands are conversing with, and receiving instructions from, this **demon-God** and acting according to his teachings. The world which is supposed to be benefited so much by **phrenology** and animal magnetism, never was so corrupt. **Satan uses these very things to destroy virtue and lay the foundation of spiritualism.**’⁶¹

⁵⁹ *Encyclopedia Britannica*, article on Phrenology.

⁶⁰ Ellen White, *Testimonies*, vol. 1, pp. 290, 296-297.

⁶¹ *Testimonies*, vol. 1, pp. 295-297

"Notice that in the last quote it says that phrenology and mesmerism are good in their place. Keep this statement in mind as we continue reading. For it all will make a little more sense after we examine a few more of her statements. As we read this next quote, one must remember that Ellen White is writing privately to some friends in 1864, having in the past condemned phrenology in her writings and has just asked Dr. Jackson, a phrenologist, to read her sons Willie and Edson's heads," John said, as he continued to read:

"'I think Dr. Jackson gave an accurate account of the disposition and organization of our children. He pronounced Willie's head to be one of the best that has ever come under his observation. He gave a good description of Edson's character and peculiarities. I think this examination will be worth everything to Edson.' ⁶²

"In 1893 at a camp-meeting Ellen White described more in depth regarding what she claimed God had shown her in vision clarifying her position, and what she claimed was God's position, regarding phrenology. In doing so she provided a key to understanding her other statements on the subject. She said:

"' A certain minister in California was tampering with phrenology, while carrying on the ministry, as a means of making money. He **falsified** in many respects, and discouraged souls by his course. He even said to some married couples that they were unfitted for each other. God never gave him such a commission. '

"'What I want to know is what kind of a heart have you. The devil had a splendid head, but he had an envious heart. There is no excuse for the rebellious heart that came in Satan, and that iniquity is unexplainable. '

"' Ministers are granted credentials that they may instruct people in the Word of God. And they can overcome their hereditary and cultivated tendencies. The phrenologist would tell them about marriages, etc., and confessions were made by women as they would confess to a Catholic priest.

⁶² Ellen White to Bro. and Sister Lockwood, Sep. 14, 1864, from Jackson's clinic in Dansville, New York, L-6-1864. For years this letter lay concealed and unreleased until a critic of Ellen White trumpeted its existence to such an extent that the White Estate realized it would cause more damage to not release it than to release it.

“...I have not one particle of faith in phrenology as it is **now handled**. ...It has **become** a fraud.

I said to a Brother Butler "God desires that you should preach His truth." But said he, "Look at my head, I have no power of faith, and I can never go and preach, and I am just as full of infidelity as I can be."

“But I told him that God had shown me that he should go and proclaim the message. He did go, and after he had labored some years he said, "Sister White the hollow in my head is all filled up." **It was** because he had been cultivating faith, and working in God's lines.

“You may say **it was due to phrenology**, but it was due to the transforming grace and power of God. Those who engage in this work of reading character by the head practice all kinds of deception under [the] profession of knowledge. [They] may try to reform character, but they never do it..’⁶³

“Notice dear,” said John, “how she says that the minister (that she mentions in the first paragraph who practiced phrenology) **“falsified”** his information that he gained from Phrenology and discouraged souls. Then she goes on to say that the devil had a splendid head. The context makes it plain that she is speaking of his head in a phrenological sense. But, he still had problems because, as the rest of the full quote above makes clear she seems to feel that phrenology is a valid science when carried on properly, however, it should never be allowed to exclude the power of God or any principle outlined in the Bible.” This seems to be what she is getting at. She then goes on to say that ‘The phrenologist would tell them about marriages, etc., and confessions were made by women as they would confess to a Catholic priest.’

“Again we see that the problem, according to her way of thinking, is not phrenology itself but rather the way things are handled in the practice of it. She says: ‘...I have not one particle of faith in phrenology as it is **now handled**. ...It has **become** a fraud.’

“Now we see the firm confirmation that her problem is not with the proper practice of Phrenology itself but with how the devil had taken hold of it and perverted it for his own purposes. She says she has no faith in phrenology as it is now handled. This implies that she does have faith in it if practiced rightly. Notice she next says” ‘It has **became** a fraud’ “This too indicates that it was originally not a fraud.

⁶³ Manuscript 12, 1893, pp. 4-7. ("A sermon at a camp meeting in New Zealand," March 28, 1893.)

For in order for something to become something it had to originally be something else and the only 'something else' to have been is not a fraud. If not a fraud then what is it? Something that is not a fraud is what? The only choice left is factual or in other words the truth. So Ellen White is saying that Phrenology was factual and true science when practiced correctly. Then we see her quote Elder Butler as saying: 'the hollow in my head is all filled up.' Then she goes on to say, '**It was** because he had been cultivating faith... You may say **it was due to phrenology...**' Elder Butler said that the Phrenological defect regarding his head, that tended to cause him lack of faith, had corrected itself by following the commands of God through Ellen White. Thus the shape of his skull now conformed to good phrenology. Ellen White does not disagree with this, rather she uses it as an example in her talk to explain her view point on phrenology and confirms Elder Butler's idea by saying: 'It was.' In other words his skull was filled in. Then she says why, 'because he had been cultivating faith.' She is saying that faith and Christian principles change phrenological symptoms that reveal natural tendencies of character. She is once again stating that phrenology is valid if practiced rightly. Lastly she realizes that her hostile audience, who had complained regarding a former speaker for condemning phrenology, might give all the credit of Elder Butler's improvement solely to his phrenological change of skull rather than to God's changing power. So she adds: 'You may say **it was due to phrenology**, but it was due to the transforming grace and power of God.' Once again we see that her concern is that phrenology not limit the power of God or be given the credit due to God's power. Not that phrenology was itself, if rightly practiced, wrong or factually mistaken.

"This explains how Ellen White could take her boys to have their heads examined by a Phrenologist and say the knowledge gained by it would be worth everything to her son Edson when she had already been writing against phrenology and condemning it as of the devil. If our conclusions were mistaken regarding this the only other choice would be to conclude that she was secretly going against her own counsel and consulting the devil through phrenology to get information to help her sons . This would make her the ultimate hypocrite. But the above quote we believe explains her real position. As I was researching this subject I at first thought she was just going against what she had written and was being a hypocrite. However, upon further thought and research I found that the above explanation makes far more sense. But, this leaves us with some serious problems

for Ellen White. First, she has indicated through this inspired testimony that phrenology was a valid science. She is stating this to her hearers who were living in a time when this was considered a science, who had just criticized another minister for speaking against phrenology, and were seeking light from God as to its validity. Ellen White claimed to speak on God's behalf with a message from God for them to answer their questions. But instead of telling them the basic truth that it is not even a valid science to start with which would have destroyed the very foundations of phrenology and cleared away the mist she beclouds the whole thing by indicating that it is a valid science thus promoting a falsehood in her testimony. Indeed, it is impossible for one to imagine that any of her audience could have left the meeting that day without the conviction that, despite her condemnation of the way it was practiced, her inspired statements confirmed and endorsed it as a valid science! This idea that she promotes is pure falsehood. Secondly, this quote also sheds light on the other quote we quoted earlier that contains these words "PHRENOLOGY AND MESMERISM ARE VERY MUCH EXALTED. THEY ARE GOOD IN THEIR PLACE, BUT THEY ARE SEIZED UPON BY SATAN.' Now this statement finally makes more sense. 'Phrenology is good in its place' fits in and confirms nicely what we have already discovered regarding her stance on the subject. For if phrenology is good in its place, it must not always be bad, but when it is in its place it must be good or at least okay. She says here that Phrenology is good under certain circumstances. She says it is 'seized upon by Satan'. This also explains and supports what we have already learned. While this certainly answers what she meant by phrenology being of Satan, what about Mesmerism? One notices in this quote that she also says the exact same thing regarding it. In fact it is paired so closely with Phrenology in this quote that one wonders if she does not have a similar view point on Mesmerism as we have seen she has on Phrenology.

John looked up from his notes to see if Lily was still listening. He noticed that her brow was creased in deep concentration as she twirled the end of one of her strands of hair.

Suddenly she looked up and said: "What is it John? Is there more?"

"Yes, there is. I just wondered if I had lost you with all this dry material."

"Oh no, John, all this research, at times, does take quite a bit of mental exercise and time. However, I am interested and it is very important. Please go on."

"That's good. I was just checking," John smiled as he said, "There is a quote that goes with the ones we have already read by Ellen White regarding Phrenology that sheds more light on the subject. It was in an article in the *Health Reformer*. In it she states that the animal organs of the brain will become heated by wearing wigs and cause one to become sensual. This seems to be a clear reference to the beliefs in phrenology of her day. The concept of different organs being in the brain that correlate with certain moral attributes and with the base, animal type passions, being in the base of the skull would seem to come from phrenology. Keep this in mind as I read the following passage:

"The artificial hair [wigs] and pads covering the base of the brain, heat and excite the spinal nerves centering in the brain. The head should **ever** be kept cool. The heat caused by these artificials induces the blood to the brain. **The action of the blood** upon the lower or animal organs of the brain, causes unnatural activity, tends to recklessness in morals, and the mind and heart is in danger of being corrupted. As the animal organs are excited and strengthened, the moral are enfeebled. The moral and intellectual powers of the mind become servants to the animal.

"In consequence of the brain being congested its nerves lose their healthy action, and take on morbid conditions, making it almost impossible to arouse the moral sensibilities. Such lose their power to discern sacred things. The **unnatural heat** caused by these artificial deformities about the head, **induces the blood to the brain, producing congestion, and causing the natural hair to fall off, producing baldness.** Thus the natural is sacrificed to the artificial.

"Many have lost their reason, and become hopelessly insane, by following this deforming fashion." ⁶⁴

"Notice she does not state that the reason for the wigs causing problems is poison given off by the wigs as some have claimed. Rather she gives a different and specific reason: it is the unnatural heat caused by the wigs that causes the blood to gather in certain organs of

⁶⁴ *Health Reformer*, October 1, 1871

the brain causing the nerves to be damaged thus causing all these problems. She prefaces all this by stating that ‘The head should ever be kept cool.’ Thus this passage seems to be setting forth a general principle that would apply to not just wigs but every situation that would cause, to use her terms, ‘unnatural heat’ to the head. That would cover much more than just wigs. She clearly seems to be teaching phrenological principles. It is obvious, and modern science confirms, that heat to the head does not cause these particular problems. Thus she was stating untruth and false information in what she claimed were inspired writings.

“What we have learned regarding what seems to be Ellen White’s true position regarding phrenology explains how she could promote phrenology here and still condemn it. But it also demonstrates once again her promoting, in what she claimed were inspired writings, phrenological scientific principles that she thought were true but over time has been proven false.

“Does God inspire his prophets and give them false information? Does he leave them in the dark and allow them to mislead his people?” John asked.

“Wow, it sure is sad and strange,” said Lily.

“I have to agree. It is just one more interesting and disturbing fact. Sweetheart, I just remembered I have to put up the goat before bed, so I better go and get it done,” John said.

“Okay,” Lily smiled. So John and Lily parted each with their disturbing thoughts. The answers to which seemed all the more elusive.



A Spirit and Broken Bones

John and Lily sat once again in John's study poring over papers. "Oh John, listen to this," Lily suddenly said:

"'Adventist beliefs have changed over the years under the impact of 'present truth.' Most startling is the teaching regarding Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Lord. Many of the pioneers, including James White, J. N. Andrews, Uriah Smith, and J. H. Waggoner, held to an Arian or semi-Arian view—that is, the Son at some point in time before the Creation of our world was generated by the Father. Only gradually did this false doctrine give way to the biblical truth... Likewise, the Trinitarian understanding of God, now part of our fundamental beliefs, was not generally held by the early Adventists. Even today a few do not subscribe to it.'⁶⁵

"And listen to this statement written by a prominent Adventist historian," Lily said:

"'Most of the founders of Seventh-day Adventism would not be able to join the church today if they had to subscribe to the denomination's Fundamental Beliefs. More specifically, most would not be able to agree to belief number 2, which deals with the doctrine of the Trinity. For Joseph Bates the Trinity was an unscriptural doctrine, for James White it was that 'old Trinitarian absurdity,' and for M. E. Cornell it was a fruit of the great apostasy, along with such false doctrines as Sunday keeping and the immortality of the soul. In like manner, most of the founders of Seventh-day Adventism would have trouble with fundamental belief number 4, which holds that Jesus is both **eternal**

⁶⁵*Adventist Review*, Jan. 6, 1994, p. 10-11

and truly God. For J. N. Andrews ‘the Son of God . . . had God for His Father, and did, at some point in the eternity of the past, have beginning of days.’ And E. J. Waggoner, of Minneapolis 1888 fame, penned in 1890 that ‘there was a time when Christ proceeded forth and came from God, . . . but that time was so far back in the days of eternity that to finite comprehension it is practically without beginning.’ Neither could most of the leading Adventists have agreed with fundamental belief number 5, **which implies the personhood of the Holy Spirit.** Uriah Smith, for example, not only was anti-Trinitarian and semi-Arian, **like so many of his colleagues, but also like them** pictured the Holy Spirit as ‘that divine, mysterious emanation through which They [the Father and the Son] carry forward their great and infinite work.’ On another occasion, Smith pictured the Holy Spirit as a ‘divine influence’ and not a ‘person like the Father and the Son.’ **Such misconceptions....helped pave the way for the pantheism that Waggoner and J. H. Kellogg taught around the turn of the century. Those misconceptions also probably helped set some Adventists up for the holy flesh heresy by the end of the 1890s.’**⁶⁶

“One can’t but notice, John, the last few lines of the above quote that states that if these false views on the God Head had not existed, the apostasy of Kellogg, as well as the holy flesh movement might not have happened. One can see the importance of the heresy of anti-Trinitarianism being corrected by rebuke and proper correction by God’s last day prophetess. So, one wonders why there never was any real rebuke, and why it took around 50 years of ministry before she wrote any solid statements on some of these subjects regarding the Godhead? Continuing on, we notice what the Adventist, Jerry Moon, who was a co-author of the book *The Trinity*, wrote:

“‘In 1846 James White dismissed the doctrine of the Trinity as ‘the old unscriptural Trinitarian creed.’ A century later, the denomination he co-founded voted its first official endorsement of a statement of "Fundamental Beliefs" that included reference to the Trinity. That a major theological shift occurred is no longer subject to debate. That most of the early leaders among Seventh-day Adventists held an antitrinitarian theology has become standard Adventist history.’”⁶⁷

⁶⁶*Ministry*, October, 1993, p. 10-15

⁶⁷ *The Adventist Trinity Debate*, part 2 by Jerry A. Moon, 2003

John sighed, "I do remember hearing something about some of the pioneers of Adventism not having something right regarding Jesus or God or the Holy Spirit or something, but I never gave it much thought and never realized it was so wide spread among them."

"Well, it seems it was not just a few pioneers who felt this way but for the most part the whole denomination was off on it." said Lily, " as M. L. Andreasen the great Adventist theologian said regarding Ellen White's book *Desire of Ages* when it first came out:

"... it contained some things that we considered unbelievable; among others the doctrine of the Trinity, which was not generally accepted by the Adventists then... I was particularly interested in the statement in *Desire of Ages* which at one time caused great concern to the denomination theologically: 'In Christ is life, original, unborrowed, underived'. That statement may not seem very revolutionary to you, but to us it was. We could hardly believe it. . . .

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Andreason speaking of this same statement of Ellen White's in his diary said:

"Especially was I struck with the now-familiar quotation in the *Desire of Ages*, page 530: In Christ is life, original, unborrowed, underived. This statement at that time was revolutionary and compelled a complete revision of my former view, and that of the denomination, on the deity of Christ."⁶⁹

"You notice that it says in the first quote by Andreason above that: 'the Trinity, which was not generally accepted by the Adventists then.' This plainly demonstrates that the whole denomination was off course. One can't but notice, John, how Andreasen and those around him were shocked that Ellen White would teach the Trinity in one of her books. Andreasen could hardly believe it. One must remember that these men were her contemporaries, were presumably well read in her writings, and yet they were certain that her past teaching was not the Trinity. This means that she either was a very poor communicator indeed, or had purposefully kept her position in

⁶⁸ M. L. Andreasen, "The Spirit of Prophecy," a chapel talk presented at Loma Linda, Calif., November 30, 1948. Also, essentially same words in a recorded sermon of M.L. Andreasen's in the possession of the author.

⁶⁹ Excerpts from M.L. Andreasen's Diary as quoted in *Without Fear or Favor: The Life of M.L. Andreasen*, by Virginia Steinweg.

extremely low profile in order not to rub other leaders in the church the wrong way, or she indeed taught at some point the wrong position on the subject. Look what her husband had to say about it:

“‘As fundamental errors, ... such as sprinkling for baptism, the trinity, the consciousness of the dead and eternal life in misery.’⁷⁰

“Here we might mention the Trinity, which does away [with] the personality of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ,’⁷¹

“‘The inexplicable Trinity that makes the God-Head three in one and one in three, is bad...’⁷²

“‘We invite all to compare the testimonies of the Holy Spirit through Mrs. W. [Ellen White], with the word of God. And in this we do not invite you to compare them with your creed. That is quite another thing. The Trinitarian may compare them with his creed, and because they do not agree with it, condemn them.’⁷³

“So, according to James White, as of 1871, his wife’s writings were anti-Trinitarian and might be rejected by a Trinitarian for being unscriptural. Next let’s see what the Adventist Church admitted in their 2009 Sabbath School Quarterly and how they attempt to explain some of this:

“‘At the same time, almost by herself, she [Ellen White] led the church from a semi-Arian (a belief that Jesus was not God) to a Trinitarian belief.’⁷⁴

“So while claiming that Ellen White corrected this error they admit that the whole church was off on the Trinity in this case, according to them, not believing that Jesus was God. The boldness of trying to foist this as a recommendation of Ellen White is amazing! But also very creative and demonstrates one way they attempt to deal with the issue. First, while it is true that changes were made to church doctrine because of new statements hidden in a few of her works that came out at the end of her life and that these statements upon being found by

⁷⁰ James White, *Review and Herald*, September 12, 1854, p. 36

⁷¹ James White, *Review and Herald*, December 11, 1855, p. 85

⁷² James White, *Review and Herald*, Nov. 29, 1877

⁷³ James White, *Review and Herald*, June 13, 1871

⁷⁴ January/February/March 2009 *Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide* Easy Reading Edition, p. 89, Lesson 12.

her devoted followers were indeed the catalyst for a change, that was about the extent of her efforts. No meaningful direct Testimony, public rebuke, or prominence was given to the subject. The prominent ministers who were teaching such heresy were never told to stop. This was totally out of character for Mrs. White who was known for her outspoken rebukes, published articles addressing issues, and direct testimonies on subjects of even minor importance. Further, it does not seem very genuine to claim she changed things single handedly when, as we will see, it was not accomplished until years after her death. But, the elephant in the room that is always ignored is that she allowed, in the first place, the denomination to go off and be off on this important fundamental doctrine of the Trinity for over fifty years of her ministry. Quite a problem for a prophet whose main purpose was to safe guard the remnant of God's people from falling into fanaticism and error. She once wrote:

"The Lord has seen fit to give me a view of the needs and errors of his people."⁷⁵

"Before going further it might be helpful to look at how the word Trinity has been often defined in the past. Some people go to Papal text books to define what Roman Catholics think one must believe in order to be Trinitarian. They let them define this theological term. They seem to not realize that this is similar to going to the Catholics for a theological definition of who Mary is. Yes, we all believe that she was the mother of Jesus but the details might be different. So it is with the Trinity. We all believe in the Trinity but not all of us have to believe necessarily quite the same in regard to the small details. Looking at the 1828 Webster Dictionary it says:

"TRINITY, n. [L. trinitas; tres and unus, unitas, one, unity.] In theology, the union of three persons in one Godhead, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit."⁷⁶

"This definition proves what the word Trinity meant to the general public in the United States in those days who were overwhelmingly protestant. Let's take a look at another quote by the great protestant Puritan theologian of the 1600's John Owen as to what the doctrine of the Trinity was to Protestants and what it meant to be Trinitarian at its most fundamental level. Let's remember that his book that I quote was

⁷⁵ *Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 14.

⁷⁶ *Webster's 1828 Dictionary* Entry Definition on the "Trinity."

widely reprinted and distributed by many different protestant groups to defend their position of the Trinity against those who denied it in their day. So it thus represents a general position of what many if not most Protestants believed at that time. He lays out what one must minimally accept in order to believe in the Trinity and be orthodox in the following words:

“In the first instance, no more, I say, is required of us, but that we assent unto the assertions and testimonies of God concerning himself... Now, the sum of this revelation in this matter is, that God is one; — that this one God is Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; — that the Father is the Father of the Son; and the Son, the Son of the Father; and the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of the Father and the Son; and that, in respect of this their mutual relation, they are distinct from each other. This is the substance of the doctrine of the Trinity, as to the first direct concernment of faith therein.”⁷⁷

“There are, indeed, very many other things that are taught and disputed about this doctrine of the Trinity.... Yet, because the distinct apprehension of them, and their accurate expression, is not necessary unto faith, as it is our guide and principle in and unto religious worship and obedience, they need not here be insisted on.”⁷⁸

Now let’s see what the Trinitarian John Wesley the Father of the Methodist church taught on the subject in his famous sermon entitled *The Trinity*:

“There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: And these three are one.

“I do not mean that it is of importance to believe this or that explication of these words. I know not that any well judging man would attempt to explain them at all.... I would insist only on the direct words, unexplained, just as they lie in the text: “There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: And these three are one.”⁷⁹

⁷⁷ John Owen, *The Doctrine of the Holy Trinity Explained and Vindicated*, Printed in 1669, p. 15

⁷⁸ Ibid., p. 42

⁷⁹ The Sermons of John Wesley No. 55, *The Trinity*

“So we can see what was considered the Trinity by many of that time and before. Now let’s get back to what Mrs. White said regarding her husband and his teaching:

“‘God has permitted the precious light of truth to shine upon His Word and illuminate the mind of my husband. He may reflect the rays of light from the presence of Jesus upon others by his preaching and writing.’⁸⁰

“Notice she said this about a minister who rejected the Trinity. She also endorsed another minister who taught error on this fundamental key doctrine on God. Regarding the book *Thoughts on Daniel and the Revelation* she said:

“‘God used the author of this book as a channel through which to communicate light to direct minds to the truth.’⁸¹

“And even clearer, ‘In *Desire of Ages, Patriarchs and Prophets, The Great Controversy*, and in *Daniel and the Revelation*, there is precious instruction. These books must be regarded as of special importance, and every effort should be made to get them before the people.’⁸²

“It is common knowledge that this very book that she is recommending, while being a wonderful book in many ways, also taught error in regard to the Godhead. Why did she not recommend this book with a reservation?

“The author of the above book, that Ellen White recommended, taught in his works that Jesus was not the ever-existent God come in the flesh to save us but was rather a created divine being in the past ages and only divine presumably because God the Father had made him so. He also taught in his books that the Holy Spirit was only a divine force rather than a being and was not part of the Godhead. Let’s see if she endorsed any of the other pioneers or if she issued a warning or correction specifically addressing this heresy like one would expect from a prophet of God on such an important fundamental topic:

⁸⁰ E. G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, p. 502, 1875

⁸¹ E.G. White, *Manuscript Release* Vol. 1, p. 63.1, *Thoughts on Daniel and the Revelation*, 1899

⁸² E.G. White, *Manuscript Release* vol. 21, p. 440.4, and Letter 229, 1903

“‘God has given me light regarding our periodicals. What is it?--He has said that the dead are to speak. How?--Their works shall follow them. We are to repeat the words of the pioneers in our work, who knew what it cost to search for the truth as for hidden treasure, and who labored to lay the foundation of our work. They moved forward step by step under the influence of the Spirit of God. One by one these pioneers are passing away. The word given me is, Let that which these men have written in the past be reproduced.’⁸³

“Notice what a blanket statement this is. Certainly, you would think that she would give some kind of pointed warning regarding this error. One can see that this is penned in 1905 after she had changed her position on the Trinity. How strange. One notices that while she did start teaching the Trinity in her books, in a very quiet way, in her later years, she never rebuked those who did not teach it, nor did she give a clear-cut testimony to the church stating that things had changed or that the Lord had given her light and the church’s doctrine needed to be altered. If she had, perhaps there would not be such confusion today in Adventism.

“How unbelievable that a supposed prophetess of God, inspired by the Holy Spirit, would leave her followers in errors that lowered Jesus to a merely created being who was made divine, pulled down the Holy Spirit from the Godhead making him a mere force, without correction for fifty-plus years of ministry. Especially is this strange when one remembers that many of those to whom she directed her writings had believed the Trinity before joining the Advent movement and had given up the Trinity. Even after more of the truth was finally proclaimed in her writings, the trumpet is only blown with a rather uncertain sound. No one is rebuked who keeps teaching these errors. And it continues to be a big controversy into the 1930s and 1940s. An example of this is an older minister who was baptized by James White at age twelve and, in the late 1930s, wrote a pamphlet that said:

“‘However kindly or beautiful or apparently profound his sermons or articles may be, when a man has arrived at the place where he teaches the heathen Catholic doctrine of the Trinity and denies that the Son of

⁸³ E.G. White, *Review and Herald*, May 25, 1905, “The Work For This Time”, address at the 1905 General Conference, May 16

God died for us, is he a true Seventh-day Adventist? Is he even a true preacher of the Gospel?' ⁸⁴

"It should be noted that the prominent Adventist minister that this older minister was condemning did believe that Jesus died for our sins but did not believe that Jesus was only the Son without being God too. He believed he was the Son and also was God. This older minister seems to feel that if one insists on Jesus' Godship, he is denying his Sonship.

"This pamphlet/letter was liked by an Adventist Conference president of that time so much that he distributed it to thirty-two of his ministers. Yet another illustration of the problems created by Ellen White's silence for so many years is brought out in this next quote by a prominent Adventist historian:

"'These statements [of Ellen White's on the Godhead] were all written in the decades following the writing of Smith's book and especially in the decade after his death (1903). He was therefore not acquainted with them.' ⁸⁵

"This shows that it was not until the end of her life that she made clear statements on the Trinity and also what darkness it left the pioneers and the church in, as heresy on the Godhead was allowed to be presented constantly before the people. According to the above historian, poor Elder Uriah Smith, and one presumes, many of the other pioneers, had a limited chance to read one of her offhanded statements teaching the truth in regard to the Godhead in one of her later books before they died.

"Even today there are many among Adventists who have these problems regarding the Godhead. The question is, why was this spirit that inspired Mrs. White silent, allowing many of God's people to leave the truth regarding the Godhead and go into false doctrine for so many years? Then, when it did finally speak out, it spoke in such an uncertain sound that would cause those in the denomination to struggle for years to get things straight. For that matter, one has to

⁸⁴ A letter/pamphlet written by J. S. Washburn in 1939. It should be noted that the prominent Adventist minister that Washburn was condemning (Elder Prescott) did believe that Jesus died for our sins but did not believe that Jesus was only the Son without being God too. He believed he was the Son and also was God. Washburn seems to feel that if this minister insists on Jesus' Godship, he is denying His Sonship.

⁸⁵ *Movement of Destiny* p. 424

ask, would the Holy Spirit, after hundreds of years of not giving a prophet or inspiration to any group of Christians, choose to give the special gift of prophecy and inspire one who was a member of a group that was lowering and speaking against the Holy Spirit and downing Jesus Christ by saying he was created and only divine because He was made so by the Father? Are not these teachings really a form of blasphemy? The Bible gives this interesting observation:

“Wherefore I say unto you, all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: **but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him**, neither in this world, neither in the world to come. Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by his fruit.’⁸⁶

“In light of the above verse, it would seem rather strange for the Holy Spirit to give the gift of prophecy to such a group of people, wouldn’t it? One notices that in the above verse, after pronouncing sentence on those who would speak against the Holy Spirit, it makes a call to make the fruit good or make it corrupt but not a mixture and muddying of the waters such as we see with Mrs. White not correcting these problems in the church.

“Unfortunately, not only did Ellen White not decidedly correct these problems, but during the years even after she changed her doctrine on the Trinity, she made statements that seemed to hearken back to her former position or at least were confusing and further muddled the waters for a church that was already struggling to understand how they could be, or if they were wrong for so many years with a real live prophet in their midst. But, before looking at some of those quotes, let’s look at the following quotes by a few prominent Adventist ministers of her day:

“‘The doctrine of the Trinity ... This doctrine destroys the personality of God, and His Son Jesus Christ our Lord.’⁸⁷

⁸⁶ Matt. 12:31-33

⁸⁷ J.N. Andrews, *Review and Herald*, March 6, 1855, p. 185

“‘Here we find that the Holy Spirit is both the Spirit of God and the Spirit of Christ.’⁸⁸

“‘The terms “Holy Ghost” are a harsh and repulsive translation. It should be “Holy Spirit” (hagion pneuma) in every instance. This Spirit is the Spirit of God, and the Spirit of Christ; the Spirit being the same whether it is spoken of as pertaining to God or Christ. But respecting this Spirit, the Bible uses expressions which cannot be harmonized with the idea that it is a person like the Father and the Son. Rather it is shown to be a divine influence from them **both**, the medium which represents their presence and by which they have knowledge and power through all the universe when not personally present.’⁸⁹

“‘The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God; it is also the Spirit of Christ. It is that divine, mysterious emanation through which they carry forward their great and infinite work.’⁹⁰

“As a side note: one sees that the last quote above by Smith was in the official G. C. Bulletin for 1891. This, one would think, for all practical purposes, presents an official declaration from the church. Last of all, look once again at what her husband taught the church:

“‘Here we might mention the Trinity, which does away [with] the personality of God, and of His Son Jesus Christ.’⁹¹

“Now that we have this background of what Adventists were hearing in sermons and in writings from their leaders, and what Mrs. White’s best friend, confidant, special helper, fellow founder of the movement, and husband, James White, believed and taught, let’s look at some statements she made in comparison:

“‘This refers to the omnipresence of the *Spirit of Christ*, called the *Comforter*.’⁹²

“‘Those who try to bring in theories that would remove the pillars of our faith concerning the sanctuary or concerning the personality of God or of Christ, are working as blind men.’⁹³

⁸⁸ E.J. Waggoner, *Christ and His Righteousness*, p. 23, 1890

⁸⁹ Uriah Smith, *Review and Herald*, October 28, 1890

⁹⁰ Uriah Smith, *GC Bulletin*, March 18, 1891, pp. 146, 147

⁹¹ James White, *Review and Herald*, December 11, 1855, p. 85

⁹² Ellen G. White, *14 Manuscript Release*, p. 179.2

"Ever wonder what Mrs. White meant when she said, '*or concerning the personality of God or of Christ*' in the above famous quote? Well, look at how her husband and the other pioneers used that phrase in the above quotes, and one can see why so many Adventists have had questions. In 1891, she had this to say:

"I have received yours dated June 3. In this letter you speak in these words: "Elder Robinson does not wish me to leave, but urges that I enter the canvassing field until such time as the conference can afford to employ me in some other capacity, but states positively that I cannot be sent out to present the truth to others until some points held by me are changed or modified in order that the views regarded by us as a people should be properly set forth." He quotes as a sample, "My idea in reference to the Holy Ghost's not being the Spirit of God, which is Christ."... My brother, you have asked me candidly for advice.... Brethren should not feel that it is a virtue to stand apart because they do not see all minor points in exactly the same light. If on fundamental truths they are at an agreement, they should not differ and dispute about matters of little real importance. To dwell on perplexing questions that, after all, are of no vital importance, has a direct tendency to call the mind away from truths which are vital to the saving of the soul.... The nature of the Holy Spirit is a mystery not clearly revealed, and you will never be able to explain it to others because the Lord has not revealed it to you....

"**It is not essential for you to know and be able to define just what the Holy Spirit is.** Christ tells us that the Holy Spirit is the Comforter, and the Comforter is the Holy Ghost, "the Spirit of truth, which the Father shall send in My name." "I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him: but ye know Him, for He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." [John 14:16, 17]. This refers to the omnipresence of the Spirit of Christ, called the Comforter. Again Jesus says, "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth" [John 16:12, 13]. There are many mysteries which I do not seek to understand or to explain; they are too high for me, and too high for you.... I hope that you will seek to be in harmony with the body.... You need to come into harmony with

⁹³ E.G. White, *Manuscript Release* 760 9.5, 1905

your brethren.... Here is your danger, of diverting minds from the real issues for this time.'⁹⁴

"One notes that at the beginning of the above quote, it states that the view regarded by us as a people was that the Holy Ghost was the Spirit of God, which is Christ. Looking at this phrase in comparison with the language used in Adventist literature of the time, such as the pioneers whom we have quoted elsewhere in this chapter, along with the quote by her son which follows below, shows this is the very terminology that the pioneers often used in describing the Holy Spirit as a mere force. Their teaching is why many of the early Adventists viewed the Holy Spirit as merely a force sent out from the Father and/or Son that was called the Spirit of God, which is Christ. The gentleman to whom the above was written had indeed mistaken ideas regarding exactly who the Holy Spirit was, thinking it was the angel, Gabriel. However, he was right in attributing it to a spirit being rather than a mere force, like it seems the denomination was doing at that time.

"But the point to notice is that when one questioned Ellen White regarding the denomination's current anti-Trinitarian doctrine on the Holy Spirit and asked for Mrs. White's input, she did not correct the church. Nor did she tell this man the truth regarding the Trinity and who the Holy Spirit was, which all the Protestant churches around her understood, or at the very least, understood much better. But rather, she told him to believe what the church was teaching at the time, which was anti-Trinitarian heresy. Mrs. White said in the above that the identity of the Holy Spirit is a mystery. Well, it sure is a mysterious thing if you don't believe it is a divine spirit being but merely some strange kind of force, like it would seem the SDA church of that time period generally believed. But one merely needed to look to the churches around them for the truth, or better still, get the truth from the Bible, which makes it plain enough.

"Mrs. White also says in the above quote that she does not consider the doctrine on what the Holy Spirit is to be fundamental or important. Unity appears to be more important. Yet, the doctrine of the Holy Spirit is acknowledged by every other Bible-believing Christian body to be fundamental to the Christian faith.⁹⁵ Also,

⁹⁴ Ellen G. White, *14 Manuscript Release*, p. 179.2

⁹⁵ This brings to mind a statement in the curriculum of *The School of Biblical Evangelism*, which is a non-denominational school representing Bible-believing Evangelicalism,

modern Adventists have it as part of their Fundamental Beliefs. So, they must at present think it is fundamental to their faith. Still more important, though, is the fact that the Bible, as we have seen, makes it plain that belittling God (Holy Spirit) and pulling Him down from divinity is far from trivial. It is rather a sin that shall not be forgiven if knowingly committed (Matt. 12:31-33).

“Further light is shed on the above quote by Ellen White when we examine the belief of her right-hand helper and probably the most knowledgeable authority on Ellen White’s writings ever to live, her very own son W. C. White. As noted in the chapter ‘Willie’s Secret Letter’ in this book, Ellen wrote that God would give W. C. White a special portion of His Spirit for his work and good judgment. For years, he and Ellen worked side by side, and who can doubt but she freely shared any insights and truths that she considered of any value with him? Who can doubt that he would cherish, or at the very least take into serious consideration, her statements? In 1935, at the very end of his life, he wrote:

“‘In your letter, you requested me to tell you what I understand to be my mother’s position in reference to the personality of the Holy Spirit. This I cannot do because I never clearly understood her teaching on the matter. There always was in my mind some perplexity regarding the meaning of her utterances which, to my superficial manner of thinking, seemed to be somewhat confused. ... There are many Scriptures which speak of the Father and the Son, and the absence of Scripture making similar reference to the united work of the Father and the Holy Spirit or of Christ and the Holy Spirit has led me to believe that the Spirit, without individuality, was the representative of the Father and the Son throughout the universe, and it was through the Holy Spirit that they dwell in our hearts and make us one with the Father and the Son.... The statements and the arguments of some of our ministers in their effort to prove that the Holy Spirit was an individual as are God, the Father, and Christ, the eternal Son, have perplexed me, and sometimes they have made me sad. ...’⁹⁶

“When we couple this quote with the one before it, it sheds much light on the former. It is hard to imagine that W. C. White would have held

which says: “...the doctrine of the Trinity is completely biblical, and it is essential that all Christians give assent to this doctrine.” (Lesson 48) A. W. Tozer: once said: “What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us.”

⁹⁶ Letter from W. C. White to H. W. Carr, April 30, 1935.

these views without his mother teaching error or at least not being clear on the subject. Certainly, she couldn't have considered it important enough to make much of it in her communications with her son. This would seem to be a generous view of the matter. Continuing on with Ellen White's statements on the Trinity, we read:

“Let them study the seventeenth of John, and learn how to pray and how to live the prayer of CHRIST. HE is THE Comforter. He will abide in their hearts, making their joy full.”⁹⁷

“As by faith we look to Jesus, our faith pierces the shadow, and we adore God for His wondrous love in giving **JESUS THE COMFORTER.**”⁹⁸

“Can anyone consider the condescension of God in preparing the gospel feast, and its great cost, and treat the invitation slightly? No man, nor even the highest angel, can estimate the great cost; it is known ONLY to the Father and the Son.”⁹⁹

“Let the brightest example the world has yet seen be your example, rather than the greatest and most learned men of the age, who know not God, nor Jesus Christ whom he has sent. **The Father and the Son ALONE are to be exalted.**”¹⁰⁰

“God informed Satan that to his Son *ALONE* he would reveal his secret purposes, and he required all the family in heaven, even Satan, to yield him implicit, unquestioned obedience.”¹⁰¹

“The ONLY Being who was one with God lived the law in humanity, descended to the lowly life of a common laborer, and toiled at the carpenter's bench with His earthly parent.”¹⁰²

“CHRIST the Word, the only-begotten of God, was one with the eternal Father,-one in nature, in character, and in purpose,-the ONLY being in all the universe that could enter into all the counsels and

⁹⁷ Ellen G. White, *Review and Herald*, January 27, 1903

⁹⁸ Ellen G. White, 19 *Manuscript Release*, p. 297.3

⁹⁹ Ellen G. White, *The Bible Echo*, October 28, 1895

¹⁰⁰ Ellen G. White, *The Youth's Instructor*, July 7, 1898

¹⁰¹ Ellen G. White, *Signs of the Times*, January 9, 1879

¹⁰² Ellen G. White, *Signs of the Times*, October 14, 1897

purposes of God. By Christ, the Father wrought in the creation of all heavenly beings.^{'103}

Comforter: "'This refers to the omnipresence of the Spirit of Christ, called the Comforter.'¹⁰⁴

"'Jesus comes to you as the Spirit of Truth; study the mind of the Spirit, consult your Lord, follow His way.'¹⁰⁵

"'The Father and the Son Alone are to be exalted.'¹⁰⁶

"'That which was truth in the beginning is truth now. Although new and important truths appropriate for succeeding generations have been opened to the understanding, the present revealings do not contradict those of the past. Every new truth understood only makes more significant the old.'¹⁰⁷

"'Satan in Heaven, before his rebellion, was a high and exalted angel, next in honor to God's dear Son.'¹⁰⁸

"'Never before had angels listened to such a prayer as Christ offered at his baptism, and they were solicitous to be the bearers of the message from the Father to his Son. But, no; direct from the Father issues the light of his glory. The heavens were opened, and beams of glory rested upon the Son of God, and assumed the form of a dove, in appearance like burnished gold. The dove-like form was emblematical of the meekness and gentleness of Christ.'¹⁰⁹

"One notices in the above quote how she says that God the Father issued his glory, and it assumed the form of a dove. This goes along nicely with the idea prevalent in Adventism of the time that the Holy Spirit was a mere force sent out from the Father and/or Son.

¹⁰³ Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 493

¹⁰⁴ E.G. White, *14 Manuscript Release*, p. 179.2

¹⁰⁵ E.G. White, *2 Manuscript Release*, p. 337.1

¹⁰⁶ E.G. White, *Youth Instructor*, July 7, 1898

¹⁰⁷ E.G. White, *Review and Herald*, March 2, 1886

¹⁰⁸ *1 Spirit of Prophecy*, p. 17

¹⁰⁹ *2 Spirit of Prophecy*, pp. 60-61

“It is interesting to note in the *Spirit of Prophecy* ¹¹⁰ books, which were the early edition of the *Conflict of the Ages* series, that they contain no mention of the third person of the Godhead or the Holy Spirit in the detailed accounts she gives of the Godhead and Satan’s struggle for a position in the Godhead. Nor does she mention the Holy Spirit in her detailed description of the counsels that she describes that the Father and Son had in heaven after the fall to figure out what to do to save mankind. As a side note, the Bible says that Christ was slain from the foundation of the world. Therefore, the God who can see the future had these talks with his Son to figure things out long before the fall and not after it. Doesn’t it seem rather unlikely that if God inspired her, He would have left out such important information regarding the Holy Spirit in these accounts? Especially considering that God’s people were in such error on the subject? Remember, Jesus when He returned to heaven promised that He would send the Holy Spirit to lead us into all truth.

“However, for argument’s sake, even if we were to assume that she did believe in the Holy Spirit being the third Person of the Godhead, the important fact still would remain that she never corrected God’s church in any meaningful way on this subject. Rather, she let many go into apostasy and blaspheme God for so many years.

“As we study this subject, it is important to remember the basic view that Jesus has voluntarily taken a submissive role to the Father in the Godhead, but that does not make him a lesser God or less equal or less powerful. The same holds true of the Holy Spirit.

“We must ask the question: isn’t it important to know if God and Christ are equal, ever existent, or if Jesus is some sort of created lower God? Isn’t it important to know if we have a Trinity with the Holy Spirit included in the Godhead or if the Holy Spirit is some non-entity and only a force of Jesus and God the Father? In other words, is it not important to know whom to worship? Certainly, God would have corrected such errors. But it was never corrected. Why would God also tell her to recommend the anti-Trinitarian writings of the pioneers, like we saw above? Is all this the fruit one would expect from a true prophet of God?

“It is interesting to note what one prominent Adventist historian had to say:

¹¹⁰ While the *Spirit of Prophecy* books were the forerunner of the *Conflict of the Ages* series, they have always been considered by Adventists as inspired as the later books.

“‘The next logical and inevitable step in the implementing of our unified fundamental beliefs involved revision of certain standard works, so as to eliminate statements that taught, and thus perpetuated erroneous views on the Godhead. Such sentiments were now sharply at variance with the accepted fundamental beliefs set forth in the Church Manual.’”¹¹¹

“The above is referring to the late 1930s and 1940s when this anti-Trinitarian heresy was finally purged from the older material that was still in print. It demonstrates just how much of a struggle the church had with this issue—an issue that might have been much smaller and easier had the spirit that inspired Mrs. White inspired a Testimony directly addressing the subject.

“But one of the strongest indicators of the problem of early Adventism in regard to the Godhead was the lack of substance of the 1872 statement of Fundamental Principles put out by the Adventist church. Look how weak they are in the area of the Godhead. This is yet one more strong indicator of the problem Adventism was having at the time in this area. For if they were not having these issues, you can be sure they would have had an explicit statement on the Godhead that would leave no doubt who was in it, like all the other traditional Bible-believing churches around them had. Notice the following:

“‘I--That there is one God, a personal, spiritual being, the creator of all things, omnipotent, omniscient, and eternal, infinite in wisdom, holiness, justice, goodness, truth, and mercy; unchangeable, and everywhere present by his representative, the Holy Spirit. Ps. 139:7.

“‘II--That there is one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Eternal Father, the one by whom God created all things, and by whom they do consist; that he took on him the nature of the seed of Abraham for the redemption of our fallen race; that he dwelt among men full of grace and truth, lived our example, died our sacrifice, was raised for our justification, ascended on high to be our only mediator in the sanctuary in Heaven, where, with his own blood, he makes atonement for our sins; which atonement, so far from being made on the cross, which was but the offering of the sacrifice, is the very last portion of his work as priest, according to the example of the Levitical

¹¹¹ *Movement of Destiny*, p. 422

priesthood, which foreshadowed and prefigured the ministry of our Lord in Heaven. See Lev. 16; Heb. 8:4, 5; 9:6, 7; etc.’¹¹²

“Notice that after saying in article one that there is one God, it does not specify who this God is. Is it just the Father, like one would assume, or is it something else?¹¹³ One notices that it does not include Jesus or the Holy Spirit. It only says the Holy Spirit is God’s way of being ‘everywhere present by his representative, the Holy Spirit.’ This would seem to fit with many Adventists of the 1800s who were saying that the Holy Spirit was a mere force or power from God that acted as God’s representative. This is all it says regarding the Holy Spirit in this whole statement of belief, excepting only one other later article where it says the Spirit can inspire a prophet. Why is not the Holy Spirit clearly made part of the Godhead and stated clearly to be divine, like we find in other statements of belief by every other Bible-believing Christian group of the time that believed in the three members of the Godhead? Is this not strange, if they were really teaching the truth, that the Holy Spirit is divine and part of the Godhead? No other group teaching the truth on this subject is so vague in their statements of faith. Now let’s look at Article 2. It says that Jesus is the Son of the Eternal Father and that God the Father did

¹¹² 1872, *Fundamental Principles*, p. 4-5

¹¹³ One prominent author in the Historic Adventist movement has tried, in a book he has written on the Godhead, to twist this statement, as it appears unchanged in the *Fundamental Principles* of 1889, and says this is teaching the Trinity. He attempts to accuse Uriah Smith and other leaders of apostasy by putting it, he insinuates for the first time, in our *Fundamental Principles* of 1889. That writer reveals his lack of honesty or at least thorough research by apparently not being aware of the earlier 1872 statement of belief (quoted above in this book) and that the article in question on God was first written in this 1872 document, which James White apparently approved. The Adventist writer also seems to not be aware or take into account the fact that Uriah Smith, whom he insinuates had much to do with the production of the 1889 statement of beliefs, was very anti-Trinitarian in his beliefs, even denying that the Holy Spirit is God or even a being at all. This we have shown by quotes earlier in this chapter. The Adventist author tries to spin this statement on God into a Trinitarian statement on the Godhead, blaming Uriah Smith and other leaders of the time for its inclusion. Given Uriah Smith’s documented views on the Trinity, it would be impossible to imagine that he would approve of such a document if it really taught such a thing, let alone have been involved in originating it. Also, as the Adventist author even admits himself, it would be strange if it did teach the Trinity since no other literature of the denomination at the time taught that doctrine. I must say that it would seem much more logical and reasonable to take this statement on God in the 1872 and 1889 *Fundamental Principles* exactly how it reads, as well as considering the light cast, by the testimony of Andreasen and others, on the subject. This attempt by this Adventist author to put a spin on things illustrates a problem that Adventist historians, it would seem, too often have had, and that is to twist things, whether intentionally or not, to fit their preconceived ideas.

supernatural things through him, such as creation. But notice what is missing. It never says that He is a part of the Godhead or actually on the same level as God the Father. Nor does it say that he was forever eternal. In fact, it does not even say that He is divine. After all, God has done many supernatural things through mere prophets. The point is, why is this statement on the Godhead so non-descriptive on this issue? Best case scenario is that there was so much bedlam of false views on the subject of the Godhead that the authors of this statement did not want to shut anyone out. Worst case scenario, and the more likely one, is that they were actively teaching false doctrine on the Godhead as a denomination. Either way, it makes no difference. The important part is the fact that there was much false teaching on this subject and Mrs. White allowed it, without meaningful rebuke, to be proclaimed and believed for years and years, thus deceiving many converts to Adventism, who had believed the truth, or at the minimum (for the sake of argument) more of the truth regarding the Godhead, before joining the church and causing them to throw it aside.

“How strange that a supposed true prophetess would have writings that, according to her husband, taught anti-Trinitarianism. Yet, we know that at the very end of her ministry she taught the Trinity. How strange indeed and sad that she never ever, in a meaningful way, reproved or corrected those around her who publicly were teaching the heresy of denying the Trinity. Does God change? Does God promote error by silence? Isn’t all this worth considering in prayer?”

“Well, isn’t that surprising, John?” Lily exclaimed.

“I would say it is,” John said. “It seems like blasphemy to teach such things about God. I just never knew all this before.”

Lily smiled. “I know I had never heard of it either. But the important thing to keep in mind is that even if there were justifiable answers to most of the details and facts mentioned above, it would not solve the real issue. It boils down to the fact that no matter what she believed personally or even if it could be proved that the church officially taught the truth on these subjects, the question still would remain: why is it that she never ever rebuked in a meaningful public manner the prominent false views being propagated by so many prominent ministers on the Godhead, and where are the Testimonies of warning to the church on this matter? Where are the clear-cut Testimonies and teaching on the subject one would expect, and that Ellen White exhibited on other issues that she thought were important for all

those first fifty years of her ministry? In other words, why did she allow the church to go into and be in error for so many years?"

"Yes, those are definitely astounding questions," said John. "But I see you have something else there as well. What is it?"

Lily looked surprised. "Well, in fact, I do have something else I came across. If you want to hear it, I would be happy to share it."

"I sure would like to," John said. "Well, here it is," said Lily, and she began to read:

"Some women have naturally small waists. But rather than regard such forms as beautiful, they should be viewed as defective. These wasp waists may have been transmitted to them from their mothers, as the result of their indulgence in the sinful practice of tight-lacing, and in consequence of imperfect breathing.' ¹¹⁴

"And then remembering that we as Adventists, as well as traditional Christianity, have considered any quote that an inspired writer chooses to endorse by putting it into the inspired writings as being invigorated at that point by inspiration due to the prophet under the direction of God choosing to make it a part of the inspired writings, let's read the following statement that she included and made part of her inspired testimony:

"But my waist is naturally slender,' says one woman. She means that she has inherited small lungs. Her ancestors, more or less of them, compressed their lungs in the same way that we do, and it has become, in her case, a congenital deformity. This leads us to one of the worst aspects in the whole matter -- the transmitted results of indulgence in this deadly vice.' ¹¹⁵

"Well, what is wrong with that?" John said. "We all know restricting the waist is not healthy!"

"But, honey," said Lily, "it is well known that this idea of parents being able to pass major physical changes (such as shorter arms due to a parent having an amputated arm) on to their children was a popular concept of the 1800s. One of the most common illustrations of this concept that she is promoting is often stated this way: if one took a rat and cut off its tail and did that for many generations eventually they would start being born with shorter tails and finally without a tail.

¹¹⁴ *Health Reformer* Nov. 1, 1871

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*

That's the same as what she is saying here, but instead of tails, it is a woman's waist being squeezed and that smallness being passed on. But it is based on the same principle. It actually comes from a theory known as Lamarckianism. It was the forerunner of the theory of Evolution, and it inspired Charles Darwin to finish developing it into his theory of Evolution. Lamarckianism has been disproven by modern science, as this next quote demonstrates:

"Darwin believed in Jean Lamarck's theory that the giraffe got its long neck by stretching to reach higher branches of trees. Fredrich Weismann disproved Lamarckianism with his experiments with mice. He cut off the tails of 901 mice for 19 generations. But the baby mice always had full tails."¹¹⁶

"Furthermore," Lily said, "it does not make sense to me because practical observation contradicts it."

"Think about it, John. The Flat Head Indians of the United States, for generations into the unknown reaches of the past, artificially flattened the heads of their children, yet when the white man came on the scene, they were still born with a normal head that had to be artificially flattened. Then one thinks of the Jews who have circumcised their boys for thousands of years, yet today their baby boys have no shorter foreskin than any gentile baby, and they still require as much circumcision. Last of all, women today no longer wear corsets, as a general rule, and haven't for generations, yet there are still women with real small waists around. So, you see, John, practical observation and commonsense would seem to indicate this concept of the 1800s and Ellen White's is wrong."

"That makes so much sense. But it is also shocking and disturbing. When I was a teenager, I read Mrs. White's writings and accepted her views on this subject without thinking much about it because she is supposed to be inspired. Now I learn that she was teaching me concepts taken from the forerunner of the theory of Evolution! I just don't know what to say. But I do know that I am glad you're my helpmeet and wife. I would have missed that. He looked lovingly at her. Lily lifted her eyes to meet his, and John felt like the luckiest man alive to have such a special wife! "Well," Lily said, "I can understand how surprised you are. But it seems there is no end to these surprises. Let's keep studying to see what else we find."

¹¹⁶ *An Unshakeable Faith*, p.196, David Cloud, 2015

“Sure thing,” said John as he picked up a book. Several hours went by, and then John spoke up, “Hey, Lily, listen to this:

“‘The mother of Jesus was agonized, almost beyond endurance, and as they stretched Jesus upon the cross, and were about to fasten his hands with the cruel nails to the wooden arms, the disciples bore the mother of Jesus from the scene, that she might not hear the crashing of the nails as they were driven through the bone and muscle of his tender hands and feet.’¹¹⁷

“Now listen to how it was changed when the book was remade into the *Desire of Ages* years later:

“‘His hands stretched upon the cross; the hammer and the nails were brought, and as the spikes were driven through the tender flesh....’¹¹⁸

“You will notice that the first quote says that the nail was driven through the bone, which would have broken his bones. While the second one was written when she had more secretarial help and years to analyze what she had written in *Spiritual Gifts* and was changed to just the flesh,” John said.

“Why would she make such a change? Isn’t it nice to know that the bones were crushed? It would seem that everything that God reveals is important,” Lily exclaimed.

John looked sadly but lovingly at his wife. “Darling, what you may not be remembering is that Christ is only the true proven Messiah if he fulfills all the Old Testament prophecies regarding him. One of those prophecies says his bones will not be broken. He was to be the true sacrificial lamb, and the typical lamb could not have any bones broken. So, Jesus, as the Antitypical Lamb, could not have any broken bones. So this statement of Ellen White’s, if true, would prove that Jesus is nothing but an imposter and also make His sacrifice inadequate for making an atonement for our sins. For the requirement, as specified, was a perfect sacrifice with no broken bones. Thus, it would seem that this is why she changed it in 1898 when *Desire of Ages* came out.”

¹¹⁷ *Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 1, p. 58, printed in 1858

¹¹⁸ *The Desire of Ages*, p. 744, printed in 1898

Lily looked at John with shock! “I thought I was through with being surprised, but finding all this out makes me shocked all over again. It was such a beautiful-sounding passage that I never noticed or thought about it when you read it. It is hard to believe that she could have made such a mistake as even a normal writer, let alone a prophetess. After all, now that I think about it, doesn’t the New Testament cite the fact of his bones not being broken, as proof of the fulfillment of that Old Testament prophecy regarding the Messiah?”

“Yes, it does, and I will read it to you.” John turned the pages of his Bible and read:

“‘For these things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken.’”¹¹⁹

“But how can we trust all the extra Biblical and spiritual insights that she brings out in her writings if she has gotten these things wrong that we have discovered? Not all things can we test. Who can test things that are spiritual and know what she has right?” asked Lily.

John slowly turned again in his Bible as he said, “Well, that is the question. It reminds me of what Jesus said,” and he began to read:

“‘If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things?’”¹²⁰

“That’s how God builds faith in His Word. By telling us small earthly things that we can test and that prove true. Our faith is then built, and we are led to have faith in the eternal things that are written that we can’t test.”¹²¹

Lily once again shook her head sadly, “What are we to do, John?”

“I don’t know. But we must keep on trying to get answers to all this,” John said.

¹¹⁹ John 19:36

¹²⁰ John 3:12

¹²¹ This principle is further demonstrated in Scripture in the manner God dealt with calling Saul to the throne. When Samuel first informed Saul privately that God had chosen him, Samuel foretold what would occur on Saul’s journey home. This was done in order that when Saul saw the accuracy and truth of these earthly revealed things, that he could test, he would have his faith established and built up to believe what he could not test, that is, the claim and truth that God had indeed chosen him to be king.

Lily yawned. "I am tired. Wow," she said, looking at the clock, "We had better go to bed!"

"Yes, we must," agreed John.

"And it shall come to pass, that when any shall yet prophesy, then his father and his mother that begat him shall say unto him, Thou shalt not live; for thou speakest lies in the name of the LORD: and his father and his mother that begat him shall thrust him through when he prophesieth." Zech. 13:3

FALSE PROPHETS

1. False prophets are inspired by the lying spirit, which, of course, comes from the father of lies. John 8:44; 2 Chron. 18:18-23; Acts 16:16, 18.

2. They believe this lying spirit is the Lord's spirit. 2 Chron. 18:22, 23; Matt. 7:22, 23. (*Bible Doctrines*, by O. A. Johnson, an Adventist Bible doctrines text book for the tenth grade printed in 1911.)

"Whatever contradicts God's word, we may be sure proceeds from Satan." (Ellen White, *Patriarchs & Prophets* p. 55)

"By inspiration God so guides and controls man that his writing even of things not revealed is precise and accurate.... Inspiration is the means by which God, in carrying out His saving purpose, not only makes facts or truths known to men, but also confers the ability to convey these facts accurately to others" (*The Bible is it a True Book?*, 1927 Edition, p. 67-73 by Carlyle B. Haynes, one of the most prominent Seventh-Day Adventist evangelists, authors, and administrators of the 1920's-1940's.)

"Are inspired Writings sometimes correct and sometimes incorrect? The answer to this question posed by this chapter heading is an emphatic Yes!- if they are

writings inspired by Satan. Eve first discovered in her first contact with him, the fact that Satan, often cleverly, united truth and error.” (*The Greatest of all the Prophets*, p. 99 by Adventist authors, Dr. Russell R. Standish & Dr. Collin D. Standish.)



Prophetess of Worms, and Plagues

As John lay in bed that night, his mind kept twirling. He just couldn't get over the new things he and Lily had learned that day. It was beginning to make him wonder about an anomaly in Ellen White's prophecies that he had known about for many years but had thought had been answered. But now, after the other mistakes that he had discovered in her writings, he was beginning to wonder if perhaps it was, after all, a serious problem. At least, he thought to himself, I really should take a second look and make sure it has really been answered. His mind kept turning things over and over. Finally, in the early morning hours, he drifted off into a fitful sleep. The next morning, after his morning duties were done and the breakfast dishes were cleared and washed, he headed for his study. Hours went by. Finally, he slowly got up and went out and did the evening chores. That night, after the children were in bed, he and Lily found their accustomed spot on the loveseat near the stove. John turned down the lights, leaving just one lamp on nearby to read by. Slowly he took out his notes. "Dear, I thought you might like to hear what I was researching today regarding Ellen White."

"Oh yes. I would love to!"

"It's about a failed prophecy that Ellen White had in 1856. My notes start by quoting the important part of the vision. I'll read it to you:

"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."¹²²

"As you know, Lily, all those people from the 1856 conference are dead. None were subjects of the seven last plagues, and none were translated."

"Oh, John, I have known about that my whole life. I thought there was some kind of an answer for it," Lily exclaimed! "Yes, I know. I learned about it years ago too when I was a teenager, and though I couldn't believe that her prophecy had failed, there were explanations that seemed to answer it at the time. Those explanations went something like this: All of God's prophecies are conditional upon our actions and free will. Only a few prophecies are non-conditional, like Jesus someday coming. Jonah is pointed to as a prophet who, they claim, had a failed prophecy like this one of Ellen White's. The Israelites not going into Canaan immediately and having to wait forty years in the wilderness for that generation to die is another example that they give. They also quote Jeremiah:

"'At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it; If that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them. And at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it; If it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good, wherewith I said I would benefit them.'¹²³

"Notice in the above verse that there has to be an obvious, noticeable, and distinct change in the nation before God repents. This is a very important biblical pattern that has to be present in order for this principle to apply to a prophecy of the Lord."¹²⁴

¹²² Vol. 1 *Testimonies*, p. 131-132

¹²³ Jer. 18:7-10

¹²⁴ Apologists for Ellen White also try to twist the experience of Isaiah delivering the private personal message to Hezekiah that he would die. They say it is an example of a failed prophecy. However, certain facts should be kept in mind. This was a private personal message that concerned only the king. We see a big change in the picture when the king does the obvious prominent action of crying out to God for mercy. Immediately, the prophet is told to openly inform the audience (the king) which had heard his first message from God, that God had changed His mind. This Isaiah does in a matter of minutes after delivering his first message and long before the first message fails to come to pass. The audience of the message is never left "scratching his head," wondering what happened or thinking it was a failed vision. In fact, no one would even consider it a failed prophecy if they were not sitting in some "ivory tower" and

“The defenders of Ellen White infer that the spiritual condition of the Adventist people changed and noticeably declined over the years after this vision was given and that if they had kept the spiritual state that they were in when the vision was given, then God would have come years before Ellen White died. This prophecy of Ellen White’s was conditional, and almost all prophecy is, they claim. In other words, God really does not mean what He says in Deuteronomy: ‘But the prophet, which shall presume to speak a word in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods, even that prophet shall die. And if thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the word which the LORD hath not spoken? When a prophet speaketh in the name of the LORD, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the LORD hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him.’ ¹²⁵

“After all, about the only prophecy that I have ever heard apologists of Ellen White cite as examples of prophecies that are not conditional is Jesus returning someday at some point in time and maybe prophecies of Christ’s first coming. But obviously, if these were the only prophecies that could be used to test a prophet, then the formula of testing would be practically worthless. For no one would live long enough from the time that these prophecies were given of Christ’s first coming until the actual event to be able to determine the validity of a prophet and punish him with death if false. Nor could God be intending for them to wait until his second coming to be able to validate a prophet. While it is obvious that some prophecies are conditional, to put almost all prophecy under such a category in the way that is done in these explanations would make this test in Deuteronomy useless for all practical purposes. No false prophet could fail this main explicitly stated test of a prophet. They would just

determined, come what may, to find a defense for their prophetess. This prophecy of Isaiah was not a conditional prophecy. But by extreme petition and entreaties of His faithful servant, God was prevailed upon to change His mind. “The prayers of a righteous man availed much.” However, such prayers never cause God to let one of His prophecies that He inspires fail. To call this a failed prophecy is certainly stretching things to the point of insulting the intelligence of their reader. If, upon relating her vision, there had been a calling out to God with tears asking Him to alter the vision, and if Ellen White had at that time related that God had accepted their prayers and granted them mercy in changing His mind, then it would be comparable. If this had happened, one can be sure no one would have ever had any questions regarding her 1856 prophecy.

¹²⁵ Deut. 18:20-22

say, 'Well, you have to understand, that was conditional. Just about all prophecy has a conditional aspect.' Yet, God says that those in the Old Testament had a right and duty to kill a prophet if their prophecies failed to come to pass. Let us remember that this was not only scripture, but this part of scripture was designed by God to be the legal Law of the Hebrew nation. Hebrew judges, with no other books than the first five books of Moses, for centuries sat and passed judgment on those who claimed to be prophets and others using only these books. Legal laws must be precise and would have been interpreted by a Hebrew judge by the letter. So, while we need to take into consideration the aspect of possible conditionality in a prophecy and be fair, let's also be careful about making of none effect this test of a prophet and throwing out the Word of God.

"As I mentioned earlier, they use the fact of God not leading the original generation that came out of Egypt into the Promised Land as an example of a 'failed' prophecy. You will remember that all through the journey from Egypt, the Hebrew Nation grumbled, had no faith in God, and even worshiped the Golden Calf at Sinai. Later, after the forty years wandering while on the borders of Canaan, they committed whoredom and worshiped idols at Baalpeor. Yet, for all this major apostasy and wickedness, God did not change his mind or keep them out of the Promised Land. It took something really major, something that stuck out like a sore thumb. It was an event that left no one scratching their heads, wondering what had happened or if God had allowed one of his prophecies to fail. You remember the story: how at the edge of the Promised Land, spies were sent out, and most of them brought back an evil report. The people went crazy with rebellion and anger, anger at Moses, anger at God. They demanded to die in the wilderness, and in flagrant open rebellion, while shaking their fists at God, they attempted to take the lives of the only two men, other than Moses, who dared to even suggest that they should obey God and go into Canaan. They refused to take the gift God had promised to give them. It was under this unmistakable circumstance that God said that he had changed his mind and called it his 'breach of Promise.'

"However, while God did intend for that original generation to enter Canaan, and He could not because of the extreme change in the people towards evil, He did not even then nullify the actual letter of his original promise. Let's take a look at it:

""Say unto them, As truly as I live, saith the LORD, as ye have spoken in mine ears, so will I do to you: Your carcasses shall fall in this wilderness; and all that were numbered of you, according to your

whole number, from twenty years old and upward, which have murmured against me, Doubtless ye shall not come into the land, concerning which I swore to make you dwell therein, save Caleb the son of Jephunneh, and Joshua the son of Nun. But your little ones, which ye said should be a prey, them will I bring in, and they shall know the land which ye have despised.... After the number of the days in which ye searched the land, even forty days, each day for a year, shall ye bear your iniquities, even forty years, and ye shall know my breach of promise. I the LORD have said, I will surely do it unto all this evil congregation, that are gathered together against me: in this wilderness they shall be consumed, and there they shall die.’¹²⁶

“Notice that God is granting their request. He is removing the promise that they have asked him to remove. As one looks at what God originally promised, one notices that God still kept the letter of the promise and prophecy. No one would look at it and call it a failed prophecy. Let’s read it now:

“‘And I have said, I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt unto the land of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, unto a land flowing with milk and honey.’¹²⁷

“This promise was made to Israel as a nation. No reasonable person would interpret it any other way by reading the prophecy. This prophecy did come true according to the letter. God did bring in the nation of Israel to the Promised Land. Notice God never said when he would do it or how long it would take. He never specified a certain generation and said that He would lead them in, like Ellen White did with her vision. Because God could see the future, he stated it in such a way that it would still be viewed as a prophecy that was fulfilled. Last of all, note that God did bring in a good share of those who first heard the prophecy. Caleb and Joshua went in, and also all who were under twenty years of age. That is quite a number of those who came out of Egypt. In fact, it was probably the majority.

“Most families in those days were made up of more children than adults. People at that time also got married very young and had many children. So, it is likely there were many young married couples under twenty who came out of Egypt and probably some who also had children. God took them into Canaan. I can’t help thinking of my own great-grandfather who was 18 when my grandfather was born. God

¹²⁶ Numbers 14:28-35

¹²⁷ Exodus 3:17

was very generous. It is hardly fair to compare this with Ellen White's vision. Rather, what God is speaking of when he mentions the 'breach of his promise' is the spirit of the promise, or rather his ideal intent, rather than the letter of the promise or prophecy. Even more importantly, one should notice that even when God did change the spirit of his promise, he did it not because of a small or even an occasional large sin, but only after there was something huge and definite that would leave no question in anyone's mind who reads these prophecies as to why there was a change. These changes seem sensible, reasonable, and don't even cause the reader to have a fleeting thought that this is a failed prophecy, which is hardly the case with Ellen White's prophecy under discussion. Last but not least, notice that God addressed this prophetic promise very specifically and explained why it was modified. This is another pattern that we should notice. This we do not see in Ellen White's vision. Never does she address her vision and say that it is nullified. In fact, the Adventist church and, it would appear, Ellen White thought this prophecy was valid and would take place clear up to and past the time of her death. For she never informed anyone that this prophecy was nullified, even when late in life ministers spoke to her regarding this vision. "Now let's take a closer look at their example of Jonah. We all know the story of how Jonah ran from God and refused to go to Nineveh to prophesy against the city. Some apologists of Ellen White's have speculated that Jonah was running because he was afraid that he would lose face if his prophecy did not come true. However, other Bible students have felt that since Nineveh was a great enemy of Israel and Jonah was a Jew, he, like most Jews, was probably naturally endowed with prejudice against Gentiles and had patriotism for his people. He felt that if he did not go, then the Ninevites could not be warned; therefore, they would not repent, and God would be sure to destroy them. After all, this thinking would go nicely with one who really thinks he can run from God. It also agrees nicely with the great hatred all the nations had for the cruel Assyrians. Anyway, the Bible does not reveal why he disliked the fact that God might repent, and it is useless to speculate on it. But it is important to realize that there is more than one possibility. "As we read the book of Jonah, we should take note of Jonah 3:4. It says:

""And Jonah began to enter into the city a day's journey, and he cried, and said, Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown." ¹²⁸

¹²⁸ Jonah 3:4

“The Hebrew word haphak, which is translated ‘overthrown,’ also means to overturn, to be changed, to be converted.’”¹²⁹

“So, Jonah’s prophecy contained a play on words, so if the people repented and God had mercy, the prophecy would still be true by the letter of the prophecy. Just like in the case of Israel’s delay in entering the Promised Land, God made even the letter of the prophecy to still be accurate. However, it is also obvious that the prophecy of Jonah was conditional. Jonah always considered it thus, which is why he ran from God in the first place. But would the average reader ever think Jonah’s prophecy was a failed prophecy if not informed by someone in some ivory tower? It seems unreasonable to think so. We see a BIG CHANGE in the people. No one has to guess at it. It is not even debatable. It is a situation that God could hardly ignore. To ignore it and proceed with destroying the Ninevites would have been unthinkable for what we know about God. It was a case where everything is so spelled out that no reasonable person would ever even question it. And just to make sure, God himself addresses and explains it in the book of Jonah where the prophecy was recorded. To be comparable to Ellen White’s prophecy under discussion, the story of Jonah would have to go something like this:

“Jonah prophesied that the city would be destroyed. The people made some nice comments to him. They complimented him on his work as a prophet and continued on as they always had without any change. After forty days, the city was not destroyed, and no explanation is ever given for it. The reader is left to figure it out. I can guarantee that if this were the case, commentators would have spent much time on the book of Jonah to try and answer the many questions that just about every reader of the Bible would have regarding it. However, the facts are quite different. No one reading Jonah questions whether Jonah is a real prophet from God, nor do they have any questions about the situation. Yet would there be anyone who, having read Ellen White’s vision for the first time, wouldn’t be in shock and have serious doubts and questions? They would have these questions even if they had read everything else that Ellen White had ever written. “Once again, we see the same pattern with Jonah’s prophecy as we saw with God delaying the Children of Israel entering the Promised Land – God making it clear as to what has happened. Once again, we do not find this in Ellen White’s failed prophecy. The closest she comes to it is towards the end of her ministry, when many began to question her as

¹²⁹ *White Washed*, by Sydney Cleveland.

to why her past statements of Christ's quick return had not seemed to materialize; she indicated that it is the people's fault, not hers. They have lost their first love and not been faithful enough, and so time has gone on longer, and may have to go on even longer still. If Ellen White was a false prophet, wouldn't that be an easy way out of a tight spot? There is nothing to keep any false prophet from using such an excuse. But more importantly, this hardly compares with the way God explained and made it plain in scripture as to why conditional prophecies were changed.

"Furthermore, we should take note of a very important point. When Ellen White prophesied that God would come in the lifetime of those present at the conference, she was time setting in regard to Christ's return. This was essentially repeating the fundamental mistake that was made in 1844. In addition, Ellen White in other places condemns this and says it should never be done. For instance, she says:

"We are not of that class who define the exact period of time that shall elapse before the coming of Jesus the second time with power and great glory. Some have set a time, and when that has passed, their presumptuous spirits have not accepted rebuke, but they have set another and another time. But many successive failures have stamped them as false prophets."¹³⁰

"Thus, she contradicts, for all intents and purposes, her own prophecy of 1856. For in it she does set a time period in which Christ must return. That it can be no more than the life time of those in that room and sets the church up for yet another failure and disappointment. We can't help also noticing that she calls those who set a definite time period for Christ's return and fail, false prophets.

"She obviously did not consider predictions or prophecies of Christ's second coming to be conditional. For she felt confident to declare that if a prediction failed it stamped them as false prophets. She doesn't say we have to consider this or that before coming to this conclusion. No, she is very definite that this fact alone is enough. Also note, it is not just because she is a prophet that she can come to such a conclusion but rather she says it "stamps them". This indicates that it is something that is readable by all. She with her prophetic gift, endorses making a judgment call as to whether a prophet is genuine or not solely on the basis of whether their time predictions regarding

¹³⁰ *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 335 (1895)

the time of Christ's return come true or not. If we follow her example, which in this instance would seem in accordance with scripture and with how Christians have traditionally treated the subject, what conclusion would we be forced to come to in regard to Ellen White?

“Apologists for Ellen White at times bring up some of the prophecies in the Old Testament regarding Israel, that have supposedly not been fulfilled as examples of failed prophecies. But the problem for them is twofold. First, just because they have not been fulfilled yet does not mean they will not be in the future. It is unfair to compare this with Ellen White's 1856 prophecy unless Ellen White's prophecy is still capable of fulfillment. Some may say how can these prophecies be fulfilled when time is so short and we are in the age of the Gentiles? First the scripture is clear that the age of the gentiles will end. It is obvious to all who read Revelation that after Christ's return it is a Jewish Kingdom that is established, in other words after the manner of Jewish things. It is the New Jerusalem. Most of Bible Believing Christianity holds that in those times these prophecies will be literally fulfilled. Paul's statements in Romans 11 seem to give weight to this. Of course some will say our understanding of prophecy does not make room for the same interpretations in this area as other Christians. This is partially true. However, one must remember that this is begging the question. Adventist interpretation of prophecy has never been infallible. There have been many changes over the years. Also, if Ellen White is not a true prophetess the chances of inaccuracy and error are greatly magnified. To assume that we have infallible interpretations of the prophecies in all points because Ellen White teaches them, and therefore we will use that to decide her genuinocity, does not work. It is not sincerely testing her as a prophetess. However, even if we were to insist on accepting the traditional Adventist views on prophecy in every detail, it does not prevent these Old Testament prophecies from being fulfilled in the future, although it would not be in quite the same way as most of the Bible believing Christian world thinks they will be. Even in our traditional understanding of prophecy it is a Jewish kingdom. Adventist's have always believed that the saved saints will be considered part of Israel and that they are Israel and therefore it will be a Jewish kingdom.

“Last of all, we need to look once again at the main claim of the apologists for Ellen White. They infer that it was because the Adventist people changed spiritually and lost their zeal and first love that they had in 1856 and therefore did not proclaim the three angel's messages to the world as quickly as they should have that God

changed his mind and quietly nullified her vision. This reasoning used to convince me and no doubt still convinces most Adventists. However, as we have pointed out in this study, every time God had a conditional prophecy and modified something it was due to a big change in the picture after the prophecy was given. Something no one has to guess at. We just don't see this in Adventist history. There is no evidence of a BIG change. Remember the basis they claim for God changing his mind is because of the Advent people not keeping the spiritual state that they were in when the prophecy was given and losing their first love. Usually just one paragraph is quoted out of this vision of Ellen White's of 1856. But let's look at more of it and see what she has to say:

“At the Conference at Battle Creek, May 27, 1856, I was shown in vision some things that concern the church¹³¹ generally.... I saw many traveling in this broad road who had the words written upon them: "Dead to the world. The end of all things is at hand. Be ye also ready." They looked just like all the vain ones around them.... Those around them would say: "There is no distinction between us. We are alike; we dress, and talk, and act alike...."

“Then I was pointed back to the years 1843 and 1844. There was a spirit of consecration then that there is not now. What has come over the professed peculiar people of God? I saw the conformity to the world, the unwillingness to suffer for the truth's sake. I saw a great lack of submission to the will of God....

“I saw that many who profess to believe the truth for these last days think it strange that the children of Israel murmured as they journeyed; that after the wonderful dealings of God with them, they should be so ungrateful as to forget what He had done for them. Said the angel: "Ye have done worse than they...."

“But many are longing for the leeks and onions of Egypt. They have a disposition to dress and act as much like the world as possible and yet go to heaven.... I was shown the company present at the Conference. Said the angel: "Some food for worms, some subjects of the seven last

¹³¹ The word "church" here refers to the Adventist church. Orthodox (those who follow the denomination's officially declared beliefs, baptismal vows, and Ellen White's writings) Adventists consider themselves to be the only true church and all others to be Babylon. Thus, other churches are not, in their minds, God's church. So, when Ellen White says "church," she is speaking of the Adventist Church. The context also shows she is referring to the Adventist Church.

plagues, some will be alive and remain upon the earth to be translated at the coming of Jesus."

""...I asked the angel why so few were interested in their eternal welfare, so few preparing for their last change. Said he: "Earth attracts them, its treasures seem of worth to them." They find enough to engross the mind and have no time to prepare for heaven... They have grasped at shadows and lost eternal life. Such will have no excuse.

""Many dress like the world to have an influence.... I saw that God hates pride, and that all the proud and all that do wickedly shall be stubble, and the day that cometh shall burn them up. As I saw the dreadful fact that God's people were conformed to the world, with no distinction, except in name, between many of the professed disciples of the meek and lowly Jesus and unbelievers, my soul felt deep anguish. I saw that Jesus was wounded and put to an open shame. Said the angel, as with sorrow he saw the professed people of God loving the world, partaking of its spirit, and following its fashions: "Cut loose! Cut loose! lest He appoint you your portion with hypocrites and unbelievers outside the city. Your profession will only cause you greater anguish, and your punishment will be greater because ye knew His will, but did it not."

""Those who profess to believe the third angel's message often wound the cause of God by lightness, joking, and trifling. I was shown that this evil was all through our ranks. There should be a humbling before the Lord; the Israel of God should rend the heart, and not the garment.... God hates your vain, wicked pride, and He looks upon you as a whited sepulcher, full of corruption and uncleanness within. ... Oh, the pride that was shown me of God's professed people! It has increased every year until it is now impossible to designate professed Advent Sabbath keepers from all the world around them.... When the exterior is hung with ribbons, collars, and needless things, it plainly shows that the love for all this is in the heart; unless such persons are cleansed from their corruption, they can never see God, for only the pure in heart will see Him....

""Such pride should not be suffered in the church. It is these things that separate God from His people, that shut the ark away from them. Israel have been asleep to the pride, and fashion, and conformity to the world, in the very midst of them.... And as soon as any have a desire to imitate the fashions of the world, that they do not immediately subdue, just so soon God ceases to acknowledge them as His children. They are the children of the world and of darkness. They

lust for the leeks and onions of Egypt, that is, desire to be as much like the world as possible; by so doing, those that profess to have put on Christ virtually put Him off, and show that they are strangers to grace and strangers to the meek and lowly Jesus.... How can I save my own soul, and be the means of saving others?... Covetousness, selfishness, love of money, and love of the world are all through the ranks of Sabbath keepers They love the world, love its gain and increase, and, unless there is an entire change in them, they will perish with the world Oh, how weak and frail is man! How puny his arm! I saw that soon the loftiness of man is to be brought down, and the pride of man humbled. Kings and nobles, rich and poor, alike shall bow, and the withering plagues of God shall fall upon them. ...' ¹³²

"I was shocked when I read the whole vision. For it makes it plain that the Adventists who were given this prophecy in 1856 had not only lost their first love but, according to Ellen White's vision, were sunk into a horrible spiritual condition. It becomes impossible to maintain that it was because of a negative change later on in the spiritual condition of the church after the vision was given that caused God to change His mind. And certainly, it was not because of a change for the better that caused God to nullify this vision, for it is common knowledge that Ellen White has similar negative statements about the church's spiritual condition at the end of her life.

"There remains just one unavoidable conclusion. There is no biblical basis for this vision to change even if one was to admit, for the sake of argument, that it was conditional. In the Bible, conditional visions were always changed ONLY in the case of A GREAT CHANGE in the people. This vision proves that there was no change, let alone a big change. It destroys the possibility of it being a conditional prophecy. Of course, most Christians would not consider her vision a conditional prophecy anyway. A conditional prophecy for the second coming of Christ is not so much dependent on man, but on God.

"For years Adventists never had a question as to the validity of this vision of Ellen White's or a doubt as to it being fulfilled. Pastor E. S. Ballenger, whose father was an Adventist pastor and who grew up as an Adventist, stated that:

"The writer can well remember when this vision was carried from camp meeting to camp meeting, and read with telling effect, the

¹³² *Testimonies*, Vol. 1, p. 127-140

speakers pointing out the fact that the Lord must come very soon; for nearly all of those who attended that conference were dead.’¹³³

“J. N. Loughborough describes his experience with this vision in these words:

“‘About 1904 [forty-eight years after the meeting in 1856], as told to me [by Bro. Nelson at the General Conference in 1905, he and George Amadon were making a list of those who attended that meeting in Battle Creek in 1856. They went to see Sister White to ask her if she could remember any names they had omitted. Brother Nelson told me she said, “What are you doing?” He replied, “I am getting a list of those who attended that meeting.” She asked, “What are you going to do with it?” He replied, “I am going to have copies of it printed and sent to all our people.” She replied, “Then you stop right where you are. If they get that list, instead of working to push on the message, they will be watching the *Review* every week to see who is dead.”’¹³⁴

“So, they stopped compiling the list. Why did not Ellen White feel comfortable with them compiling a list? Was it not the purpose of the vision in the first place to cause people to feel time was short by realizing it would take place in the lifetime of those at the conference? Would not the fact that so few were now left alive push the church even more into being ready? Does not her reaction seem awfully suspicious and like a prophetess who wanted to shield herself from a possible failure? Yet, notice that even at the very end of her life and at an opportune time, she never told these men who spoke with her regarding the vision that God had nullified it. Nor did she ever say that it was a conditional prophecy. Nor did she warn them that it might not be fulfilled. She seems to have believed it would still be fulfilled or was too afraid to say otherwise. The Adventist church continued to believe that it was a valid prophecy that would be fulfilled clear into the 1930s. As F. M. Wilcox, Editor of the *Review and Herald* at that time demonstrates. After quoting the 1856 vision of Ellen White’s he says:

“‘We are firm believers in the spirit of prophecy, and we accept at full face value this statement which we have quoted above.’ *Review and Herald*, Jan. 22, 1931, p. 23. It was only after it became patently obvious that this prophecy was a failure that Adventist leadership began frantically to grasp at straws for an explanation and claimed that it

¹³³ *The Centennial Supplement*, p. 69, by E. S. Ballenger

¹³⁴ *Review and Herald*, Jan. 22, 1931, p. 24.

was a conditional prophecy. One can't but feel sorry for those men who felt it their responsibility to find some kind of defense for Ellen White's failed vision.

"It is interesting to note that in Vol. 1 of the *Testimonies*, where this 1856 vision is recorded, there is a footnote that reads:

"[SISTER CLARISSA M. BONFOEY, WHO FELL ASLEEP IN JESUS ONLY THREE DAYS AFTER THIS VISION WAS GIVEN, WAS PRESENT IN USUAL HEALTH, AND WAS DEEPLY IMPRESSED THAT SHE WAS ONE WHO WOULD GO INTO THE GRAVE, AND STATED HER CONVICTIONS TO OTHERS.]"

"The fact that this woman, who was in good health, should suddenly, due to this vision, immediately feel that she would die, reminds one of the power of the mind. Also, it is reminiscent of the way satanic powers often work. It demonstrates the danger of putting faith in any prophet before one has sincerely and genuinely tested them by the Bible and not just by some list of tests put out by a ministry that promotes the prophet."

"Well Dear," John said, "I too thought that this vision was all answered. But now after reexamining it and finding these new shocking facts in connection with it, the answers seem to have evaporated like dew on a hot morning. Don't you think?"

"Yes, I have to admit I didn't know all that." Lily sighed. "But John, this is serious. While any of the other problems would be enough to convict Ellen White of being a false prophet, if no valid answers can be found, this one is certainly one of the most brazenly obvious of all. What are we to do?"

"I don't know, Sweetheart. I would love to have an answer, but remember we promised God at the beginning that we would follow truth wherever it would lead. We can't just make up answers that are not warranted. We must be truly testing Ellen White and not just trying, come what may, to defend her, or God will not help us find truth. Rather, God might send us a strong delusion that we should believe a lie if we love truth so little as to not really search for it, like the Bible says:

"...Because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie:" (2 Thess. 2:10-11)

"Yes, you are right, of course," Lily said.

"That reminds me, John said, of another interesting fact that I discovered years ago that has always puzzled me. How much do you know about obelisks?" John asked.

"Obelisks? Whatever are you thinking of John?" Lily asked.

"Just tell me what you know about them," John said. "Well, I guess I have always heard that they are a Masonic symbol, and that they go back to ancient sun worship and that it also represents the male sex organ."

"That's right. The obelisk is all of those things, but also it goes back to ancient Baal worship. Dr. Burns says:

""Obelisk, a long pointed four-sided shaft, the uppermost portion of which forms a pyramid. The word "obelisk" literally means "Baal's shaft" or Baal's organ of reproduction.' ¹³⁵

"Baal, as you will recall, is what the Israelites were always turning from God to worship. At Mt. Sinai, they worshipped a golden calf. This was a god of Egypt, but it also represented Baal. At Baalpeor it was Baal worship that the people of God fell into. In the time of Elijah, it was Baal worship once again that caused God's anger to fall on his people. According to some sources, the obelisk was one of many different images that were used to represent Baal. It also represented a beam of light to the sun, and of course, Baal worship actually goes back to Babylon and Nimrod. Even though it is true that the Egyptians were probably the first to use obelisks and incorporate them in sun worship, at the time of Moses, obelisks were popular in Egypt, and Moses, along with the children of Israel, would have been constantly bombarded with them as a major part of the idol worship that was constantly trying to take hold of their lives. Some of these facts are brought out in the next quote:

""What is an obelisk? The Egyptians dedicated many obelisks to Ra, the god of the sun. The obelisk shape has been defined as that of a phallic symbol, or a ray of the sun extending to heaven. Heliopolis, the former Egyptian city of the sun, near present-day Cairo, was known in ancient times by the name Annu, which means "obelisks."" ¹³⁶

¹³⁵ *Masonic & Occult Symbols Illustrated*, Dr. Cathy Burns, p. 341

¹³⁶ *Too Long in the Sun*, p.136, Richard Rives. Figure 1 above is also from same work. Rives grants permission in work to reproduce content of it as desired.

“In Figure 1, you will see a picture of the Black Obelisk from ancient Assyria. It is presently located in the British Museum. It is inscribed with an inscription honoring several gods including Bel. One should keep in mind that all these ancient pagan religions were highly related. They all had their roots at the rebellion at the Tower of Babel. Then as the people moved out and settled in different areas, the religion of each group of people slowly changed form to some degree. But many times, through the years, there was swapping and borrowing in regard to religious things among many of the ancients at different times. But overall, it was all highly related. For instance, Dagon, that the Philistines worshiped, was considered to be Bel’s father, and Ashtaroth was a female counterpart to Bel. Notice what this next quote says:

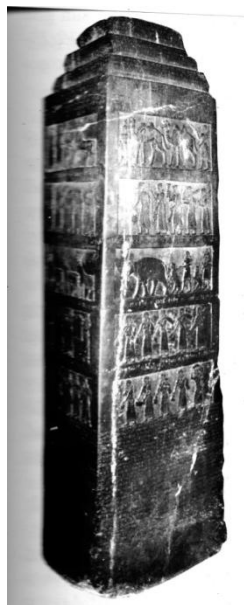


Figure 1

““The name Nimrod appears in ancient Babylon’s mythology. The Babylonian god Bel-Merodach is also called Bel-Nimrod and Bel-Nipru. Ancient Babylon was called “the city of Bel-Nimrod.” He had the characteristics of the biblical Nimrod. He was a proud and mighty warrior king. Bel-Nipru means “the god of the chase” or “the great hunter.””¹³⁷

“Along with its native gods, Baal worship was also prevalent in Egypt.¹³⁸ Obelisks were also popular among the Canaanites.¹³⁹ One can’t help but find it interesting to note the comment of a recent travel guide regarding obelisks:

““Paying obeisance to the Sun god, an obelisk was built to resemble a petrified ray of the Sun disk....”¹⁴⁰

“So, the obelisk was built as a symbolic act of paying obeisance to the Sun God or, as we saw in the earlier quotes, as a symbolic representation of Baal. As we can see, obelisks played an iconic role in the evil pagan sun-worshiping religions that were Satan’s counterfeit

¹³⁷ *Bible Times and Ancient Kingdoms*, p. 99, David Cloud, 2021

¹³⁸ *Encyclopedia Britannica online*, article “Obelisk,” as of 2023

¹³⁹ *Encyclopedia Britannica online*, article “Obelisk,” as of 2023

¹⁴⁰ *Online Travel Guide*

religious system that signified rebellion to God and honored Satan as its head. As one author points out:

“‘Baal was a spiritual chameleon, with Baal worship taking many forms. In fact, Baal worship is called ‘Baalim’ in reference to its plurality and its bewildering variety of aspects (Judges 10:6). As Baalzebub, Baal was the lord of the flies (2 Ki. 1:2). He was thought to protect the people from plagues of flies. Baalzebub was sought out as an oracle of the future, as in 2 Kings 1:2.’¹⁴¹

“Bel worship was Baalzebub worship. It was devil worship,¹⁴² and its prophets, such as Jezebel and all the other false prophets, were inspired by Baalzebub, who was an oracle of the future. Unfortunately for them, he was also undependable, and his trademark was that of being a lying spirit.

“‘Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.’¹⁴³

“‘And they shall no more offer their sacrifices unto devils, after whom they have gone a whoring...’¹⁴⁴

“Now I wish to ask a question. Can you imagine the prophet Moses, or the prophet Elijah, or the prophet Isaiah, or Jeremiah, or Daniel, or any other, as they were planning for their future burial, choosing to erect an obelisk which would show honor, display loyalty to the paganism around them, as well as represent their obeisance to the sun god, that would also mark them as submissive followers of that god? Can you think of one prophet in the Bible that did something similar to this? Can we imagine Peter doing this, or Paul? For that matter, if they had for some reason even considered it, due to ignorance, can we not be sure God would have stepped in and stopped them from such a blunder that would destroy their witness and perhaps their life work as a prophet?”

“But John,” Lily broke in, “what has this to do with Ellen White?”

“I am getting to that,” John said. “You remember that I told you that I visited Battle Creek, Mich., to see where the headquarters of the

¹⁴¹ *Bible Times and Ancient Kingdoms*, p. 277, David Cloud, 2021

¹⁴² 1 Cor. 10:20; Deut. 32:17

¹⁴³ John 8:44

¹⁴⁴ Lev. 17:7

Adventist Church was for so many years and also Ellen White's grave. I wanted to see it for myself."

"See what for yourself, John?"

"The obelisk that was erected during Ellen White's lifetime. It is the chief marker of James and Ellen White's family burial plot."

"Oh, no!" Lily said. "You can't be serious! I mean, it can't really be!"

"I am afraid it is, Dear. When I was in Battle Creek, I saw it with my own eyes and even took pictures of it. Unfortunately, I lost the pictures, but I was able to find one taken back in 1915 at Ellen White's funeral that shows the obelisk."

"But John, Ellen White claims that God showed her so many things, sometimes things that were rather small and not nearly as important as this, like that hair net that girl took from her. But this is so much more important because, as a modern-day prophet, with no proven true prophet from the Lord before her for around two thousand years, people are bound to be suspicious, and she has to prove herself. God would know that maintaining her credibility would be very important! Many sincere people would be testing her and understandably looking for red flags of warning. Certainly, God would not allow her to brand herself as a servant of the sun god and Beelzebub. I mean, she has this obelisk as essentially the family icon."

"I know, Honey. It was an awful shock to me too when I first learned of it. I have known about it for around twenty years but just kind of put it into the back of my mind and ignored it. But now with the other things we have found out lately, it is, I fear, forming a pattern that I felt I had to investigate a little more carefully. I am afraid I have to admit it seems like such an impossible and strange thing for a true prophet of God. But if she were a false prophet, it would make perfect sense. One could see God allowing something like this or even causing it so that it would mark her unmistakably, to all those who have eyes to see and ears to hear, as a false prophet inspired by the same lying spirit that inspired the prophets of the sun worshipers of old. You might like to see the picture I spoke of earlier of the obelisk at the time of Ellen White's funeral...."

"Thanks, John. Oh wow. There it is all right. It is so hard to believe." Lily said. "Yes, I know what you mean," John said. "And we can thank God for showing us this."

“Yes, you are right, John,” Lily said as she looked up at him. Slowly they knelt in prayer, asking God, as so many times before, to give them the answers and lead them into truth.



Figure 2. Ellen White’s casket in the cemetery just before burial in 1915. Obelisk marking James and Ellen White’s burial plot at Battle Creek, Mich. The obelisk was erected during Ellen White’s lifetime (probably at James White’s death in 1881) and was still present in 2007 when the author visited her grave.

“There is a statement made by Moses relative to the true and to the false prophets, found in the eighteenth chapter of Deuteronomy, which, in our consideration of rules for discerning true prophets, may be designated as rule number five. He says: ‘And if thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the word which the lord hath not spoken? When a prophet speaketh in the name of the lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him.’ verses 21-22 The same thing is found also in the following scriptures: ‘Who is he that saith, and it cometh to pass, when the Lord commandeth it not? Lam. 3:37. Of the prophet Samuel it was said, ‘All that he saith cometh surely to pass.’ 1Sam. 9:6. ‘When the word of the prophet shall come to pass, then shall the prophet be known, that the Lord hath truly sent him.’ Jer. 28:9. Our Saviour said of his predictions, ‘I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen: but that the scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his

heel against me. Now I tell you before it come, that, when it is come to pass, ye may believe that I am he.' John 13:18, 19. These scriptures, and others of a similar nature, might be quoted to show that when the time comes for an event to take place which has been mentioned by a true prophet the very thing predicted is there." (Adventist pioneer minister & historian, John Loughborough, *Review and Herald*, Oct. 31, 1899.)



Ellen White & the Church Speak Out

John and Lily sat at the breakfast table. “What do we do now? I am sick of all these mistakes. We have more than enough evidence to prove she was wrong at times with things she claimed were inspired. After all, it only takes being wrong once in an inspired writing to prove a prophet is not from God. Isn’t that right?”

“You’re right, Honey, in both cases. We need a new line of study. I think we should turn to our church’s history and see what we might learn. But before that, I would like to see if we can find any enlightening statements from Ellen White.”

“Sounds good. I have to get some baking done, so I am afraid I can’t help you today,” said Lily. “Well, thanks for helping me yesterday. I found more than I could ever have without you, but I know what you mean; a mother’s job is never finished. I guess I better get started. The day is not getting any younger, and this research takes quite a bit of time.” John got up, kissed Lily, and headed for his study. Hours later, John called for Lily. As she entered his study, John said, “Look at some of these things I found.”

Lily took his notebook and read:

“‘The Bible must be your counselor. Study it and the testimonies God has given; for they never contradict His Word.’¹⁴⁵

¹⁴⁵*Selected Messages*, vol. 3, p. 32

"Really," said Lily, "they never contradict God's Word? What about all the contradictions and false statements we have found? Why, John, this seems like a false statement in itself."

"I know," said John, "but keep reading."

"Okay," said Lily as she went on in a low voice:

"'One stood by my side and said: God has raised you up and has given you words to speak to the people and to reach hearts as He has given to no other one. He has shaped your testimonies to meet cases that are in need of help.'¹⁴⁶

"'In these letters which I write, . . . I am presenting to you that which the Lord has presented to me. I do not write one article in the paper expressing merely my own ideas. They are what God has opened before me in vision--the precious rays of light shining from the throne.'¹⁴⁷

"'The Holy Ghost is the Author of the Scriptures and of the Spirit of Prophecy.'^{148 149}

"Wow! That is quite a statement. So can the Holy Ghost lie?"

"Of course not," said John.

"Just wondering," said Lily. "But let me keep reading."

"'In my books, the truth is stated, barricaded by a 'Thus saith the Lord.' The Holy Spirit traced these truths upon my heart and mind as indelibly as the law was traced by the finger of God, upon the tables of stone.'¹⁵⁰

"Well, this is what we have always believed, but now it seems greatly inaccurate and outlandish based on what we have found."

"Keep going," said John.

¹⁴⁶ *Life Sketches*, p. 201

¹⁴⁷ *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 67

¹⁴⁸ *Selected Messages*, vol. 3, p. 30

¹⁴⁹ The term "Spirit of Prophecy" is what she uses to designate her writings.

¹⁵⁰ Letter 90, 1906

““These books contain clear, straight, unalterable truth, and they should certainly be appreciated. The instruction they contain is not of human production.’¹⁵¹

““My writings are kept on file in the office, and even though I should not live, these words that have been given to me by the Lord will still have life and will speak to the people.... The Lord Jehovah is the one to specify how the work shall be carried on under all circumstances.’

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““While I am able to do this work, the people must have these things to revive past history, that they may see that there is one straight chain of truth, without one heretical sentence, in that which I have written. This, I am instructed, is to be a living letter to all in regard to my faith.’

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““I am thankful that the instruction contained in my books establishes present truth for this time. These books were written under the demonstration of the Holy Spirit.’¹⁵⁴

““These books, giving the instruction that the Lord has given me during the last sixty years, contain light from heaven, and will bear the test of investigation.’¹⁵⁵

“Will bear the test of investigation,” Lily exclaimed! “Oh John, how can she say that? If it is possible for man to test anything of this nature and know the truth of the matter, it is certain that her writings do not bear up under investigation and utterly fail!”

“I know,” John said. “I never thought I would ever agree to such a statement, but it seems to be the case. But read on, Dear.”

“Okay,” said Lily, as once again she continued:

“I am just as dependent upon the Spirit of the Lord in relating or writing a vision, as in having the vision. It is impossible for me to call up things which have been shown me unless the Lord brings them

¹⁵¹ Letter 339, Dec. 26, 1904

¹⁵² *General Conference Bulletin*, June 1, 1913, pp. 219-221

¹⁵³ Letter 329a, 1905

¹⁵⁴ Letter 50, 1906

¹⁵⁵ *Selected Messages*, vol. 1, p. 35, 1906

before me at the time that He is pleased to have me relate or write them.’¹⁵⁶

“Why have I not claimed to be a prophet?--Because in these days many who boldly claim that they are prophets are a reproach to the cause of Christ; and because my work includes much more than the word "prophet" signifies.’¹⁵⁷

“He gives me the word, and I dare not refuse to give it to the people.’¹⁵⁸

“She calls it the Word, John. That is equating it with the Holy Bible, which is the only book that is called the Word by Christians other than Christ himself,” Lily exclaimed, as she started reading John’s notes again:

“God sets no man to pronounce judgment on His Word, selecting some things as inspired and discrediting others as uninspired. The testimonies¹⁵⁹ have been treated in the same way; but God is not in this.’¹⁶⁰

“That certainly does not leave any room for saying that any of her writings are uninspired. According to her, they must all be considered inspired.” Lily read on:

“I have my work to do, to meet the misconceptions of those who suppose themselves able to say what is testimony from God and what is human production. If those who have done this work continue in this course, satanic agencies will choose for them...”¹⁶¹

¹⁵⁶ *Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 2, pp. 292, 293

¹⁵⁷ *Selected Messages*, vol. 1 p. 32

¹⁵⁸ Manuscript 22, 1890 {VSS 398.2}

¹⁵⁹ The term “Testimonies” was used especially to refer to her letters of counsel and rebuke. It is also true, however, that the word was often used as a general term by Ellen White to refer to all of her writings. Such is the case in this quote. She often used this term when comparing her writings to the Bible. An example of this can be seen in her statement: “In ancient times God spoke through the mouths of prophets and apostles. In these days He speaks to them by the Testimonies of His Spirit [her visions].”

(*Testimonies for The Church*, vol. 4, p. 148; vol. 5, p. 661)

¹⁶⁰ *1888 Material*, p. 238

¹⁶¹ *Selected Messages*, vol. 3, p. 70

“‘But the Spirit of God rests upon me with power, and I cannot but speak the words given me. I dare not withhold one word of the testimony.’¹⁶²

“‘I speak the words given me by a power higher than human power, and I cannot, if I would, recall [retract] one sentence.’¹⁶³

“‘The Spirit of God works upon my mind and gives **me appropriate words** with which to **express the truth**.’¹⁶⁴

“‘I had been very sick, and yet had tried to speak to the people, and the Lord had strengthened me greatly. I had not knowledge of my words. The Lord spoke indeed through me.’¹⁶⁵

“‘I gave myself, my whole being, to God, to obey His call in everything, and since that time my life has been spent in giving the message, with my pen and in speaking before large congregations. It is not I who controls my words and actions at such times.’¹⁶⁶

“‘Of all the precious assurances God has given me regarding my work, none has been more precious to me than this, that He would give me tongue and utterance wherever I should go.’¹⁶⁷

“‘When writing these precious books, if I hesitated, the very word I wanted to express the idea was given me.’¹⁶⁸

“‘It would seem at the very least she is saying that the Lord, according to her, gave her the right words when her humanity was in danger of failing in finding the right words,” said John. Lily kept reading without making a reply:

“‘I have not been in the habit of reading any doctrinal articles in the paper (Review & Herald) that my mind should not have any understanding of anyone’s ideas and views, and that not a mold of

¹⁶² 1888 Material, p. 578

¹⁶³ 1888 Material, p. 578

¹⁶⁴ Selected Messages, vol. 3, p. 51; Letter 90, 1907

¹⁶⁵ Manuscript 59, 1905

¹⁶⁶ Selected Messages, vol. 1, p. 39

¹⁶⁷ Letter 84, 1909

¹⁶⁸ Selected Messages, vol. 3, pp. 51-52; Letter 265, 1907

any man's theories should have any connection with that which I write.'¹⁶⁹

“My books were written independent of books or the opinions of others.”¹⁷⁰

“Permit me to express my mind, and yet not my mind, but the word of the Lord.”¹⁷¹

“My commission embraces the work of a prophet, but it does not end there.”¹⁷²

“I read over all that is copied to see that everything is as it should be. I read all the book manuscript before it is sent to the printer.”¹⁷³

“How interesting and enlightening considering the mistakes in her writings. Listen now to what she wrote in a preface to the second volume of *Spiritual Gifts*, one of her earliest works.

“A special request is made that if any find incorrect statements in this book, they will immediately inform me. The edition will be completed about the first of October; therefore send before that time. E. G. W.”¹⁷⁴

“The above was in an appendix of sixteen pages that was bound in only four hundred copies that were sent to select people as a pre-print run. In the providence of God, this was the edition from which, years later, the facsimile edition was taken. One can see, in the above quote, how much faith Ellen White herself had in her inspiration. She knew that it would not keep her from mistakes. She did not include this in the main edition that most people purchased. In the early years, when she was less experienced, we find more glaring mistakes, and she was less polished. Never again would she make such a blunder of a statement. Could it be that in these early days God caused this to slip into print in order to warn His people by giving them evidence as clear as crystal that she was not a true prophet? Where in the Bible do we find such a statement made by a prophet?” Lily read slowly as she continued to read John's notes.

¹⁶⁹ Letter 37, 1887

¹⁷⁰ Ms. 7, 1867

¹⁷¹ Letter 89, 1899

¹⁷² *Selected Messages*, vol. 1, p. 36, 1906

¹⁷³ Letter 133, 1902, pp. 1-2

¹⁷⁴ 2 *Spiritual Gifts*, p. 295

“Some try to rationalize this away by saying that she is admitting here that nothing written of a biographical nature by her is inspired since, according to them, *Vol. 2 Spiritual Gifts* is biography. The problem with this theory is twofold: first, Ellen White never says that a book of hers that is of a biographical nature, including this book, is not inspired. In fact, taking her other statements as well as what is written in this book, one would have to think it most certainly was inspired. Also, this book is far from simply biographical in nature. Intermixed with biography, she relates visions she had and testimonies of rebuke. To separate these things would be to do what she condemned Uriah Smith for doing in saying that some things were inspired in her writings and some things not. This she leaves no room for.

“If this book was not inspired, then the testimonies and dreams related in it are not either. And if that is the case, then how can one have confidence in the inspiration of any of the others related in other books? For most, if not all, of her books have some form of biographical **matter**, either of her time or historical, intermixed in it. No, this seems to me to be only a rationalization. This was a statement that God had slip through the cracks in order to warn His true people. Unfortunately, it would seem, most, if not all, of those who did get this edition with this statement in it were too overwhelmed with the excitement of having a prophet and with signs and wonders to take notice of the warning God gave and test the spirit with the standards and requirements set forth by the Bible for a prophet of God. Her above statement is tantamount to admitting that she is not a true prophet of God. For God never makes mistakes in His work, and His works are always perfect.”

“He is the Rock, His work is perfect: for all His ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is He.’¹⁷⁵

“Is that not amazing?” said John.

“It most certainly is,” said Lily. “I guess there is no end to what we might find out. But do let me read what the Adventist Church has claimed for her.”

“In the *28 Fundamental Beliefs*, which is, for all practical purposes, the creed of the SDA Church, there is an article that states that Ellen White manifested the gift of prophecy and her writings are ‘authoritative’ for the Adventist Church. The article is as follows:

¹⁷⁵ Deut. 32: 4

“18. The Gift of Prophecy: One of the gifts of the Holy Spirit is prophecy. This gift is an identifying mark of the remnant church and was manifested in the ministry of Ellen G. White. As the Lord's messenger, her writings are a continuing and authoritative source of truth which provide for the church comfort, guidance, instruction, and correction. They also make clear that the Bible is the standard by which all teaching and experience must be tested. (Joel 2:28, 29; Acts 2:14-21; Heb. 1:1-3; Rev. 12:17; 19:10)’

“MINISTRY MAGAZINE: ‘We believe the revelation and inspiration of both the Bible and Ellen White's writings to be of equal quality. The superintendence of the Holy Spirit was just as careful and thorough in one case as in the other.’¹⁷⁶

“THE ADVENT REVIEW: ‘As with the ancient prophets, the talking is done by the Holy Spirit through her [Ellen White's] vocal organs. The prophets "spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." 2 Peter 1:21. David said, "The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and His word was in my tongue." 2 Sam. 23:2. In Acts 1:16 we are told that the Holy Ghost spoke by the mouth of David. So also, her vision was like that of Balaam, "entranced, with eyes rolled upward." Num. 24:16, Spurrell's translation, margin.’¹⁷⁷

“KENNETH WOOD (at the time Editor of the *Review*): ‘Ellen G. White was inspired in the same sense as were the Bible prophets.’¹⁷⁸

“ADVENTIST REVIEW: ‘As Samuel was a prophet to Israel in his day, as Jeremiah was a prophet to Israel in the day of captivity, as John the Baptist came as a special messenger of the Lord to prepare the way for Christ's appearing, so we believe that Mrs. White was a prophet to the church of Christ today. And the same as the messages of the prophets were received in old days, so her messages should be received at present times.’¹⁷⁹

“‘Consistency calls for acceptance of the Spirit of Prophecy [Ellen White's] writings as a whole. We cannot justify accepting part and rejecting part.’¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁶ *Ministry*, October 1981

¹⁷⁷ *Advent Review & Sabbath Herald*, Nov. 5, 1914

¹⁷⁸ Kenneth H. Wood, *Review*, Sep. 4, 1980, p. 15

¹⁷⁹ *Review & Herald*, October 4, 1928

¹⁸⁰ *Prophetic Guidance*, p. 70

“‘God will pour out His Spirit on all who humble themselves and **conform their lives** to His will as expressed in His Holy Word and **His instructions in the Spirit of Prophecy**.... The *Spirit of Prophecy* [Ellen White’s Writings], which I believe was inspired just as God inspired all prophets...’”¹⁸¹

“‘Our position on the Testimonies [Ellen White] is like the keystone of the arch. Take that out, and there is no logical stopping place till all the special truths of the message are gone. ... Nothing is surer than this: that this message and the visions belong together and stand and fall together.’”¹⁸²

“Why would the other doctrines fall if they truly can be proved and justified with just the Bible? It would seem that if her writings are the keystone that holds the arch of their theology, it is really tactfully admitting that her writings are what the doctrines are, to a great degree, based on, wouldn’t it, John?” Lily asked.

“One would have to really wonder all right. But do keep reading. It is interesting hearing it all at once,” John said. “Well, I only have one more quote, and here it is,” Lily answered as she once again started to read.

“‘We recognize that the principles set forth in the Spirit of Prophecy writings do not change with the passage of the years, that time and trial have not made void the instruction given,’ and ‘the instruction that was given in the **early days of the message is to be held as safe instruction to follow in these its closing days.**’”¹⁸³

Lily looked up from the notes she had been reading. “Well, that establishes pretty well the claims that she and Seventh-day Adventists generally have made for her. I really find it quite interesting.”

“Yes, I do too. Now tomorrow I will start studying more into the beliefs of inspiration in our church. You know, at the beginning of our investigation, I discovered some strange things regarding a change of teaching in our church regarding inspiration and whether it is

¹⁸¹ Ted Wilson, current president of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, in a sermon at the 2022 General Conference Session, in which, acting in an official capacity, he called on all Adventists to hold to the standards of the denomination.

¹⁸² James White (husband of Ellen White & a founder of the Seventh-day Adventist Church) in the *Review and Herald*, Aug. 14, 1883

¹⁸³ *The Spirit of Prophecy Treasure Chest*, p. 125

inerrant. Let's check more into that and the history surrounding it," John said.

"I can't wait to see what else you find," said Lily. "Me too," said John.

"Whatever contradicts God's word, we may be sure proceeds from Satan." (Ellen White, *Patriarchs and Prophets* p. 55)

"Has God placed His work in such a careless manner that man can fashion it to suit his own inclinations, receive that which is agreeable to him and reject a portion? Would God give visions to correct His people of their errors and then trust to the erring one's judgment to receive or reject what portion of them he pleased? What would be the use of visions in the church if held in this light, or if erring individuals in their darkness were left to make what application of them they pleased? This is not the way that God works. If God reproves His people through an individual, He does not leave the one corrected to guess at matters and the message to become corrupted in reaching the person it is designed to correct. God gives the message and then takes especial care that it is not corrupted.

"The visions are either of God or the devil. There is no half-way position to be taken in the matter. God does not work in partnership with Satan." (Ellen White, Letter 8, 1860)

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If the Testimonies¹⁸⁵ speak not according to the word of God, reject them. Christ and Belial cannot be united." (Ellen White, *Testimonies for the Church* Vol. 5 p. 691-692)

¹⁸⁴ Letters by Ellen White that have any reference to moral or spiritual subjects or that are on ecclesiastical or biblical history, such as counsel on spiritual matters or counsel in regard to an Adventist institution, have traditionally been considered inspired writings by Adventists.

¹⁸⁵ "Testimonies" is the term Ellen White used to designate her writings.



An Inspirational History

John had spent several days in study. Winter had finally hit. He had not gotten as much done in preparing for winter as he would have desired with the research he and Lily had been doing regarding Ellen White. But, by God's grace, they had gotten the minimum done to get by. His glance out the window showed him it was snowing and turning into a blizzard. He wondered how long it would be before he would need to get out there and snowplow his mile of country road. Living near the Canadian border was fun but came with its challenges. He glanced down at his notes. What a strange history, he thought. He couldn't wait to share it with Lily. That night, Lily and John, in the gleam of the fire, sat on the love seat and looked over John's notes. "So what have you learned this time?" Lily asked.

"You might remember me telling you about how the denomination has come out with what appears to be a new view of inspiration. All the laity and almost all ministers used to teach and were taught that inspiration was infallible and inerrant. Our ancestors were taught this, or they probably would not have joined the S.D.A. church, for they were already Christians and would have felt that anyone preaching that the Bible was not the inerrant and infallible Word of God was a false teacher. Most Christians who were sincere and truly wanted to follow God at all costs felt the same way in that era. The S.D.A. church leaders knew this and trained their pastors and members in this traditional Christian doctrine that can be traced clear back to the days of the apostles. Indeed, it dates even farther, for the Jews in Christ's day and as far back as we can trace considered their scriptures to be infallible and inerrant, as Josephus, the Jewish historian, points out. ¹⁸⁶

¹⁸⁶ See Josephus against Appion, book i, c.7, 8; and Philo, ed. Haeschel, p. 515, and p. 918

Jesus, when here on earth, never corrected them in this concept. He always treated scripture as inerrant and infallible. Our S.D.A. church in the beginning was teaching and believing this same doctrine.” John took the notebook from Lily and scanned the page. “For instance, notice in this next quote how William Miller believed that Scripture must not contradict itself or, in other words, contain error:

“‘But his [William Miller’s] infidel associates were not slow to bring forward all those arguments which he himself had often urged against the divine authority of the Scriptures. He was not then prepared to answer them; but he reasoned that if the Bible is a revelation from God, it must be consistent with itself; and that as it was given for man’s instruction, it must be adapted to his understanding. He determined to study the Scriptures for himself and ascertain if every apparent contradiction could not be harmonized.

“‘He pursued his study in a regular and methodical manner; beginning with Genesis and reading verse by verse, he proceeded no faster than the meaning of the several passages so unfolded as to leave him free from all embarrassment.... ‘Thus I was satisfied,’ he says, ‘that the Bible was a system of revealed truth.’”¹⁸⁷

“While in the 1800s the Christian world of liberal scholarship was denying inspiration or formulating new views of inspiration to correlate with the new theories of higher criticism and Darwinism, the pioneers of our church and most of conservative Christendom continued in the traditional belief in infallible and inerrant inspiration, as we read in the *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society*:

“‘That early Seventh-day Adventists regarded the Scriptures as infallible and inerrant is evident from the uncritical reprint in the *Review* of several portions from non-Adventist authors that fostered such a view. In 1859, for example, the *Review* reprinted a large paragraph from Louis Gaussen’s *Theopneustia*, stating that not one single error could ever be found in the more than 31,000 verses of the Bible. Some paragraphs of John H. Pratt’s *Scripture and Science Not at Variance* came out in the *Review* in 1880, declaring that the Holy Spirit preserved the writers of the Holy Scriptures from errors of every kind in the records they made. An entire lecture of H. L. Hastings on

¹⁸⁷ *Great Controversy*, 1888 edition, pp. 319-321, by Ellen G. White

inspiration appeared in the *Review* in 1883, referring to the Scriptures as the transcript of the Divine Mind.’¹⁸⁸

“In 1863, *The Bible from Heaven*, one of the first, if not the first, book published by the S.D.A. church on the Bible, said:

““Nothing in the Bible contradicts any of the sciences of physiology, anatomy, hygiene, materia medica, chemistry, astronomy, or geology.’
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“This book would never have been published by the Adventists if it was felt by those controlling the press that it was in error on a central issue like the inspiration of the Bible. Adventists were solid and sure on this doctrine to the point that little discussion took place regarding it, except what was written to defend the Bible against infidels. Most, if not all, conservative Christians of the time period would hardly have countenanced any other stance regarding inspiration. Indeed, the doctrine is older than Christianity itself, extending back to the ancient Jews. So what and why would any Adventist pioneer feel a need to reexamine and give up this all-important and central doctrine of Christianity? The answer seems to be found in what took place in 1883:

““By 1883,...However, some *internal* crises regarding the nature and authority of Ellen White’s writings pushed Seventh-day Adventists in the 1800s into a more thoughtful discussion of the doctrine [inspiration]. During that period, two major questions were raised: (1) Are there *degrees* of inspiration? and (2) did the Holy Spirit dictate the actual *words* of the inspired writings?’¹⁹⁰

“As most Adventists know, Uriah Smith received some pointed testimonies from Ellen White around 1882-1883. These he did not care for. He also came up in the spring of 1883 with some new concepts of inspiration. He now thought a prophet that claimed to be writing inspired writings could get things wrong in those writings, and only her visions be correct, and still be a true prophet. Mrs. White’s visions were inspired, but not the testimonies, was the net result of his theory. Only if she said, ‘I saw,’ was it inerrantly inspired.”

¹⁸⁸ *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society*, 10/1-2 (1999): 486-514

¹⁸⁹ Moses Hull, *The Bible from Heaven*, pp. 168-169

¹⁹⁰ *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society*, 10/1-2 (1999): 486-514

"Uriah Smith was one of the foremost Adventist intellectual thinkers of his day. He greatly developed the prophetic doctrines of the church. Any who have read his *Daniel and Revelation* can remember the thrill of the cool, level-headed logic of the book. So why would such a level-headed guy, who had worked with the Whites closely for so many years, written probably the first book defending Ellen White as a prophetess and a supporter of her visions, suddenly dabble in new and strange ideas regarding inspiration that would affect not only her writings but those of the Bible as well? The answer that most Adventists have been told is that Uriah Smith simply didn't like being criticized by the *Testimonies* and went into rebellion to escape reproof. While it is true that no one enjoys reproof and this no doubt played a part, it is also true that very few who have given so much of themselves for God, as Smith had done, will reject to this extent a message they have good reason to believe is sent to them from God. So is there anything else that caused such a level-headed and logical guy to act so illogically? After all, turning against God's prophet and downgrading inspiration for no good reason is rather serious. As it turns out, it seems that there was much more going on in Uriah Smith's mind. Some confidential letters he wrote to another prominent minister of the time give a little window into his thoughts:

Uriah Smith

Battle Creek, Michigan, March 22, 1883

Dear Brother Canright:

... I was interested in your queries to Uncle George [Butler, General Conference President] on the omissions in "*Early Writings*." We have the Marion paper in exchange, and I had noticed the article. Under the circumstances, I think it must have come down on him something like an avalanche; and I have a curiosity to know how he has answered it, as he put a note on the margin that he had answered it. I have no doubt the quotations [given in the Marion paper] are correct. I remember coming across the tract, "*Word to Little Flock*" when we were in Rochester, but I have not seen a copy since [i.e., in more than 25 years], and did not know but *Experience and Views* contained the full text of the early visions.¹⁹¹ **It seems to**

¹⁹¹ Smith, in certain articles he wrote in the 1860s for the Review, which were shortly circulated as a small book defending Ellen White, seems to indicate that he was aware at that time of some changes to later material from *A Word to the Little Flock*. The fact that *A Word to the Little Flock* was pushed so far back into the obscure edges of the mind of the

me that the testimonies, practically, have come into that shape, that it is not of any use to try to defend the erroneous claims that are now put forth for them. At least, after the unjust treatment I received the past year, I feel no burden in that direction. Theoretically, the doctrine of *Spiritual Gifts* is clear enough, and I think all our people stand together on that. Bro. Littlejohn has preached on the subject here, treating it mostly from a theoretical standpoint. But that does not touch the question at issue among us at all. **I presume you noticed in the Review of March 13 Bro. Waggoner's extinguisher of the Mormon Gifts. But if the same reasoning will not apply somewhat to our own experience, I cannot see straight.** The cases of Fuller, Cornell, and Smith Sharp are stunners to me. If all the brethren were willing to investigate this matter candidly and broadly, I believe some consistent, common ground for all to stand upon could be found. But some, of the rule or ruin spirit, are so dogmatical and stubborn that I suppose that any effort in that direction would only lead to a rupture of the body. I am sorry the meeting of the Michigan Ministerial Association has ignominiously fallen through this year. The two difficulties it had to contend against, as I view it, are first, a lack of literary taste on the part of many ministers. But this should be overcome, and I think could be, by practice and constant pressure.

editor of the Review that he would forget this fact over the years would seem to demonstrate just how successful James White was at obscuring *A Word to the Little Flock* and the facts about it from people's minds. One must bear in mind that there is a difference between suppression and outright destruction. Due to the circumstances that James found himself in, it would have been certain failure to try and suddenly outright destroy certain of his wife's writings. In fact, to even appear as if he had something against circulating one of his wife's productions or spreading information regarding them would have potentially caused him to fall into great suspicion in the eyes of others. Therefore, he only suppressed them. This meant that he let them go out of print or cut unwanted parts out of reprinted editions, did not use them, or encourage others to use them unless he had to in order to prevent suspicion, or there was more to be gained than lost in promoting them, and/or to maintain face. This explains why James White cooperated in promoting the articles mentioned above that Smith wrote in the 1860s once they were in book form. To do otherwise would have been more harmful to him than to promote it. It was, after all, the first and best defense of Ellen White up to that time, and if he rejected it, he would have had to give some kind of reason that would make sense to Smith, who was, after all, the editor of the paper as well as the author of the articles. Among other things, James might have ruined an apologist for his wife and turned him into an antagonist, or at the very least made Smith and many others very suspicious.

But second, the greatest I believe to be a fear on the part of the powers that be, of free thought and free discussion. So far as this is the case, it is a shame and a disgrace to us...

Very truly yours,

U. Smith

“In this letter, one can see Uriah Smith found out some shocking facts regarding Ellen White’s work and visions that shook him to the point of admitting in private that we were no better off than the Mormons with their prophet. It should be noted that this letter was written in March, and it was in the spring of this same year that Uriah Smith came out with his views on the Testimonies not being inspired, only the visions. However, as a firm supporter of Ellen White, instead of going back to the drawing board and saying maybe we need to retest this prophet by the Bible and see if this spirit comes from God, he desired some way to keep Ellen White and make it all work; for he feared that the body would rupture. Even the most logical men will be tempted to rationalize things to conform to their preconceived ideas. It is something we all must guard against. Now I will read the second letter:

Battle Creek, Michigan, April 6, 1883

Dear Brother Canright:

Yours of March 24 was duly received. I herewith return Bro. Butler’s letter, as you request, having read it, or spoken of it, only to Bro. Gage. Eld B. [Butler] writes to others making a very light matter of the omissions from ‘Early Writings.’ He write to Bro. M.C. Wilcox, now in this office, that if enough is made of the matter so that it call for an answer, if none of our ‘Great Writers’ see fit to reply to it, he will try his hand at it. In regard to writing for the Review, the plan is to send requests to some nineteen different persons, and if all should write more than from one to three moderately lengthy articles, there would not be room for them in the paper, so that limit was fixed as to length. We would like one from you sufficient to go through say three numbers. I intend to write for the next paper a synoptical article on that subject, but if I should, it would in no wise interfere with what you might say on the subject. I do not take the disconsolate view of our experiences that you seem to; for if the visions should drop out entirely, it would not affect my faith on our Biblical theories at all; hence,

I should not consider my experience worthless, nor my life thrown away; for I am rooted and grounded in our doctrines. I believe the system of prophetic interpretation we present is sound, and that so far as we have been instrumental in presenting it to the world, we have done a good work. **I did not learn any of these things from the visions**, and they don't stand on their authority. You ask if there is any way out. I do not know, or rather, while there must be some way through present difficulties (for God will carry on and bring through His own work) I do not now see what that way is. The idea has been studiously instilled into the minds of the people that to question the visions in the least is to become at once a hopeless apostate and rebel; and too many, I am sorry to say, have not strength of character enough to shake off such a conception, hence the moment anything is done to shake them on the visions, they lose faith in everything and go to destruction. I believe this state of things never would have occurred had the position of our people on this manifestation of the gifts been correct. If our people would come together and calmly, candidly, kindly, and freely deliberate upon this matter, I believe, as I have said to you and others, that a consistent position could be found, which would free the subject from difficulties, meet and satisfy the scoutings of an intelligent public, and not rob the gift of whit of the good it was intended to do. But there are too many doggedly bigoted, and stubborn, to offer any very flattering outlook in this direction. If the matter could be got along with without any violent disruption anywhere, it would be better. This is what I dislike, and fought against in our college troubles. I should like very much to see you and canvass together some of these questions. I may sometime accept your invitation and visit Otsego. You see by the Review that I get out occasionally. Tomorrow I go to Marshall - joint meeting of Marshall, Convis and Newton. A week from today I go to Hillsdale on the invitation of Bro. Lamson to attend their district quarterly meeting the 14th and 15th. The conception of a state of things that might exist among us occasionally flashes through my mind, when love and harmony would prevail; where there would be concert and union of action, a recognition of each other's rights and a courage and inspiration to make the land echo with the sound of the glorious truth, as souls are pointed to the Savior as their hope and refuge. Let us live as near right as we can, be watchful against all devices of the enemy to

destroy our spiritual life, and hope in God for His providence to guide us in these times of danger. Dr. Sprague [an Adventist Physician] joined the Presbyterian Church last Sunday, and I am informed that his mother and Sister Nelson are to join next Sunday.

Yours truly,

U. Smith

"We see in this letter, among other things, that Uriah Smith doesn't see a way out of the difficulties of explaining how Ellen White can be a true prophet. We also note that he wishes that "the matter could be got along with without any violent disruption anywhere, it would be better." Also, he and Canright were going through this together. Both men were trying to get answers. Smith, taking a view that was more loyal to the movement, and Canright, willing to question everything. This comradie nature is brought out not only in the fact the letters were written to start with but in the phrase: "I should like very much to see you and canvass together some of these questions." Could it be that the problems referred to in these letters that even had Smith in turmoil were a part of the reason Canright left the Adventist Church? One also notices that Butler was endeavoring to get writers to defend and answer the problems that were brought to light even though Smith, and it would appear the rest, probably had no real answers. It would appear they were all trying to theorize a solution and put on a brave bold front publically. Could this be why Butler a year later in 1884 penned his controversial series of articles on inspiration stating that there can be mistakes and some things are not even inspired in a prophet's writings even in regard to the Bible? Was this written to establish a basis to be able to defend Ellen White? Ellen White only condemned his articles in 1889 five years after they had run in the Review. And even then it was only after she found that her testimony in 1888 regarding the 1888 message was disregarded by many because they had imbibed in the theories and ideas of inspiration that Butler had promoted in those old articles. One wonders why she said nothing in 1884 when Butler originally applied his theories, that he had obtained from the higher critics, to the Bible and inspiration as perhaps a basis to explain problems in Ellen White's writings. But when it crossed and diminished the authority of her Testimonies a whole five years later she finally objected and said something." John looked up from reading his notes as he said, "now let's read the next letter Smith wrote Canright:"

Dear Bro. Canright:

Yours of July 28 is at hand. I have shown it to Bro. Gage as you request. It is true G.I.B. [Butler] has asked me to write something for the proposed Supplement [in reply to A.C. Long's attack], and in the presence of Brn. Littlejohn and Fargo, has urged it hard; or rather they three together have urged me to it. But I have not yet made up my mind to say anything; because I do not know that I can say that will be of any particular help to them. I told these brethren so plainly. And my reason is that Sr. W. has herself shut my mouth. In the 'Special Testimony to the B.C. [Battle Creek] Church,' quoted in the 'Sab. Advocate Extra,' (both of which I suppose you have seen) she has published me as having rejected not only that testimony, but all the testimonies. Now if I say that I haven't rejected them, I thereby show that I have, for I contradict this one. But if I say that I have, that will not do them any good that I can see, but will be saying that which I have not supposed to be true. **Her attack on me seems to me most uncalled for and unjust. I told the brethren that I did not understand why she seemed so anxious, and in such haste, to publish me to the world as a disbeliever in the testimonies. She has forced me without cause into a very embarrassing position,** because if I say nothing, of course it will be taken as a virtual acknowledgment of the correctness of the charges. But if I do say anything, I must speak my convictions, which will not be at all satisfactory to them. I have just written a letter to Bro. Waggoner on the subject giving my position quite fully. I am going to keep a copy, and if you would like to see it, I will send it out to you to read and return. I would like to have you see some correspondence I have had with Sr. W. ...

In haste and love,

Yours, U. Smith

John looked up and into Lily's eyes; were they blue or green he wondered? He never could quite make up his mind. She broke into his thought

"It is very interesting John. But please go on."

John cleared his throat. "Okay sweetheart. Here is another of his letters:"

Battle Creek, Michigan, Aug. 7, 1883

Dear Bro. Canright:

Yours mailed yesterday is at hand. I enclose in this what I wrote to Bro. Waggoner on the question before us. The first part of the letter was on some criticism of Hebrew words which you would not care to see. I have concluded to write a little for the 'Supplement' for this reason: those who write in the '*Advocate Extra*', most of them, manifest a spitefulness and bitterness of feeling which I cannot affiliate with, and do not wish to be considered as endorsing. In this I state, what I have told you that I still hold that Sr. W. has been shown things in vision, and that this is a manifestation of Spiritual gifts; but they do not stand on a level with the Scriptures, and should not be made a test of fellowship. I close by saying that they should manifest 'more of that charity which the apostle sets forth as more desirable than all gifts and without which even the best gifts are but a sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal.' I am aware that what I have written will not materially help my case in regard to the testimonies; for it brings me into direct antagonism with what Sr. W. has last published about me, which the '*Advocate*' of course will not be slow to pick up. But I think Bro. Green has prematurely set this ball rolling, and we shall not be likely to see so decisive steps taken at our next annual meetings as we should doubtless otherwise have seen. I should not have said anything, had not these men embarrassed the situation by rushing in and manifesting the spirit they do. Logically, my case cannot be let alone till I have acknowledged what Sr. W. Wrote in our School troubles, which I have no evidence was or is vision, and as I write to Bro. W., I know I have to discriminate between 'testimony' and 'visions.' Well, I think I know myself as well as Sr. W. knows me. And I leave all these things in the hand of God, determined to seek to do his will here, and find a place in his kingdom hereafter.

Yours truly,

U. Smith

"Among the many things to notice in this letter is that he will not be let alone until he acknowledges what Sister White wrote even though he is convicted that 'I know myself as well as Sr. W. knows me. And I leave all these things in the hand of God.'"

John turned the page and read on:

Battle Creek, Michigan, Oct. 2, 1883

Dear Bro. Canright:

Yours of the 28th was duly received. Should have been very glad to see you at the C.M. We had in some respects a most powerful meeting. A.N. Seymour and wife were present, Sabbath and Sunday, and even he acknowledged to Bro. Dodge that it seemed like 1844. Wish you could have been here. Both myself and Harriet have had a talk with Sr. W., and in many things wherein my mind was most severely perplexed, it has been relieved, which of course makes me feel quite differently. Then again, I have had opportunity to learn that quite a good many are disposed to be affected by my course in their relation to this cause. I am very vulnerable on the point of standing in another's way. I would rather do almost anything than that. Of course, I would not think it would make so much difference, if others would go no farther than I go. But they do not stop there. Right or wrong, they have got the idea fast in their minds that the testimonies and the messages stand or fall together; and if they give up the former they give up the latter also. Now I would much rather a person would be radical on the testimonies, **even if they are not all what they claim to be**, than give up the present truth; for this latter I believe to be vital to our future well-being. So the best light I see for myself is to case my influence in so far as it will go, with the body, and wait further developments.

Sr. W., is certainly doing a work which no other person seems fitted for doing, and which is of great value to this cause. So I will get along with my private trials and hold them in abeyance for the general good.

Yours truly,

U. Smith

“Here one can see that the fear of causing others to stumble in regards to giving up our doctrines (not the fear of giving up the testimonies) played a large part in him accommodating himself to Ellen White and staying with the church. Now let me take a step back and look once again as to why Elder Butler wrote those controversial articles in the review on inspiration. The *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society* states:

“‘It seems that to harmonize such quarrels about the trustworthiness of Ellen White’s testimonies, George I. Butler, General Conference president, wrote for the *Review* a series of ten articles on Inspiration, in which he sought to provide a biblical rationale for the theory of degrees of inspiration. According to E. K. Vande Vere, if Butler could show that the Bible contained human elements, then by implication, the Testimonies contained many more human elements and could not be regarded as absolutely perfect. Assuming that inspiration varies according to the various forms of revelation, Butler argued that the Scriptures are inspired just in the degree that the person is inspired who writes them. Since Scripture resulted from different forms of revelation, according to Butler, there likewise had to be distinct degrees of inspiration, of authority, and of imperfection. For him the Scriptures are authoritative in proportion to the degrees of inspiration,... Such a theory of inspiration led Butler to suggest a hierarchy within the biblical canon, in which the books of Moses and the words of Christ appeared in the first and highest level; the writings of the prophets and apostles and a portion, at least, of the Psalms in the second level; the historical books in the third level; and the Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, the Song of Songs, and the book of Job in the last and lowest level. Beyond those levels, Butler pointed out some specific passages (Rom 15:24; 1 Cor 1:16; 4:19; 7:7-40; 16:5-9; 2 Cor 11:21; Phil 2:19, 23; 2 Tim 4:9) which he could hardly call inspired. Thus, under the assumption that different forms of revelation implied distinct degrees of inspiration, Butler ended with a hierarchy within the biblical canon, and in fact even rejected some texts as uninspired.’

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“In other words as we have said before, a crisis was going on regarding Ellen White’s inspiration involving Uriah Smith among others and it would seem that finally the General Conference President himself (George Butler) wrote a series of articles to try to

¹⁹² *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society*, 10/1-2 (1999): 486-514

find a solution to the problem; which was to bring all inspiration including that of the Bible down to match what was being found in Ellen White's writings. Smith's letters leave little doubt that a big part of the crisis was Smith and others finding what they were convinced were problems in the Spirit of Prophecy (Mrs. White's writings) and in connection, things that had been omitted when some things were republished. We may never know for sure what all may have been omitted.

"There are statements from eye witnesses of her early visions and those who claim to have early written accounts of those visions that do not appear in her present writings. Many of these are from Christian people with a high moral reputation with their contemporaries of that day who ended up rejecting her because of the inaccuracies etc. in her visions. They claimed they did not believe that she passed the biblical tests of a prophet. For some reason we generally are never told of the testimony of these people, but are only told of the positive witnesses. Were those who rejected her as a true prophet telling the truth? That is a good question. We have no special reason to believe they were not, and their testimony certainly would be considered valid evidence in a court of law. However, at this late date it is hard to substantiate if they were telling the truth, which is why I have been generous and not included these witnesses in these notes. But, fortunately it doesn't matter if they were telling the truth. For all we need to determine is if her writings speak according to the Word of God or not and if error is present in them; for God will never inspire something that is not true and He will never contradict the Bible. Before leaving this point on Uriah Smith and visions as well as material being cut out of publications consider this interesting quote:

"At one time in the early days of the message, Father Butler and Elder Hart became confused in regard to the testimonies. In great distress they groaned and wept, but for some time they would not give the reasons for their perplexity. However, being pressed to give a reason for their faithless speech and manner, Elder Hart referred to a small pamphlet that had been published as the visions of Sister White, and said that to his certain knowledge, **some visions were not included**. Before a large audience, these brethren both talked strongly about their losing confidence in the work.

"My husband handed the little pamphlet to Elder Hart, and requested him to read what was printed on the title page. *"A Sketch of the Christian Experience and Views of Mrs. E. G. White,"* he read. For a moment there was silence, and then my husband explained that we

had been very short of means, and were able to print at first only a small pamphlet, and **he promised the brethren that when sufficient means was raised, the visions should be published more fully in book form.**

“Elder Butler was deeply moved, and after the explanation had been made, he said, “Let us bow before God.” Prayers, weeping, and confessions followed, such as we have seldom heard. Father Butler said: “Brother White, forgive me; I was afraid you were concealing from us some of the light we ought to have. Forgive me, Sister White.” Then the power of God came into the meeting in a wonderful manner.’¹⁹³

“How interesting. Two sincere old time workers in God’s cause notice that not all the visions are included and some have been left out and they are having a crisis of faith in the movement. They are not against Ellen White rather they are firm believers and are afraid some of the light will be lost to them. James White does not disagree that some visions have been left out rather he says the reason why is lack of funds but that soon when money is available it will be printed fully in book form. But the fact is that although a supplement was published to *Experience and Views* it contained no new material for 1851 or before, 1851 being when *Experience and Views* was originally published. Later, after James White’s death in 1882, *Experience and Views* was republished as the first part of *Early Writings*. But *Early Writings* contained nothing new for 1851 and before except two dreams that Ellen White had as a child before she was called as a prophetess.

“So, why were these visions left out? As the ministers wanted to know, why would not one want to preserve such inspired visions? Is there a connection between this and what Uriah Smith speaks of above? Are those early witnesses who rejected Ellen White right when they say there were visions that were wrong, that caused them to reject Ellen White, that were left out of her published writings? Fortunately, we don’t need to know any of these answers to be able to make a decision in regards to Ellen White. God has seen fit that we have enough other information to test her and come to a biblical decision.”

¹⁹³ *Selected Messages*, vol. 1, p. 53

John could tell by his quick glance at his wife that she was having a hard time staying awake. It was getting late. "Perhaps we should stop for now and continue tomorrow," he said. Once again they knelt asking God to continue leading them to find answers to the disturbing facts that had swept so much anguish into their lives.



1883 General Conference and Beyond

The day's work was finally over and John picked up his notes that Lily and he had been examining the previous evening. John glanced at his wife seated across from him and started to read:

"1883 was the year that Ellen White decided to put out a new edition of the *Testimonies* and, in the process, do some editing of them. This caused concern among some who felt it wrong for even a prophetess to change the words God had given. After all, the prophets of old didn't even understand many times what they wrote and had to study their own writings, like everyone else, to figure out what God was saying. Ellen White maintained that it was not the words that were inspired in the Bible and her writings but the thoughts.¹⁹⁴ Thought inspiration fit the bill and took care of the problem. For the first time in our church's history, thought inspiration was advocated. Higher critics years before had come up with the theory of thought inspiration. One has to wonder at the good fortune of the higher critics, who tore down the Bible, to be the first to come up with the truth that had escaped the Jews through the ages and Christianity for thousands of years before Ellen White promoted this doctrine. The

¹⁹⁴ While she maintained that she was thought inspired, in some places she seems to indicate that the words were chosen for her as well. See the chapter in this book entitled *Ellen White and the Church Speak Out*.

General Conference quickly passed a resolution at the General Conference session in 1883 calling for the revision and stating that:

Whereas, Many of these testimonies were written under the most unfavorable circumstances, the writer being too heavily pressed with anxiety and labor to devote critical thought to the grammatical perfection of the writings, and they were printed in such haste as to allow these imperfections to pass uncorrected; and —

Whereas, We believe the light given by God to His servants is by the enlightenment of the mind, thus imparting the thoughts, and not (except in rare cases) the very words in which the ideas should be expressed; therefore —

Resolved, That in the republication of these volumes such verbal changes be made as to remove the above-named imperfections, as far as possible, without in any measure changing the thought.¹⁹⁵

“Even this modification of what Adventist doctrine seems to have been before 1883 still did not provide a basis for mistakes in inspiration. It only gave the right for the changing of the words. Later, as we have seen, those in the know at the top would feel the need to define thought inspiration as not only not giving the words but also not ensuring that no mistake would appear in an inspired writing. This was felt necessary in order to be able to account for Mrs. White’s mistakes. However, the original doctrine of the words of scripture being inspired was far from dead in Adventism. The church would officially teach it in its publications and thus contradict its statement of 1883. The important thing to notice is that whether it is thought inspiration, or the words also being inspired, at this stage in Adventism, they both left no room for factual mistakes in inspiration.

“Even though 1883 had been shocking to some church leaders at the very top in regard to the Spirit of Prophecy (Ellen White), the church moved on, and the majority of the laity and ministers appear to have not fully internalized the full extent of the matter. But for many of that generation of top leaders in the church, it would never be quite the same. They now knew in their hearts that their prophet was not as perfect as they had at once thought. But they certainly were not going

¹⁹⁵ *Review Herald*, Nov. 27, 1883, 741-742

to talk about it anymore than necessary. Meanwhile, time marched on, and for most, the memory of such matters faded.

“In 1890, for instance, it was stated in the *Signs of the Times* that ‘the New Testament does not speak of inspiration as being given to men or of men being inspired. It was the writings which were inspired or, literally, God-breathed. The New Testament declares this repeatedly of the Old Testament. See 2 Tim 3:15, 16; Acts 1:16; Heb 3:7; 1 Peter 1:11. Peter classes Paul’s writings with the Scriptures, and Paul declares that his words were given by the Spirit of God. 2 Peter 3:16; 1 Cor 2:13.’¹⁹⁶

“In 1890, we also find in *Bible Readings for the Home* that came out that year these words:

“‘Then all the prophecies of the Old Testament, as well as those of the New, were dictated by the Spirit of Christ and are therefore designed to be studied by Christians.’¹⁹⁷

“We also find in the same year in the *Sabbath School Quarterly* the same doctrine expounded, where it says:

“‘**Have Inspired.** -The holy men of old certainly knew the salvation of Christ personally. (See Gen. 49:18; Ex. 15:2; Ps. 9:14; 51:12) In fact, the whole inspired psalmody of Israel breathes of the salvation of God, both present and future. Yet they did not understand the plan of salvation in its fuller development, as did and do those of the Christian era. This is expressly declared in the scripture (verse 12), in the prophets themselves (Dan. 12:4, 9), by Christ (Matt. 13:16, 17), by the apostles (Rom. 16:25, 26; Eph. 3:5); but this understanding was not necessary, for God by his Spirit spake through them things which they did not know nor understand. They were the instruments; it was the Spirit of Christ, which was in them that testified, not the prophets themselves. The Spirit of God knows the mind and thoughts of God (1 Cor. 2:13; 2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Peter 1:2.’¹⁹⁸

“It should be noted regarding the foregoing quote that no *Sabbath School Quarterly* is published by the conference without going through an extensive approval process for doctrine and content. This was being officially taught to all the churches by the denomination. It

¹⁹⁶ Editorial, *Questions on Inspiration ST*, Oct. 27, 1890.

¹⁹⁷ *Bible Readings for the Home Circle*, 1890, p. 15

¹⁹⁸ *Sabbath School Lessons* on the First Epistle of Peter for Senior Classes June 1893, p. 7 -8

therefore was, for all practical purposes, official doctrine of the church. Those who claim that our church in the late 1800s taught an inspirational doctrine that includes mistakes are simply mistaken, as this quote proves. It is true, as we will see, that a few at the top of the organization held these views of a mistaken inspiration, but the official teaching of the church that came through to most of the ministers and all of the laity was a perfect inspiration without mistakes.

"In 1911 regarding inspiration we find:

"Milton C. Wilcox, who was Editor of the Signs of the Times, said:

""The original words, of course; the words by which prophet and apostle spoke. It was not the person who was inspired; it was the God-breathed Word. "All Scripture is [literally] God-breathed." 2 Tim. 3:16. "The Spirit of Jehovah spake by me, and His word was upon my tongue." 2 Sam. 23:2. "Which the Holy Spirit spake before by the mouth of David." Acts 1:16. "Which things also we speak, not in words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Spirit teacheth" (1 Cor. 2:13). God moved upon each of the holy writers to use the best language of which he was capable to express the thoughts of God. Those words are inspired.' ¹⁹⁹

"Notice carefully Wilcox's view on inspiration, for while it contains the assertion that the words are inspired, it also contradicts that assertion by saying that 'the holy writers used the best language of which he was capable,' thus indicating that the words are not, in fact, inspired. Then, right after contradicting himself, he states once again that 'Those words are inspired.' This plainly demonstrates the struggles that the church was going through as it tried to fit Ellen White's new declaration of thought inspiration into a traditional Christian framework. Indeed, this seems to show, at least in this one man's life, a kind of transitional state between the two doctrines of inspiration.

"Then in 1914 we find once again the traditional understanding of inspiration inspiring the words and keeping them free from error.

""As with the ancient prophets, the talking is done by the Holy Spirit through her [Ellen White's] vocal organs. The prophets "spake as they

¹⁹⁹ *Questions and Answers*, 1911 edition, p. 12. This was a book reprinting answers by the editor to questions that readers had sent in that had been previously printed in the *Signs of the Times* magazine.

were moved by the Holy Ghost." 2 Peter 1:21. David said, "The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue." 2 Sam. 23:2. In Acts 1:16 we are told that the Holy Ghost spoke by the mouth of David. So also, her vision was like that of Balaam, "entranced, with eyes rolled upward." Num. 24:16, Spurrell's translation, margin.' ²⁰⁰

"In 1917, we find the new doctrine of thought inspiration creeping out for one of the first times in a meaningful way in the first revision of *Bible Readings for the Home*. While in the original *Bible Readings* the inspiration of the words was upheld, in this revision we read:

""What name is applied to Jesus as the revelation of the thought of God in the flesh?" ²⁰¹

""When "the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us," the thought of God was revealed in human flesh. When holy men of God "spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost," the thought of God was revealed in human language. The union of the divine and the human in the manifestation of God's thought in the flesh is declared to be "the mystery of godliness;" and there is the same mystery in the union of the divine thought and human language. The two revelations of God, in human flesh and in human speech, are both called the Word of God, and both are the Word of life. He who fails to find Christ thus in the Scriptures will not be able to feed upon the Word as the life-giving Word.'" ²⁰²

"We see the change in doctrine. Now it is only thought inspiration, and this reveals the shocking fact of what lengths thought inspiration can lead one to in order to defend it. To try to make it seem logical and make sense to the reader, this revised version of *Bible Readings* seems, in this place, to lower Jesus down to merely the thought of God. However, in 1926 we find the more traditional view of inspiration once again maintained. We read:

""In 1926 and again in his book's revision in 1928, Benjamin L. House, professor of Bible and Homiletics at Pacific Union College, devoted a special section of his *Analytical Studies in Bible Doctrines for Seventh-day Adventist Colleges* to the topic of The Inspiration of the Bible. One of the first paragraphs of that section was a quotation... stating that since inspiration is *God speaking through men*, the Old Testament is just as

²⁰⁰ *The Advent Review & Sabbath Herald*, Nov. 5, 1914

²⁰¹ *Bible Readings for the Home Circle*, 1917, p. 22

²⁰² *Bible Readings for the Home Circle*, 1917, p. 23

much the Word of God as though God spake every single word of it with His own lips. "All Scripture is inspired," 2 Tim. 3:16, that the selection of the very words of Scripture in the original languages was overruled by the Holy Spirit in some [way], and that the writers did experience the guiding and controlling influence of the divine Spirit in the choice of material. He guided the writer even in the choice of what imperial decrees, genealogies, official letters, state papers, or historical matters he might find necessary for recording the divine message of salvation.' ²⁰³

"In 1927, Carlyle B. Haynes, the president of the South American Division of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, wrote a book titled *The Bible: Is It a True Book?* He said:

"The inspiration of Scripture is altogether different from genius or piety. It is not the same as the inspiration of the poet.... The Bible is a divine revelation embodied in an inspired book... By inspiration, God makes known to man that which he could never know or discover for himself. By inspiration, God so guides and controls man that his writings, even of things not revealed, [are] precise and accurate... Inspiration enables a man to record accurately either a revelation previously received, or an event or fact or saying into which revelation did not enter at all.... The revelation of God in the written Word is full, complete, and perfect.... A perfect revelation from God to man is required if mankind is to be without excuse in the judgment. Inspiration is the means by which God, in carrying out His saving purpose, not only makes facts or truths known to men, but also confers the ability to convey these facts accurately to others. It not only imparts to man the capacity to receive the revelation from God, but also the power to communicate divine truth to other human beings.... This involves an obligation on his part, [the prophet] under God's guidance, sometimes to speak, sometimes to write, a fact, a conversation, or a discourse.... to narrate a history, sometimes to compile and edit existing documents.... The Bible declares that God did inspire its writers and writings. It does not tell us how He did this. Therefore, we have nothing to do with the method of inspiration; we have everything to do with the fact of inspiration, for we must accept it or reject it.... If the revelation was committed to vessels of tainted or corrupt material, so that the infusion corrupted or injured or distorted

²⁰³ House, *Analytical Studies*, 60 (italics supplied in replacement to the original emphasis). As quoted in *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society*, 10/1-2 (1999): 486-514. This quotation was still preserved in the 1928 edition of House's book.

the truth; or if the revelation was communicated by men who stated simply the result of their own observation, or used the utmost of their native ability, reasoning out as best they could, unaided, what could be useful to man, in either case it would scarcely be what might reasonably be expected from God. It would not be like God.... The record of the utterance of this revelation by the prophet is equally under God's exclusive control. This is inspiration.... If the divine control stopped with communicating the revelation, then we have no revelation at all, but merely a human account of a divine revelation. That is, there was a revelation, but it perished as such with the men to whom it was imparted, and all that the world has now is a fallible account of that impression.... The words of the Bible were not dictated to the inspired writers as a man would dictate to a stenographer.... Inspiration means that the Spirit, by a mysterious control beyond our comprehension, but in which we should believe, acted in such a way upon chosen men while they were writing the books of the Bible, that they were supernaturally guided in communicating the will of God.... The product was so controlled that it became the word of God which liveth and abideth forever....' ²⁰⁴

"Carlyle B. Haynes was one of the most prominent Seventh-day Adventist evangelists, church administrators, and authors during the years of the 1920s, 30s, and 40s. In his life, he authored forty-five books. His statement above on inspiration mirrors what we were raised to believe," John said. "And although with all this research I am now convinced of the verbal view of inspiration because it seems to be more biblical, this view of Haynes does put the Bible and inspiration in an inerrant place. Indeed, some would probably try to define Haynes' view as a form of verbal inspiration. ²⁰⁵

"Moving on, Alonzo J. Wearner, author of Seventh-day Adventist denominational textbooks, wrote in his 1931 college text:

"... men may err, but the Scripture cannot; for it is the word of God Himself, who can neither mistake, deceive, nor be deceived.... The Bible was not given as a textbook on science—except the science of salvation. Nevertheless, every statement therein agrees with man's

²⁰⁴ *The Bible: Is It a True Book?*, 1927 edition, p. 67-77, by Carlyle B. Haynes. This book was not available to researchers on the internet. I have uploaded my copy to Internet Archives for your benefit.

²⁰⁵ The author's research, including looking at Scripture, did indeed eventually lead him to the certain conviction of the correctness of the view of verbal inspiration.

discoveries, for the Creator is its author. Furthermore, it goes far beyond mankind's puny mind, "for there are mysteries in the realm of natural science which still elude the research of the wisest."²⁰⁶

"The 1933 *Sabbath School Quarterly* said:

"The Bible is therefore inspired, God-breathed. It is the transcript of the divine mind, the unfolding of the divine purpose, the revelation of the divine will.... Inspiration does not leave a man to speak his own words. Balaam realized this in his futile attempt to curse Israel; for he said, "Have I now any power at all to say anything? The word that God putteth in my mouth, that shall I speak." Num. 22:38. The Lord said to Ezekiel (Eze. 2:7), "Thou shalt speak My words unto them;" again, "The word of the Lord came expressly unto Ezekiel" (Eze. 1:3). This is inspiration.... Nothing is more certain than that the later writers of the Bible accepted as true all that preceding writers had penned. It is equally certain that they accepted as literally true the historical portions of the Scriptures; and that they acknowledged the authority of God behind all that had been written. (See Isa. 48:21; 43:16.)"²⁰⁷

"1933 was also the year that General Conference Vice President William H. Branson wrote his book, *In Defense of the Faith*. In it, he said:

"Seventh-Day Adventists Fundamentalists

"Seventh-day Adventists are absolute Fundamentalists. As has already been pointed out, they hold strictly to all the great fundamentals of the gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. They have nothing in common with Modernists..."²⁰⁸

"There can be no doubt that a minister as experienced as Pastor Branson, who was heading up as large a denomination as he was, that had previously been President of the Southern Union Conference and also the African Division of Seventh-day Adventists, who had lived through the segment of Adventist history (1887-1961) that he had, and who also witnessed the controversies between Modernists and Fundamentalists that were at their height at that time, would know

²⁰⁶ *Fundamentals of Bible Doctrine*, p. 12, published in 1931. This was the basic doctrines text book for training Adventist ministers well into the 1950's.

²⁰⁷ *Senior Sabbath School Quarterly*, No. 152, 1933

²⁰⁸ *In Defense of the Faith*, William H. Branson, p. 28-29

exactly what Fundamentalists stood for and believed. They were very bold in publishing their beliefs, and it was a short list to remember. There can also be little doubt that Branson was in a unique position to know what the majority of Adventist laymen and ministers believed at that time and for quite some time before, and according to him, they were Fundamentalists. Let us look at a history book on Fundamentalism to see what a Fundamentalist believed. Then we will know, according to Branson, some of the doctrines that Adventists held.

“‘The foundation of Fundamentalism is the conviction that the Bible is divinely inspired: **plenarily**, verbally, infallibly, **inerrantly**. This confidence in the Bible’s infallibility, and a literal interpretation of it, is the fountainhead of Fundamentalism.’ ²⁰⁹

“‘Plenarily’ means every part of it. ‘Verbally’ means every word of it. ‘Infallibly and inerrantly’ mean it cannot be wrong or false in any way or thing.

“You will remember, Dear, that we discovered a book written in 1944 that seems to hint at the new idea of inspiration having mistakes. It was called *The Testimony of Jesus* by Francis McLellan Wilcox. Wilcox was careful how he wrote what he wrote, but he insinuated that prophets can make mistakes. This was a change from the Wilcox of 1911 who, as we quoted above, felt that God inspired the words of a prophet. “By the 1950s, one or two books on Ellen White were promoting the view of an inspiration that makes mistakes (see pages 6-9 of this book for more info). But by far the majority of books and the official teaching of the church held to the traditional view of inspiration without error. It would appear that the few high church leaders in the know were slowly beginning to leak out information necessary to make a change in the doctrine of inspiration. This appears to have been done so the laity would eventually be accustomed to a new model of inspiration that would accommodate a prophet that makes mistakes. Thus, when the truth of Mrs. White’s mistakes created a major crisis, as they knew it would one day, they would avoid the organization being destroyed. However, it is important to note that, as near as I can tell, most of even the highest officials in the church were in the dark as to these matters and still believed and taught the doctrine that inspiration was without error.

²⁰⁹ *The Heritage and History of Fundamentalism & Fundamental Baptists* p. 23, David W. Cloud, 2020

For example, the General Conference organized Bible Conference of the 1950s, the very first to take place since 1919, stated in its written report:

“‘The foregoing survey shows that there is much archaeological evidence at our disposal that we can use in support of the authenticity of the Biblical text and the veracity of the historical parts of the Bible. This material used in the right way can give tremendous strength to **our fundamentalist position of accepting the whole Bible as God's inspired word.** The years of study in this field have profoundly strengthened my confidence in the sure foundation on which our faith is built. We do not need to be afraid to proclaim Bible truths that we cannot prove yet by outside sources, as long as we remain on that sure foundation that has never failed us yet, the infallible Word of God.’

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“‘Though Bible critics have undergone crushing defeats during recent years as a result of archaeological discoveries, Satan has by no means given up his attempts to destroy confidence in the Scriptures. Now that their historicity has been established, he is willing that men should accept them as authentic as long as they are not impressed that Bible principles apply today as they did in years past.’”²¹¹

“‘From the 1950s, Seventh-day Adventists would see the rise of new trends that would multiply during the 1970s and early 1980s. Among those trends would be an increasing tendency to define inspiration from factual studies on the person and writings of Ellen White.’”²¹²

John straightened himself and stretched his sore muscles as he continued, “The above quote shows that after the fifties, things began to change in what was presented to the ministers and laity. A snowballing action began to take place until at the present, most students training in Seventh-day Adventist colleges are taught that inspiration is full of mistakes, including the Bible. But the most important thing to notice are the words: ‘Among those trends would be an increasing tendency to define inspiration from factual studies on the person and writings of Ellen White.’ So, in other words, according to this, the changes took place because of studying inspiration in regard to Ellen White and what that revealed. The problem with this

²¹⁰ 1953 *Our Firm Foundation* p. 116

²¹¹ 1953 *Our Firm Foundation*

²¹² *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society*, 10/1-2 (1999): 486-514

whole philosophy is that the new prophet on the block, who does not meet the standard of inerrancy as laid out in the Bible, is allowed to define what inspiration consists of in order to pass the test of a biblical prophet, i.e., the requirement of having inerrancy in their inspired writings. Rather than going to the Bible and testing her by the Bible, we are testing her by her writings. Indeed, as the foregoing has shown, the whole doctrine was changed not based on some Bible student finding truth in the Bible, but rather mistakes being found in Ellen White's writings and those in authority trying to make that fact fit a true prophet by studying how she defined inspiration.

"It would be similar to asking the famous occult prophetess of the twentieth century, Jean Dixon, how she can be a true prophet when she failed the biblical test of a prophet by getting some things wrong. She simply answers by saying, 'Well, the problem is that you have to realize that the Bible is old and shrouded in the mist of the ages. You are fortunate enough to have a prophetess as a contemporary in your day, and that is me. You don't have to depend on something as uncertain as that old Bible as to what inspiration is. You need to look at what I have written on inspiration and how it should be defined. You will then see that the Christian world has been wrong for all these thousands of years on what inspiration is. For inspiration does contain mistakes at times. If you will only be reasonable, you will see I do pass the tests of a true prophet.'

"The problem is that the prophet being tested is allowed to define the answers to the examination. No one claiming to be a prophet would ever fail the tests of a prophet if they were allowed to define the answers to the test questions that they come short in. As an example of this, I will read the following quote that was published a number of times in slightly different forms over the years and in different places by the Adventist church:

"'As Seventh-day Adventists, we are uniquely fortunate in approaching this question [inspiration]. We are not left to find our way, drawing our conclusions only from writings penned 19 centuries and more ago, which have come down to us through varied transcriptions and translations. Concerning inspiration, with us it is almost contemporary matter, for we have had a prophet in our midst.

"'What is more, rather than having in our possession only relatively short documents or a handful of letters, as is the case with the extant records of the Bible prophets, we have the full range of Ellen G. White writings penned through a period of 70 years, embodying her published books, her 4,600 periodical articles, and her manuscripts,

letters, and diaries. We have also the testimonies of her contemporaries' eyewitness accounts of those who lived and worked closely with her. Both she and they discussed many points touching on the visions and on the manner in which the light was imparted to her, and how she, in turn, conveyed the messages to those for whom they were intended. In other words, the eyewitnesses discussed the operation of inspiration.

“Further, she wrote in a modern language, so a large number of people today can study her writings in the original language, without needing to depend on a translation. Rarely, too, is it necessary to depend upon a transcription.

“If we accept Ellen White as an honest witness, then her observations concerning her work, her statements on inspiration, and her declaration as to the work of the prophets of old are particularly significant to us. Thus, what she has said of the work of the prophet in action can well form a basis for arriving at an accurate understanding of inspiration.’²¹³

“Notice how the Bible is degraded in the above quote by insinuating that they are old writings that are subject to the corruption of the ages. This is typical of one defending a false prophet. If the prophet doesn’t reach up to the Bible standard, then bring the Bible down to the prophet. Furthermore, it insinuates that the Bible suffered corruptions and was not preserved by God as He promised and as our forefathers have believed. This statement was written by Arthur L. White, the grandson of Ellen White and the secretary of the White Estate at the time. This demonstrates the philosophy that was used increasingly after the 1950s to define inspiration. Not all agreed, however, with the new views on inspiration even if they were manufactured to defend Ellen White. Not only did most of the laity not know what was beginning to happen, but many ministers of the sixties, seventies, and even early eighties did not realize the mistakes that existed in Ellen White’s writings and so did not see the need for the change in doctrine. After all, the reason for the change was certainly kept on a low-profile basis. One such minister appears to have been the famous and most successful evangelist George Burnside, who was a personal friend and influenced the life of Dr. Collin Standish. Burnside was an

²¹³ Written by Arthur L. White, "Toward an Adventist Concept of Inspiration," appeared in issues dated January 12, 19, 26, and February 2, 1978, of the *Adventist Review* as well as other places, including being part of a book.

older man by the nineteen seventies and felt very uncomfortable with the way things were going regarding the new views on inspiration and the New Theology coming into the church. He would end up standing against it and passing the torch to his younger friend, Dr. Standish.

“He was Ministerial Association Secretary of the Australasian Division in 1970 and wrote in *Ministry Magazine*, the official magazine for Adventist ministers:

“1. The Very Nature of Our God Demands an Infallible Bible. How could a holy God, in whom is no darkness, One who “cannot lie” (Titus 1:2), inspire men to write anything less than a perfect, unerring, infallible account? “Infallible,” I understand, means incapable of teaching deception; while “unerring” means not liable to be proven false or mistaken. If there are scientific errors in the Bible, why should there not be errors of theology and of salvation as well? If the God who made and guides the stars does not know the correct movement of the stars, what kind of God is He? If in the original text He inspired mistakes in the common things of life, can He be trusted in the great issues of eternity? The issue cannot be side-stepped or shelved. If one part is erroneous, can any of it be trusted? 2. The Bible Claims Infallibility: “every word of God is pure” (Prov. 30:5). These words are pure—free from error. If the Bible is liable to error in one place, or in one particular, what guarantee have we that it is not in error in another? To brush some sections of God's Word aside as trivialities is to reveal a very irreverent attitude.... Jesus, Heaven's Glorious Commander, accepted the Scriptures as unerring. We do well to stay by our one and only Example. He whispers down the ages to us today: “He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life” (John 8:12). “Thy word is truth” (chap. 17:17). “The scripture cannot be broken” (chap. 10:35). “My words shall not pass away” (Matt. 24:35). Jesus appealed to the Scriptures as the final authority; never once do we find Him questioning its truth. He made no excuse or apology for anything written there. He cites or alludes to it more than four hundred times. Our Lord did not belong to the liberals or to the higher critics. Christ accepted the Bible as it existed without comment or question, and His acceptance places on it the final seal of approval.”²¹⁴

²¹⁴ George Burnside in *Ministry Magazine*, 1970, p. 6, article “Our Infallible Bible”

“Dr. Standish, inspired by men such as George Burnside, would go on to be one of the founders of the Historic Adventist Movement, standing against the apostasy of new theology creeping into the church and still holding to an inerrant view of inspiration. It would seem likely Burnside was unaware of the true extent and nature of the mistakes in Ellen White’s writings and certainly never knew the real reason why the Adventist church was shifting its view on the doctrine of inspiration.

“Dr. Colin D. Standish & Dr. Russell R. Standish in 2004 wrote: ‘Let us examine the serious dilemma in which we are placed if both of the following claims are factual: 1. Satan inspires men and women to proclaim by voice and pen that which is truth mixed with that which is erroneous; 2. The Holy Spirit inspires men and women to proclaim by voice and pen that which is truth mixed with that which is erroneous. The searching believer—if both of these propositions are accepted—is left with no basis upon which to discern between that which is inspired by the devil and that which Christ inspires through the Holy Spirit. This is a quandary of insuperable proportions. **One particle of error** destroys truth irrespective of the quantity of truth remaining.’²¹⁵

“One can see that the Seventh-day Adventist Church’s present shift towards an inspiration filled with mistakes is not a historical position in the church as far as the majority of laity and ministry are concerned. Tomorrow, I want to look into the history of the doctrine of inspiration in the Christian church in general.”

“Honey,” Lily said, “it is really good, but do you realize it is twelve o’clock?”

“Wow,” said John, “I knew it was getting late, but I didn’t know it was that late. I guess we better be getting to bed.” So, the two knelt hand in hand and asked the Lord to keep the love of the truth burning in their hearts and to continue to guide them into His truth.

²¹⁵ *The Greatest of all the Prophets*, by Russell R. Standish & Colin D. Standish, p. 101



The Cloud of Witnesses

John leaned back in his chair and thumbed through the documents on his desk. The doctrine that scriptural inspiration consists of no mistakes, that is inerrancy, is what the Christian church has believed since ancient times, John thought. He glanced down at his accumulated research. Yes, there was no question. Silently he read it again:

Clement of Rome (A.D. 30–100) says, “Be contentious and zealous, brothers, but about things that relate to salvation. You have searched the Scriptures, which are true, which were given by the Holy Spirit; you know that nothing unrighteous or counterfeit is written in them.”

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Justin Martyr (A.D. 100–165) wrote: “When you hear the utterances of the prophets spoken as it were personally, you must not suppose that they are spoken by the inspired men themselves but by the divine Word who moves them.” For “we must not suppose that the language proceeds from the men who are inspired, but from the divine Word which moves them.” “To him [Moses] did God communicate that divine prophetic gift . . . and then after him to the rest of the prophets...who use nothing from their own human conception, but from the gift vouchsafed to them by God alone.” For “the energy of the Divine Spirit . . . descending from heaven and using righteous men as instruments like a harp or lyre, [does this so He] might reveal to us a knowledge of things divine and heavenly.” In short, “the Holy Spirit

²¹⁶ A Seismic Shift in the Inerrancy Debate (Norman L. Geisler, Douglas E. Potter 2018)

of prophecy taught us this, telling us by Moses that God spoke thus.”

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Irenaeus (2nd cent.) declared: “the Scriptures are indeed perfect, since they were spoken by the Word of God [Christ] and His Spirit.” He added, “The Scriptures [are the] ground and pillar of our faith.” And ‘the writings of those apostles, . . . being the disciples of truth, are above all falsehood.” “The Scriptures are indeed perfect, since they were spoken by the Word of God and His Spirit.” 218

John Wycliffe (1324-1384) Wycliffe believed the Bible to be the Word of God without error from beginning to end. One of Wycliffe’s major works was “*On the Truth of Sacred Scripture*,” which was “a defense of the authority and inerrancy of the Bible.” 219 Wycliffe wrote: “It is impossible for any part of the Holy Scriptures to be wrong. In Holy Scripture is all the truth; one part of Scripture explains another.” 220 Wycliffe believed that the Scripture was ‘a divine exemplar conceived in the mind of God before creation, and before the material Scriptures were written down.” 221

No doubt he received his conviction from texts such as: “For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven.” (Ps. 119:89)

Martin Luther (A.D. 1483-1546) held that the Bible was the written Word of God. He wrote, “This exactly as it is with God. His word is so much like himself that the Godhead is wholly in it.” Speaking of the Book of Genesis, Luther declared, “It must be observed, however, that another one is the **author** of this book, namely, the Holy Ghost.” He adds elsewhere, “He is called a prophet who has received his understanding directly from God without further intervention, into whose mouth the Holy Ghost has given the words [emphasis in original]. For He (the Spirit) is the source, and they have no other authority than God.’ ‘So, we refer all of Scripture to the Holy Ghost.” “We must know what we believe, namely what God’s Word says... You must rely on the Word of God alone.” So, “The Scriptures, although they too are written by men, are neither of men nor from men but from God.” Luther adds, “I have learned to ascribe this honor

217 Ibid.

218 Ibid.

219 *Faith vs. Modern Bible Versions*, p. 445, Rev. David Cloud, 2005

220 David Fountain, *John Wycliffe*, p. 48, as quoted in Ibid.

221 Malcolm Lambert, *Medieval Heresy: Popular Movements from the Gregorian Reform to the Reformation*, 1998, p. 23, as quoted in *Faith vs. Modern Bible Versions*, Rev. David Cloud, 2005

(namely infallibility) only to the books which are termed canonical, so that I confidently believe that not one of their authors erred." Thus, "when one blasphemously gives a lie to God in a single word, or says it is a minor matter if God is blasphemed or called a liar, one blasphemes the entire God and makes light of all blasphemy."²²²

John Calvin (A.D. 1509–1564) [claimed] "...the Bible was the inspired and inerrant Word of God on whatever topic it addressed." Indeed, he went so far as to say that "We owe to Scripture the same reverence which we owe to God; because it has proceeded from Him alone, and has nothing belonging to man mixed with it. . . . The Law and the prophets are not a doctrine delivered according to the will and pleasure of men but dictated by the Holy Spirit."

Calvin insisted that "Our faith in doctrine is not established until we have a perfect conviction that God is its author. Hence, the highest proof of Scripture is uniformly taken from the character of Him whose word it is." Hence, "the full authority which they ought to possess with the faithful is not recognized, unless they are believed to have come from heaven," as directly as if God had been heard giving utterance to them...." For the Bible is "the composition of prophets but dictated by the Holy Spirit. For the writers of Scripture . . . were sure and authentic amanuenses of the Holy Spirit; and therefore, their writings are to be regarded as the oracles of God...." Hence "our wisdom ought to consist in embracing with gentle docility, and without any exceptions, all that is delivered in the sacred Scripture."²²³

John Owen (1616-83) was the respected systematic theologian of the Puritan tradition. One of his greatest works on the "*Divine Original of Scriptures*," sought to vindicate the purity and integrity of the Hebrew and Greek texts of the Old and New Testament.... He wrote: "That as the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament were immediately and entirely given out by God himself, His mind being in them represented unto us without the least interveniency of such mediums and ways as were capable of giving change or alteration to the least iota or syllable; so, by His good and merciful providential dispensation, in His love to His word and church, His whole word, as

²²² A Seismic Shift in the Inerrancy Debate (Norman L. Geisler, Douglas E. Potter, 2018)

²²³ Ibid.

first given out by Him, is preserved unto us entire in the original languages.” ²²⁴

Francis Turretin (1623-1687) was a Protestant leader and theologian. In his three-volume *Institutio Theologicae Elencticae* (Summary of Refutational Theology), which was published in 1679, 1682, and 1685, he said: “Unless unimpaired integrity characterize the Scriptures, they could not be regarded as the sole rule of faith and practice, and the door would be thrown wide open to atheists, libertines, enthusiasts, and other profane persons like them for destroying its authenticity and overthrowing the foundation of salvation. For since nothing false can be an object of faith, how can the Scriptures be held as authentic and reckoned divine if liable to contradictions and corruptions? Nor can it be said that these corruptions are only in smaller things which do not affect the foundation of faith. For if once the authenticity of the Scriptures is taken away (which would result even from the incurable corruption of one passage), how could our faith rest on what remains? AND IF CORRUPTION IS ADMITTED IN THOSE OF LESSER IMPORTANCE, WHY NOT IN OTHERS OF GREATER? WHO COULD ASSURE ME THAT NO ERROR OR BLEMISH HAD CREPT INTO FUNDAMENTAL PASSAGES? Or what reply could be given to a subtle atheist or heretic who should pertinaciously assert that this or that passage less in his favor had been corrupted? IT WILL NOT DO TO SAY THAT DIVINE PROVIDENCE WISHED TO KEEP IT FREE FROM SERIOUS CORRUPTIONS, BUT NOT FROM MINOR. *For besides the fact that this is gratuitous, it cannot be held without injury, as if lacking in the necessary things which are required for the full credibility of Scripture itself. Nor can we readily believe that God, who dictated and inspired each and every word to these inspired men, would not take care of their entire preservation.* If men use the utmost care diligently to preserve their words, especially if they are of any importance, as for example a testament or contract, in order that it may not be corrupted, how much more, must we suppose, would God take care of his word which he intended as a testament and seal of his covenant with us, so that it might not be corrupted; especially when he could easily foresee and prevent such corruptions in order to establish the faith of his church?” ^{225 226}

²²⁴ Quoted in *Forever Infallible and Inerrant* (Jeffrey Khoo, 2011), p.180

²²⁵ Quoted in, *Faith vs. the Modern Bible Versions*, p. 720, by David Cloud, 2005.

²²⁶ For a study on God’s preservation of Scripture and the manuscript evidence, we recommend to the reader David Cloud’s Book, *Faith vs. the Modern Bible Versions*, 2005.

Mathew Henry (late 1600s & early 1700s) said: “The scriptures are the oracles of God: they are a divine revelation, they come from heaven, are of infallible truth, and of eternal consequence as oracles.” ²²⁷

John Wesley (1700s) said: “Nay, if there be any mistakes in the Bible there may as well be a thousand. If there is one falsehood in that book it did not come from the God of truth.” ²²⁸

The Post-Reformation View on Scripture from Francis Turretin (*Institute of Elenctic Theology*) to B. B. Warfield and Charles Hodge (Inspiration, 1881) stood firmly in the orthodox tradition. This has been documented in a Harvard dissertation by H. D. McDonald (*Theories of Revelation: An Historical Study, 1700–1960*). Warfield and Hodge summarize this period well: The Bible is the Word of God. “The New Testament writers continually assert of the Scriptures of the Old Testament...that they ARE THE WORD OF GOD. What their writers said God said.” The Bible is infallible. “. . . the line of inspired or not inspired, or infallible or fallible, can never rationally be drawn between the thoughts and words of Scripture.” “Every element of Scripture, whether doctrine or history, of which God has guaranteed the infallibility, must be infallible in its verbal expression.” “And throughout the whole of his work the Holy Spirit was present . . . securing the errorless expression in language of the thought designed by God.” ²²⁹

L. Gaussen, D.D (1841) Prominent author, scholar, Bible translator, theological seminary professor, and pastor, said: “I do not think we can be presented with a question more essential to the existence of our faith than this: Is the Bible from God? Is it entirely from God? Or is it true that it contains ...the offspring of rashness in the writers and [is] tainted with error? This is the decisive fundamental question: a question of life! ...If it be true, on the one hand, that all which the Bible contains is not important, affects not the faith, and does not relate to Jesus Christ; and if, also, it be true that there is in this Book nothing inspired but what in the reader's judgment is of importance, does affect faith, and relates to Jesus Christ; then is such a Bible a totally different book [from] the Bible of the Fathers, the Reformers, and the saints of every age. This is fallible; theirs was perfect. This contains chapters or portions, sentences or expressions, to be excepted

²²⁷ *Matthew Henry Commentary* on Romans 3:21

²²⁸ *Journal VI*, 117

²²⁹ *A Seismic Shift in the Inerrancy Debate* (Norman L. Geisler, Douglas E. Potter, 2018)

from those which are from God; theirs was the altogether inspired Word....”²³⁰

Charles Spurgeon (1855), the prince of preachers and mightily used of God, said: “This volume is the writing of the living God; each letter was penned with an Almighty finger; each word in it dropped from the everlasting lips; each sentence was dictated by the Holy Spirit.... Scripture is not a record of the words of mere men. [For he says that if that was the case] we might reject them.”... Instead, Scripture is the very Word of God: “This Bible is a book of authority; it is an authorized book, for God has written it.”²³¹ “We must settle in our minds that the Word of God must certainly be true, absolutely infallible, and beyond all question.”²³²

The Protest of the Archbishops and Bishops of the Church of England in United Protest to Bishop Colenso, in 1863, said: “All our hopes for eternity, the very foundation of faith; our nearest and dearest consolations, are taken from us if one line of that sacred book (the Bible) be declared unfaithful or untrustworthy.”

Dean Burgon of Oxford in the late 1800s, the great textual scholar, wrote: “The Bible is none other than the voice of Him that sitteth upon the throne. Every book of it, every chapter of it, every verse of it, every word of it, every syllable of it, every letter of it, is direct utterance of the Most High. The Bible is none other than the Word of God, not some part of it more, some part of it less, but all alike the utterance of Him who sitteth upon the throne, faultless, unerring, supreme.”²³³

Thomas N. Ralston (1806–1891), in his book, *Elements of Divinity*, p. 94, said: “Inspiration—plenary inspiration—was needed at every step—at every chapter, sentence, and word. It was needed to teach them what to write and what not to write; to teach them how to write and when to write; to teach them the thoughts to express and the proper words to express those thoughts. It was needed for their own sake, to enable them to write as they did, and for the sake of the Church and the world, in all coming time, to give divine authority to the sacred record. Abstract the idea of the inspiring Spirit guiding the pen of the sacred writer in every sentence, word, and letter from the holy

²³⁰ Preface to *THEOPNEUSTIA*, by L. GAUSSEN, D.D., 1841 edition

²³¹ C. H. Spurgeon, “The Bible,” (March 18, 1855)

²³² *The Gospel Focus of Charles Spurgeon*, p. 26

²³³ Dean Burgon of Oxford quoted in *Forever Infallible and Inerrant* (Jeffrey Khoo, 2011), p. 173

Gospels, and the heavenly unction—the divine power—of the book is gone. It is no longer the record of Heaven we trace—no longer the voice of God we hear. The Shekinah has left the mercy seat; the divine sacrifice ceases to smoke upon the altar, and the glory has departed from the Christian temple. And further, Ralston argued concerning this divine authority of the Bible extending to all its parts: The Christian mind has long been trained to contemplate the Bible as the ‘word of God’—not of man. ... And if it be indeed the ‘word of God,’ and not the mere word of man, then it follows that every portion of it, each book, chapter, and verse—was given under the influence of plenary inspiration—an inspiration including, to some extent, all these elements—superintendence, elevation, and suggestion. ... But, according to the Bible view of the doctrine of divine inspiration, there is a sacredness and a divine impress upon every sentence and word of Holy Writ infinitely beyond what any human composition can claim. ... Hence we conclude that the Scriptures are all given by plenary inspiration, embracing throughout the elements of ‘superintendence, elevation, and suggestion,’ in so high a sense that the Bible, from Genesis to Revelation, is the infallible word of God—‘one jot or tittle’ of which can never fail, but which, when heaven and earth shall pass away, shall still remain, enduring as the throne of Him by whose Spirit it was inspired.”

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J. Marcellus Kirk in the “Introduction” to the reprinted (1974) edition of Warfield’s *Limited Inspiration* speaks to the impact of the issue in Warfield’s day and warns of the consequences of not embracing the full inspiration of the Bible in future generations. Kirk says, “Many of those who oppose the Scripture’s claim to infallibility try desperately to retain some measure of authority from the written Word. They hold to some form of ‘**Limited Inspiration**’ for the books of the Bible. In the later part of the 19th century, several contended that the Holy Spirit’s inspiration was limited to all matters of faith and morals but did not extend to the recording of scientific and historical facts. Stress was placed on the infallibility of the written record of that revelation. This position is the precursor of the position of neo-liberalism and neo-orthodoxy that rejects the identification of God’s truth with any formulation given in the Scripture while at the same time strongly contending for the possibility of an existential, infallible experience of God’s revelation. . . . With keen insight he [Warfield] shows the logical

²³⁴ Quoted in *The Burning Bush*, July 2018, p. 97-98

outcome of a theory of limited inspiration. The church cannot yield the surrounding territory to the ravages of the enemy with the hope that they will spare the citadel. . . . We note with sadness that the lesson of history has not been learned by some within the conservative camp who feel that a theory of limited inspiration will safeguard the authority of and retain the respect for the Scriptures. The history of this theory shows that it destroys not only the authority of Scriptures as a rule for faith and life but the very authority of Christ himself. . . . This leads to an approach that allows for the incorporation of the radical conclusions and methods of prevalent schools of Old and New Testament negative higher criticism. But as Warfield says, all this 'does not reckon sufficiently with one fact. It has the Bible itself against it, and the Bible is always with us. When this criticism has been forgotten, the Bible will still be read by men, and will still convey to men its views of the course of the history by which the true religion has been given by God to man.'"²³⁵

Kirsop Lake, modernist, liberal, albeit eminent New Testament scholar and professor, wrote in 1926: "It is a mistake often made by educated persons who happen to have but little knowledge of historical theology to suppose that fundamentalism is a new and strange form of thought. It is nothing of the kind; it is the partial and uneducated survival of a theology which was once universally held by all Christians. How many were there, for instance, in Christian churches in the eighteenth century who doubted the infallible inspiration of all Scripture? A few perhaps, but very few. No, the fundamentalist may be wrong; I think that he is. But it is we who have departed from the tradition, not he, and I am sorry for the fate of anyone who tries to argue with a fundamentalist on the basis of authority. The Bible and the corpus theologicum of the Church is on the fundamentalist side."²³⁶

Dr. Edward J. Young, one of the ablest conservative scholars of the Old Testament at the time, wrote in 1957: "If we assert that the autographa of Scripture contain error, we are saying that God is guilty of having told us something that is not true. It may be a matter which we ourselves would call minor, but in this case a minor error is no less an error than a major one. A person who continues to make so-called trifling mistakes is not one whom we can trust. And one who

²³⁵ *A Seismic Shift in the Inerrancy Debate*, Norman L. Geisler, Douglas E. Potter 2018

²³⁶ *Kirsop Lake, The Religion of Yesterday and Tomorrow* (Boston; Houghton, 1926), p. 61 as quoted in *Battle for the Bible*, p.19

constantly slips up in lesser points is one whose words may well be brought into question when greater matters are involved. If God has communicated wrong information even in so-called unimportant matters, He is not a trustworthy God. It is therefore the question of Biblical theism which is at stake. If the autographa of Scripture are not infallible, we can never be sure at what points they are trustworthy and at what they are not. We would then have no sure position for the defense of Christianity. If, as a matter of fact, the revelation of God is not free of error, the message of Christianity must ever remain in doubt." ²³⁷

William Culbertson, the late president of Moody Bible Institute, said in 1971: "The root from which all heresy springs is a faulty view of the inspiration and inerrancy of the Word of God." ²³⁸

The Lausanne Covenant ²³⁹is widely regarded as one of the most significant documents in modern church history. Emerging from the First Lausanne Congress in 1974 ... it served as a great rallying call to the evangelical Church around the world. It defined what it means to be evangelical," (Lausanne Movement website as of 2026) "One of the most influential documents in modern [evangelicalism](#), it was written at the First International Congress on World Evangelization in [Lausanne](#), Switzerland, where it was adopted by 2,300 evangelicals in attendance." (Wikipedia, Article: Lausanne Covenant, as of 2026) "In July 1974, the original Lausanne conference brought together approximately 2,700 Christian religious leaders from over 150 countries and was called by a committee headed by the American evangelist Billy Graham." (Wikipedia, Article: Lausanne Covenant, as of 2026) Article 2 of the Lausanne Covenant states: "We affirm the divine inspiration, truthfulness and authority of both Old and New Testament Scriptures in their entirety as the only written word of God, **without error in all that it affirms**, and the only infallible rule of faith and practice. ... 2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:21; John 10:35; Isaiah 55:11; 1 Corinthians 1:21; Romans 1:16; Matthew 5:17, 18; Jude 3; Ephesians 1:17, 18; 3:10, 18." (Lausanne Covenant, Article 2, emphasis mine) In 2010 over 4,000 Christian leaders from 198 countries issued The Cape

²³⁷ *Thy Word is Truth*, 1957, pp. 165-166

²³⁸ *Battle for the Bible*, 1976, p.152

²³⁹ The author wishes to point out that by citing the Lausanne Covenant he is not endorsing the movement it has turned into over the years. While they have stood for the doctrine of inerrancy of inspiration the movement has other aspects that are concerning.

Town Commitment which reaffirmed The Lausanne Covenant. It said that: "...we remain committed to the primary documents of the Movement *The Lausanne Covenant* (1974) These documents clearly express **core truths of the biblical gospel** and apply them to our practical mission in ways that are still relevant and challenging." (Preamble of *The Cape Town Commitment* of 2010, emphasis mine) Notice that it says that *The Lausanne Covenant* expresses "core truths". Core truths are fundamental doctrines and one of these doctrines was the inerrancy of inspiration.

Dr. Harold Lindsell, scholar, professor, and founding editor of *Christianity Today*, in 1976 said, "Apart from a few exceptions, the church through the ages has consistently believed that the entire Bible is the inerrant or infallible Word of God."²⁴⁰

Dr. Francis Schaeffer, in 1976, when speaking to the National Association of Evangelicals, stated that the "Watershed of the Evangelical World" is the infallible inspiration of Holy Scripture. In connection with this, he said: "What is the use of evangelicalism seeming to get larger and larger in number if significant numbers of those under the name of 'evangelical' no longer hold to that which makes evangelicalism evangelical?"²⁴¹ He further stated in 1984 in his book *The Evangelical Disaster* that: "Within evangelicalism there are a growing number who are modifying their views on the inerrancy of the Bible so that the full authority of Scripture is completely undercut."²⁴²

Josh McDowell, the great Evangelical Christian apologist, in 1999 in his memorable book *The New Evidence*, said: "Such alleged contradictions are not new [supposed historical mistakes in the Bible]. They have been recognized by Biblical scholars down through the centuries. And yet one gets the impression from reading the current scholars who deny inerrancy that some recent factual finds have forced them to the conclusion that they must now give up inerrancy. Just the contrary is true. More of the Bible stands confirmed today and more problems are explainable than has been the case in centuries.... Why then is the impression left that 'facts' are just now leading men to give up this **crucial doctrine of the Christian faith**? I am convinced that it is not a factual matter at all; it is a philosophical issue. Paul warned, 'Beware lest any man cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit.' (Col. 2:8)... Another objection to inerrancy is the claim that inspiration covers only

²⁴⁰ *The Battle for the Bible*, Zondervan, 1976, by Harold Lindsell, p. 42-43

²⁴¹ D.A. Waite, *What's Wrong with the N. A. E.*, cited in *Faith vs. the Modern Bible Versions*, David Cloud, 2005, pp. 641-642

²⁴² *The Great Evangelical Disaster*, p. 44 as cited in *Faith vs. the Modern Bible Versions*, p. 644, David Cloud, 2005

the doctrinal or moral areas of Scripture, but not necessarily the **historical and the scientific areas**. ‘All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine’ (2 Tim. 3:16). **There are several serious flaws in the view of ‘limited inspiration.’** First, the Bible makes no such distinction between doctrinal and historical matters. Everything affirmed in the Bible is true. Secondly, in many biblical teachings there is no way to separate the spiritual from the physical or historical. For instance, Jesus’ teaching about divorce is inseparable from His affirmation that God created a literal Adam and Eve (Matt. 19:4). And how can one separate the spiritual and historical in the Cross or the Resurrection? Thirdly, this false dichotomy between the spiritual and historical shows no awareness of our Lord’s statement to Nicodemus, ‘If I have told you of earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you of heavenly things?’ (John 3:12). That is, if we cannot trust the Bible and our Lord when they speak of historical events, how can we trust them when they speak of spiritual matters? ... To allow for an errant Bible is to allow anyone and everyone to choose which parts of God’s commands they are willing to accept, and which they will reject.”²⁴³

Yet another voice was heard in 2011 by Dr. Jeffrey Khoo, a conservative Bible College president who has stood firm in defending Scripture against all forms of Modernism. He states the problems one confronts when they seek to throw away the traditional Christian doctrine of biblical inerrancy: “Since the Word of God is our only effective offensive weapon, it would be wholly inconsistent with the character of God to send us out into battle with a sword that is not dependable and uncertain [sic] [certain]. The Word attests to Christ, and Christ attests to the Word—in fact Christ was the Word made flesh! All of Scripture was inspired by the Holy Spirit to set forth God’s unique system of truth and thus the system of truth is self-attesting. Robert Reymond shows how absolutely vital the Scriptures are, ‘We must not forget that the only reliable source of knowledge that we have of Christ is the Holy Scripture. If the Scripture is erroneous anywhere, then we have no assurance that it is inerrantly truthful in what it teaches about him. And if we have no reliable information about him, then it is precarious indeed to worship the Christ of Scripture, since we may be entertaining an erroneous representation of Christ and thus may be committing idolatry. The only way to avoid this conclusion is to keep the Christ of Scripture and the Scripture itself in vital union with each other—the former the Giver of the latter—and to affirm that the latter is true because it was inspired by the former, who is truth itself (John 14:6).’ Theologian John Murray makes it clear the

²⁴³ *The New Evidence*, pp. 346, 347

desperate state of mankind without the Scriptures: 'Without Scripture we are excluded completely from the knowledge, faith, and fellowship of him who is the effulgence of the Father's glory and transcript of His being, as destitute of the Word of life as the disciples would have been if Jesus had not disclosed himself through His spoken word.... Our dependence upon Scripture is total. Without it we are bereft of revelatory Word from God, from the counsel of God respecting all things necessary for His own glory, man's salvation, faith, and life.... It is because we have not esteemed and prized the perfection of Scripture and its finality that we have resorted to other techniques, expedients, and methods of dealing with the dilemma that confronts us all if we are alive to the needs of this hour...let us also know that it is not the tradition of the past, not a precious heritage, and not the labors of the fathers, that are to serve this generation and this hour, but the Word of the living and abiding God deposited for us in Holy Scripture.'" ²⁴⁴

In 2018, *Norman L. Geisler* and *Douglas E. Potter*, well-known scholars specializing in the area of inspiration and the Bible, gave a serious warning: "A seismic shift is occurring in the inerrancy debate. Unfortunately, few are alarmed about it. In fact, the masses are unaware of it. The shift is from the historically held, evangelical view to a neo-evangelical view of limited inerrancy. The issue is whether inerrancy covers all matters on which the Bible speaks or whether it is limited to only redemptive matters." ²⁴⁵

"How interesting," thought John, "so, things are beginning to shift in the non-Adventist world as well. Is it any wonder that as this concept of inspiration is finally beginning to be viewed as acceptable in the conservative Christian world that our church has come out more and more with this doctrine that was kept in the shadows for years?" John couldn't wait to show Lily what he had found in his study. He felt confirmed in the view of inerrant inspiration that he had been raised in Adventism to believe. Indeed, it was the doctrine that all the true people of God, going back to and including the Jews, believed. The Jews held the same view in Jesus' time and were blessed and confirmed by Jesus himself. John closed his notebook and headed off to show Lily what he had found.

²⁴⁴ *Forever Infallible and Inerrant* (Jeffrey Khoo 2011), p. 167

²⁴⁵ *A Seismic Shift in the Inerrancy Debate* (Norman L. Geisler, Douglas E. Potter 2018)



Willie's Secret Letter

John and Lily sat together on the loveseat in the living room. John looked lovingly at his wife; a frown creased her brow. John could understand that frown. He and Lily had decided to research together again. They had been uncovering things over the last several months that really hadn't been what they expected or liked. So, they had decided to research together in hope of better success. John glanced down at the page his wife was staring at. He had thought he would never again be surprised by what he would find after everything else he had discovered. But it seemed there was always something more astounding that would suddenly jump out and surprise him. Here it was happening again. He took the papers from his wife and started to read:

“‘While we were in Australia, the Lord instructed me that W. C. White should be relieved from the many burdens his brethren would lay upon him, that he might be more free to assist me in the work the Lord has laid upon me. The promise had been given, ‘I will put My Spirit upon him, and give him wisdom.’ Since my return to America, I have several times received instruction that the Lord has given me W. C. White to be my helper, and that in this work the Lord will give him of His Spirit.’”^{246 247}

²⁴⁶ Vol. 1 *Selected Messages*, p. 50

²⁴⁷ Regarding W.C. White's validity, Ellen White also wrote: “After this experience, light was given me that the Lord had raised me up to bear testimony for him in many countries, and that he would give me grace and strength for the work. It was also shown me that my son, W. C. White, should be my helper and counselor, and that the Lord would place on him the spirit of wisdom and of a sound mind....”

“The assurance was given me: ‘You are not alone in the work the Lord has chosen you to the people... God will give you of His Holy Spirit, and his grace and wisdom and keeping power will be with you.... This word was given me in 1882.... More recently, in a time of perplexity, the Lord said: ‘I have given you my servant, W. C. White, and I will

“This firmly establishes that Willie White had not only his mother’s endorsement but, according to Ellen White, God’s endorsement as well. It firmly establishes his validity.

“In October 1912, Haskell wrote to J. N. Loughborough, noting that an Adventist brother by the name of Manous had raised the issue of “whether the statements of historical facts found in *Great Controversy* are infallibly correct, or whether such statements are based upon [historical] evidence and subject to correction.” To Haskell, all such changes were based upon “precisely the same reasoning of the higher critics of the Bible” and “destroys the inspiration of the Testimonies. It introduces a principle that does away with all the force of the chapter in *Early Writings*” on issues related to the daily. “The whole question,” noted Haskell, “resolves itself into this: Has God set any man to rein up the Spirit of God by contradictory historians?” Four days later, he mailed a copy of the Loughborough letter to W. C. White, claiming in an accompanying



Figure 1 Loughborough

give him judgment to be your helper. I will give him skill and understanding to manage wisely. ...Whether or not my life is spared, my writings will constantly speak, and their work will go forward as long as time shall last. My writings are kept on file in the office, and even though I should not live, these words that have been given to me by the Lord will still have life and will speak to the people....The Lord Jehovah is the one to specify how the work shall be carried on under all circumstances. W. C. White has his commission. I have instructed him to labor untiringly to secure the publication of my writings in the English language first, and afterward to secure their translation and publication in many other languages...” (General Conference Bulletin, June 1, 1913, p. 219-221) “It was also shown me ... that the Lord would guide him [W.C. White], and that he would not be led away, because he would recognize the leadings and guidance of the Holy Spirit....I will put My Spirit upon your son, and will strengthen him to do his work. He has the grace of humility. The Lord has selected him to act an important part in His work. For this purpose was he born.” (*Selected Messages* Book 1, p. 54-55)

One can’t help but notice that in connection with God’s supposed endorsement of W.C. White, that God promised Ellen that she would not be alone and that God would be with her. Certainly, if W.C. White had been unfaithful to his trust, God would have kept his promise of being with Ellen, and informed her, if necessary of that fact and instructed her just how to remedy the situation. It is common knowledge that she claimed that God told her to fire some other secretaries for supposedly not delivering the quality of work they should. One notices that this statement endorsing W.C. White was made by her in 1913, not long before her death in 1915, and after W.C. White’s letter to Haskell.

note that “the questioning of [Ellen White's] writings on points of chronology or of dates according to my mind is entering upon forbidden ground.””²⁴⁸

“The background of this controversy was that younger men such as Willie White, A. G. Daniells, and Prescott were bringing in and promoting a different view of the daily²⁴⁹ than the traditional view preached by the older generation represented by those such as Haskell and Loughborough. Haskell was not pleased and felt that since Ellen White seemed to say in *Early Writings* that the view held by William Miller on the daily was the correct one, it must be right, and it would be error and apostasy from truth to depart from it. Therefore, to question Ellen White’s accuracy on history would also bring into question her statements regarding the Daily and everything else, thus destroying her inspiration. Willie White’s answer to Haskell, a veteran, prominent pioneer in the cause, and faithful supporter of his mother through the years, seems, to me, rather strange. At one point, he proceeds to inform Haskell what the pioneers had believed in regard to inspiration and his mother. He seems to have forgotten that the one he wrote to was one of those pioneers and had been on intimate relations with all the other pioneers when Willie White was a mere boy. Yet, Willie White at times almost seems to act as if he is talking to a novice in the work who is not able to know what the pioneers believed or have good judgment about what the Bible teaches in regard to inspiration. The fact that Haskell had written the

²⁴⁸ S. N. Haskell to J. N. Loughborough, Oct. 19, 1912; S. N. Haskell to W. C. White, Oct. 23, 1912. As quoted in *Ministry Magazine*, August, 1997, p. 10

²⁴⁹ The controversy regarding the “Daily” in Adventism has to do with whether the word “Daily” found in Dan. 8:12-13 refers to paganism (old view) or the sanctuary in heaven (new view). This ties in with the 2300-day prophecy mentioned in Dan. 8:14, which it is claimed ended in 1844, establishing the “Sanctuary Doctrine,” which includes the Investigative Judgment. It is impossible to give an adequate in-depth explanation in a footnote. We refer the reader to the following books: *The Cultic Doctrine of Seventh-day Adventists: An Evangelical Resource, An Appeal to SDA Leadership*—by Dale Ratzlaff. While not necessarily agreeing with his rejection of the year day principle etc. he demonstrates many flaws of miller and the investigative judgment especially in its relation to the gospel, *The Impelling Force of Prophetic Truth* by L.R. Conradi gives the results of his extensive research in the history of commentary on these prophecies and his answer to the 2300 days issue that keeps the year day principle intact as well as ending in 1844 (yet no investigative judgment)., and excerpts from *Confession of Faith* by E.J. Waggoner found in the appendix of this book gives more info. on this subject. In addition, the recommended websites in the appendix of this book are yet another resource in this area.

same letter first to Loughborough would seem to indicate he expected that old pioneer to hold the same views and be in sympathy with him.

“Haskell was in for a surprise. For the first time, the doctrine of thought inspiration that had popped out in Adventism in the 1883 general conference session was to take another step forward and not only strip the words of their inspiration but also destroy factual accuracy as well. Once again, the change would emanate from the Whites.

W. C. White’s October 31, 1912, Letter Written to S. N. Haskell:

Regarding Mother's writings, she has never wished our brethren to treat them as authority on history. When *Great Controversy* was first written, she oftentimes gave a partial description of some scene presented to her, and when Sister Davis made inquiry regarding time and place, Mother referred her to what was already written in the books of Elder Smith and in secular histories.

When *Controversy* was written, Mother never thought that the readers would take it as an authority on historical dates and use it to settle controversies, and she does not now feel that it ought to be used in that way. Mother regards with the greatest respect those faithful historians who have given their [lives] to the study of the working out in this world's history of God's great plan, and who have found in this study a correspondence of the history with prophecy.

Whenever proof has been found that the writers of our Adventist literature had come short of finding the exact truth regarding some detail, she has always taken her position in favor of correcting those things that were clearly found to be errors, and when consulted about the efforts that were being made to revise and correct the good book *Daniel and Revelation* [by Uriah Smith], she has always opposed making unnecessary changes and has always favored correcting those things that were plainly shown to be inaccurate.

It seems to me that there is danger of placing altogether too much stress upon chronology. If it had been essential to the salvation of man that he should have a clear and harmonious understanding of the chronology of the world, the Lord would not have **permitted the disagreements and discrepancies which we find in the writings of the Bible**

historians, and it seems to me that in these last days there ought not to be so much controversy regarding dates.

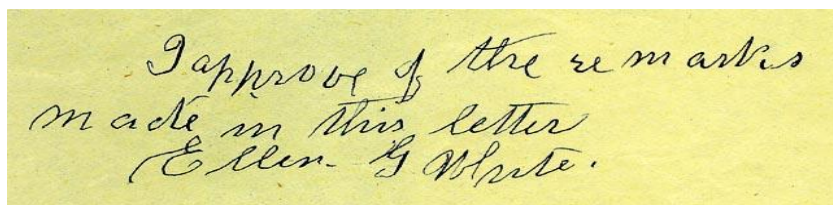
For myself, I will say this: that the more I study the experience of the Adventist people, the more I feel to honor and praise and magnify the wisdom of the God of heaven who gave to a plain man like William Miller an understanding of the great truths of the prophecies. It is evident to anyone who will study his explanation of prophecy that while he had the truth regarding the principal features, that he adopted at first many inaccurate and incorrect interpretations regarding details. At first, these were accepted by his associates; but God raised up scholarly men who had enjoyed broader opportunities for study than Miller, and these men, by their study of the prophecies and history, found the truth regarding many points in which Miller's exposition was incorrect.

One who studies this experience from the standpoint of faith in that great Advent movement, as presented in *Daniel and Revelation*, and in *Great Controversy*, cannot fail to rejoice in the goodness of God as they see how He brought in truth and light through the study of many men and it seems to me that we who love the work that was built upon that foundation ought to treat very kindly, very considerately, very reverently the work which God helped Miller to do.

It seems to me that there is nothing anyone can do at the present time that would more effectually destroy confidence of the people in Miller's work and the work of his associates than to speak and write about the matter in the tone and the spirit used by Brother _____. It seems to me that nothing could be done more effectually to destroy the confidence of the people in that good and glorious movement than to claim perfection for that which we know was not perfect, and thus challenge the criticism of thinking men.

I need not quote Brother _____'s words. I think you are familiar with them. It may be that you helped him to adopt the views which he expressed so unfortunately in his tract. But wherever he got his untimely assurance, I wish to say regarding it again that I think there is nothing that can so effectually destroy the respect and confidence that our people ought to maintain in the 1844 movement than for men to make such inconsiderate assertions as were made by Brother _____ in his tract and in his correspondence.

I believe, Brother Haskell, that there is danger in injuring Mother's work by claiming for it more than she claims for it, more than Father ever claimed for it, more than Elder Andrews, Waggoner, or Smith ever claimed for it. I cannot see consistency in our putting forth a claim of verbal inspiration when Mother does not make any such claim, and I certainly think we will make a great mistake if we lay aside historical research and endeavor to settle historical questions by the use of Mother's books as an authority when she herself does not wish them to be used in any such way.²⁵⁰



I approve of the remarks
made in this letter
Ellen G. White.

"Looking at the above, one notices that this letter had a postscript by Ellen White saying that she approved of everything in this letter. This makes it a letter not just written by Willie White, but one chosen and endorsed by her, as she chose other quotes, etc., to put in her writings. She chose this letter as one that she approved of with her prophetic gift. We also notice other things. First, he says Ellen White never wished for her writings to be considered an authority on history. If this is the case, it would mean that nothing historical in nature can be inspired, for inspiration by its very nature is authoritative. In fact, telling people that something that is inspired is not authoritative is an offense to God and a sin. So, her writings, when it comes to historical matters, must not be inspired. Unfortunately, that pretty much wipes out the *Conflict of the Ages* series, for it is almost all historical in nature.²⁵¹ In fact, almost everything written in the Bible is historical or is so entwined with history that it cannot be separated from it. So, she would not be inspired and authoritative on these subjects either. One must wonder if there is anything left that she would be inspired and authoritative on. One also notices that this concept of not being inspired in her writings on historical matters contradicts her other

²⁵⁰ As of 2019, can be found at: <https://whiteestate.org/legacy/vault-haskell-html/?hl=haskell%20letter>

²⁵¹ The *Conflict of the Ages* series is a collection of books that is arguably Ellen White's most important, popular, lasting, and influential work.

statements presented above in the chapter *Ellen White and the Church Speak Out* and in her Introduction to *Great Controversy*, for she has made blanket statements regarding her inspiration and never indicates an exception and rather condemns any who might try to do so.²⁵²

“It would appear that not until she is faced with questions that she and Willie don’t wish to answer does he write what is in the above letter. (Having clearly denounced in *Early Writings* any who should not hold to the view of William Miller on the Daily. However, by the time of this letter, Willie had endorsed the new view, and Ellen White is forbidding anyone to use her writings in the debate on the issue.) The only logical explanation is that she considered it all inspired but that inspiration has mistakes. We will see further on that this is the case.

“Going on, we notice that it says: ‘Mother never thought that the readers would take it as an authority on historical dates and use it to settle controversies.’ The question that goes through my mind is how could she not think that the people would take her writings as an authority on history and settle controversies when she said, as we have seen earlier, that they are all inspired by God? She also said that one cannot choose what is inspired and what is not in her writings (see earlier in the book). Also, if she is really inspired by God, does it really matter or make a difference how she thought people would take her writings? For they are not her writings. She is not the author, but God is. The question should be: how does God intend His inspired writings to be taken?

“Now we come to the heart of this letter. It says: ‘If it had been essential to the salvation of man that he should have a clear and harmonious understanding of the chronology of the world, the Lord would not have **permitted the disagreements and discrepancies which we find in the writings of the Bible historians,**’²⁵³ This letter

²⁵² As a side note: Contradictions themselves are a form of mistake in writing and have been used in the past by Adventists to prove that the Mormon prophet Joseph Smith was a false prophet.

²⁵³ Willie and Ellen make it clear in this letter that they feel that too much stress can be put on chronology. The idea is conveyed that it should not be considered totally reliable. According to them it has discrepancies and God really does not consider it very important or expect us to understand it. In other words, it is basically just filler material. Not only is this very irreverent thinking but it fails to take into account the relative shortness of scripture and how the Holy Spirit jammed so much into such a short space. Certainly we can be sure He would not have included anything unless there was an

states that there are disagreements and discrepancies in the Bible! What a downing of the Word of God!! What a perfect solution for all the questions that were surfacing in regard to the mistakes in her writings. (Around this time, A. T. Jones and others had embarrassing questions. These we will discuss later.) For if the Bible gets things wrong, then certainly Ellen White could get things wrong and be a true prophet. What a perfect solution and one that was in fashion in that day among the higher critics. The higher critics took thought inspiration to the next logical level, asserting that it was okay for inspiration to contain mistakes. This doctrine, sanctioned by Ellen White, would be shared in a very quiet and careful way until the latter half of the twentieth century when it would begin to be shared more openly. A doctrine, for all practical purposes, kept secret from most ministers and laity over the years. By borrowing arguments from the higher critics and infidels and bringing the Bible down to the level of their prophet, they had found the best defense and solution to answer that relatively new and difficult critic Canright and all the others like A. T. Jones who suddenly seemed to have questions that the Whites could not answer. But the only thorn in the side was that they could not teach this openly at that time. Rather, it was a solution being planned for a later generation to avert a future rupture in the church. The laity and ministers of that time were still too much in the old school of thought in regard to inspiration. Also, the conservative Christian world of that day would not stand for it. The public in evangelistic campaigns would not be convinced they were Bible promoters bringing things back to Bible standards if they openly taught that inspiration could be wrong. But this secret solution and

important purpose. As we look at the onslaught of the theory of Evolution against God's church it becomes painfully obvious how important biblical chronology is and how far from truth Willie and Ellen were straying when they chose to down God's Holy Word. As one author said, "There have been those who have objected to the suggestion that God is concerned with providing information on the age of the Earth and humanity, but the numerous chronological tables permeating the Bible prove that theirs is a groundless objection. God, it seems, was very concerned about giving man exact chronological data and, in fact, was so concerned that He provided a precise knowledge of the period back to Abraham, plus two tables – with ages – from Abraham to Adam. The ancient Jewish historians (1 Chronicles 1:1-27) and the New Testament writers (Luke 3:34-48) understood the tables of Genesis 5 and 11 as literal and consecutive. The Bible explains quite explicitly that God created the Sun and Moon to be timekeepers (Genesis 1:16) for Adam and his descendants (notice how Noah logged the beginning and the ending of the Flood using these timekeepers, Genesis 7:11; 9:14)" (Bert Thompson, "The Bible and the Age of the Earth," August 1999, <http://www.apologeticspress.org/articles/85>), as quoted in, *An Unshakable Faith*, p. 97-98, by David Cloud, 2015.

doctrine was up their sleeve to use when the going was impossible and, more importantly, to use after they, in the future, had an opportunity to slowly condition the laity and thus be able to take care of the potential for a future explosion over Ellen White's mistakes. Such a time came in the 1960s, 70s, and 80s."

John looked up from his notes as Lily broke in. "John, everyone always talks about Ellen White's good fruit, but it would appear that she and her son were the originators of this new doctrine in Adventism that destroys the Word."

"Yes, it does appear that this is some bad fruit that was like a time bomb that did not go off and do most of its dirty work until relatively recently. I will mention more on this later, but let's get back to this letter. Looking again at the words quoted in the above letter, it says: 'If it had been essential to the salvation of man that he should have a clear and harmonious understanding of the chronology of the world, the Lord would not have permitted the disagreements and discrepancies which we find in the writings of the Bible historians.' We notice that it says if it had been essential to the salvation of man, then God would have made sure there were no mistakes. In other words, inspiration is only without mistakes in matters that are essential to salvation, and everything else can have mistakes or errors. This too was a common idea among those Higher Critics who came up with the idea of thought inspiration. Keep this idea, presented in this letter, in mind when we read the letter from Willie White to Mr. Eastman that follows. For Willie will explain and say it in a clearer way.

"Now we come to the last of the letter. He says: 'I believe, Brother Haskell, that there is danger in injuring Mother's work by claiming for it more than she claims for it, more than Father ever claimed for it, more than Elder Andrews, Waggoner, or Smith ever claimed for it. I cannot see consistency in our putting forth a claim of verbal inspiration when Mother does not make any such claim, and I certainly think we will make a great mistake if we lay aside historical research and endeavor to settle historical questions by the use of Mother's books as an authority when she herself does not wish them to be used in any such way.' Here is a lie and falsehood. He intimates that the early pioneers, including Uriah Smith, never thought that inspiration included historical matters and had to be perfect in regard to Ellen White. We have already seen in regard to the history of the teaching of inspiration in the church that that is not the case. Further, we have read the letters of Uriah Smith in which he reveals his serious shock at finding that the visions had not been without mistakes as late

as 1883. Willie White may be right as to the beliefs of his mother and father. Willie, in other places, speaks of the 1883 General Conference statement as proof that the theory of thought inspiration containing factual mistakes was held by the church. The problem for him and Ellen is that the 1883 statement did not contain anything as to factual mistakes being okay. It only touched on the fact that thought inspiration was the medium of communication to the prophet. He then goes on to set up a straw man by saying that his mother never made a claim to verbal inspiration. That may or may not be the case. But is that what the issue is? No, the issue is whether the inspiration is accurate without mistakes. It really does not matter that much if it was thought inspired or verbally inspired if it is guaranteed to be accurate and free of mistakes. ²⁵⁴

“Willie, in another document, tries to blame Prescott for getting a verbal view of inspiration started and that before him there was no such belief in Adventism. Again, one must question his integrity, for, as we have seen in another chapter, the view of verbal inspiration was the original view held up until 1883 in Adventism. Even then, thought inspiration was not really embraced that well by the denomination for quite some time. Also, once again, the issue is not whether it is verbal inspiration or thought inspiration but rather if inspiration can have mistakes or not. This straw man of the Whites’ is still commonly erected by many defenders of Ellen White to try and muddy the waters.

“Willie, in one document, says Prescott got his views of inspiration from Professor Gaussen and that Ellen White never approved of the Gaussen ‘theory.’ He also states that Prescott had caused trouble with it. Again, as we have seen earlier in this book, inerrancy in inspiration was the norm in conservative Christianity and among Adventists long before Prescott came on the scene. Prescott may have aggravated the issue, but it hardly seems honest to accuse him of bringing in something new and perverting the brethren.

“Gaussen happens to have been the personal friend and associate of J. H. Merle d’Aubigné, the famous Protestant historian that Ellen White so often quotes from. He and Gaussen helped to start a seminary

²⁵⁴ While it is true that what matters most in inspiration is it not having mistakes, it is also true that thought inspiration was originally conceived by the higher critics in order to bring the accusation against the Bible of it having mistakes and to explain that supposed “fact.” For the person who is a deep thinker and takes things to their logical end, it is quite likely that it will end in believing that inspiration has mistakes.

where they were associate professors in Geneva. They tried to re-light the anti-papal fires in Protestantism. I looked at Gaussen's book on inspiration to see what Willie and Ellen did not approve of. In it, I discovered that Gaussen's burden was to fight against the higher critics of his day in order that the future generation would not be robbed of the Bible their forefathers had possessed. While he believed in verbal inspiration and states why he feels it is biblical, he also indicates that he does not insist that one believe in verbal inspiration as long as one believes in an inerrant Bible and that the purpose of the book is to prove that the inspired Word is without mistakes. Of course, this would mean that in a certain sense and to a certain degree the words were inspired, at least to his way of thinking. He said:

“We will propose them [the two acceptable definitions of inspiration] separately to our readers and offer them the alternative. The one has more precision, the other more simplicity, inasmuch as it presents the doctrine in a form more divested of every question relative to the mode of inspiration and to the personal experience of the sacred writers. To accept, unreservedly, the one or the other, is to render to the Scriptures the honour and faith which are their due. We therefore propose to establish the doctrine of Theopneustia [inspiration] under one or other of the following forms: “The Scriptures are given, and guaranteed by God, even as regards their language;” and [or] “**the Scriptures do not contain any error.**” By which we understand that they communicate all that they ought to communicate; and that they communicate only what they ought to communicate.’²⁵⁵

“So one has to wonder if Gaussen’s support of an inspiration without mistakes is the real reason Willie and Ellen White did not like Gaussen’s ‘theory’ of inspiration, as Willie termed it. We will discover later that Gaussen did not have a theory. He had a doctrine supported by the Bible. Willie and the White Estate are the ones with the theory. They and Ellen White are the ones who had a theory and began the change of Adventist doctrine. Someone may ask, how can this be when Mrs. White seems to extol the Bible so strongly? The answer we will see farther on is in the words ‘seems to.’ It is like a politician who you were sure said he believed a certain thing, only to hear after they were elected that they claimed they really hadn’t said exactly that, but they were saying something different because they defined some of their words a little differently than you and your friends did. To the uninitiated, it sounded good, but if you understand what they really

²⁵⁵ THEOPNEUSTIA, by L. GAUSSEN, D.D., pp. 37-38, 1841 edition

believe, it means something different. Before going further into those statements of Ellen White, let's look at another letter that Willie White wrote at the same time as the above letter to Haskell. It was word for word identical except for a few additions. He wrote it to Mr. Eastman, who was in charge of one of our publishing houses at the time. This letter's one or two small additions amplify even further the viewpoint of Willie White, and it would seem Ellen White. I will quote just part of it:

“Regarding Mother's writings and their use as authority on points of history and chronology, Mother has never wished our brethren to treat them as authority regarding the details of history or historical dates. ... When *Controversy* was written, Mother never thought that the readers would take it as authority on historical dates or use it to settle controversy regarding details of history, and she does not now feel that it should be used in that way. Mother regards with great respect the work of those faithful historians who devoted years of time to the study of God's great plan as presented in the prophecy, and the outworking of that plan as recorded in history. ... It seems to me there is danger of placing altogether too much stress upon chronology. If it had been essential to the salvation of man that he should have a clear and harmonious understanding of the chronology of the world, the Lord would not have permitted the disagreements and discrepancies which we find in the writings of the Bible historians, and it seems to me that in these last days there ought not to be so much controversy regarding dates.... Regarding Mother's writings, I have overwhelming evidence and conviction that they are the description and delineation of what God has revealed to her in vision, and where she has followed the description of historians or the exposition of Adventist writers, I believe that God has given her discernment to use that which is correct and in harmony with truth regarding all matters essential to salvation. If it should be found by faithful study that she has followed some expositions of prophecy which in some detail regarding dates we cannot harmonize with our understanding of secular history, it does not influence my confidence in her writings as a whole.”²⁵⁶

“Notice that this letter and the one to Haskell have these words: ‘in these last days there ought not to be so much controversy regarding dates.’ One has to ask, in light of the importance to the last days of the

²⁵⁶ *Selected Messages*, vol. 3, pp. 445-450

study of prophecy, is the accuracy of historical dates really less important? I will let the reader decide.

“Next we see him more fully expound on an idea that we noticed in the last letter that I requested you to remember. And that is that in only matters essential to salvation is inspiration guarded from mistakes. This present letter expands upon what we noticed in the last by being even clearer. It says: ‘if it should be found by faithful study that she has followed some expositions of prophecy which in some detail regarding dates we cannot harmonize with our understanding of secular history, it does not influence my confidence in her writings as a whole...’²⁵⁷

“So, even her son, who she said was chosen by the Lord and given a special portion of the Holy Spirit for his work as her assistant, admits that she could get things wrong in matters not essential to salvation. He clearly in the last letter said that the Bible has mistakes, and here he clearly says Ellen can have them too. The problem is that if we can only trust the Spirit of Prophecy (Ellen White's writings) with what is essential to salvation, then what is the purpose of reading it? For the Bible already tells us that. Any minister who pays attention to the Bible can be that inspired. Also, let us remember that the letter that Willie wrote to Haskell that we quoted earlier has a written statement of Ellen White as a prophet giving her stamp of approval to Willie's letter. We also must remember that it is common knowledge that she claimed that God revealed to her the need to remove certain individual secretaries that might corrupt her work and that she removed them. If Willie was not being faithful to his mother and her work, surely God would have warned Ellen White as He did regarding the unfaithful secretaries.

“Lastly, it is interesting to note the opinion of the late Dr. Colin Standish, who was an ultra-conservative Adventist, one of the founders of the Historic Adventist movement, Adventist College President, author of over forty books on Adventism, and a believer in Ellen White's inspirational inerrancy. On the value of Willie White's testimony, he said:

“‘Elder W. C. White's personal testimony of his first-hand knowledge of Sister White's writings is important.’²⁵⁸

²⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁵⁸ *The Greatest of the Prophets*, p. 196

John closed his notebook and looked at Lily. "Wow," she said, "that is something."

"Yes, it is," agreed John, "and the downgrade of the Bible it conveys is in stark contrast to another statement that comes to mind published by the Trinitarian Bible Society on the subject. I know it is getting late, but I just have to share this before we go to bed."

"Sure," said Lily, "I would love to hear it."

"Okay, here it is," said John:

"It is another fact that there is an extraordinary accuracy in the facts and statements of the Bible, which is supernatural and above man. ... [T]he greatest discoveries have been made in science, and the greatest alterations in the ways and customs of our human society. There is hardly a thing in which faults and weak points have not been discovered, and hardly an institution which has not been through a process of reforming, amending, changing. But all this time, men have never discovered a weak point or a defect in the Bible. Infidels have assailed it in vain. There it stands – perfect, fresh, and complete, as it did when it was written many centuries ago. The march of intellect never overtakes it. The wisdom of wise men never gets beyond it. The science of philosophers never proves it wrong. The discoveries of travelers never convict it of mistakes.

"Are the islands of the Pacific laid open? Nothing is found that in the slightest degree contradicts the Bible account of man's heart. Are the ruins of Nineveh and Egypt ransacked and explored? Nothing is found that overturns one jot or tittle of the Bible's historical statements. How shall we account for this fact, that so large a book, handling such a vast variety of subjects, should be found so free from erroneous statements? There is only one account to be given of the fact--the Bible was written by inspiration of God."²⁵⁹

"Yes, that is quite a contrast indeed," said Lily.

"Tomorrow I will share the rest of what I found," said John. "But I fear we have stayed up too late. We had better get to bed."

"For if the pure Word of God be once taken away, there remaineth no consolation, no life, no salvation." (Martin Luther, *Commentary on ST. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians*, p. 95)

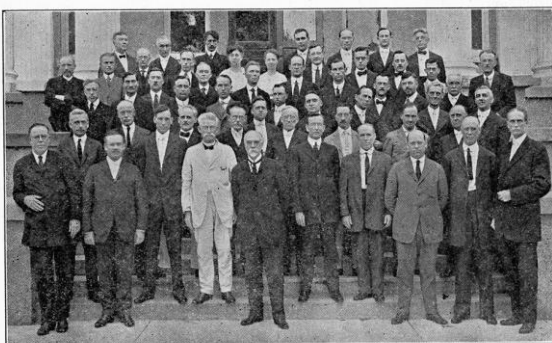
²⁵⁹ *Divine Inspiration of the Holy Scriptures*, p. 23-24, Published by: The Trinitarian Bible Society

“Archaeology also has verified the accuracy of the Bible. The spades of a thousand diggers over the centuries have not discredited the truth of Scripture, nor has the turned-over earth proven the Bible to be untrue.” (Dr. Harold Lindsell, *Battle for the Bible*, p. 35)

“... It may be stated categorically that no archaeological discovery has ever controverted a Biblical reference. Scores of archaeological findings have been made which confirm in clear outline or in exact detail historical statements in the Bible” (Renowned Archaeologist Nelson Glueck, *Rivers in the Desert*, p. 31, quoted in, *An Unshakable Faith*, p. 99, by David Cloud).

**Archaeology has confirmed countless passages which have been rejected by critics as unhistorical or contradictory to known facts...Yet archaeological discoveries have shown that these critical charges...are wrong and that the Bible is trustworthy in the very statements which have been set aside as untrustworthy...We do not know of any cases where the Bible has been proved wrong.
(Dr. Joseph P. Free)**

[SEE THE QUOTES AT THE END OF THE CHAPTER: *THE STORM DEEPENS*, IN THIS BOOK FOR MORE RELATED QUOTES.]



Delegates to Bible Conference, Washington, D. C., July, 1919

The Secret Conference of 1919

John and Lily looked at each other as darkness gathered outside. Once again, they had put their daughter to bed and now had time alone to discuss the issue of Ellen White and inspiration. Lily was the first to speak, "So what else did you learn that you didn't have time to tell me yesterday?"

"Well, the one thing I didn't mention is something that has extreme importance. As you know, Willie and Ellen had put out the letter stating their opinions regarding inspiration and her writings that we read over last evening. This letter was sent in two slightly different forms to two prominent men. But the letter to Haskell was a private letter that was never published until rather recently. It would appear they were starting the process of conditioning the church to the new doctrine on inspiration that had become necessary. But it would take many years before it would be safe to really start propagating it in a meaningful way. Now we can proceed to 1919. In that year, there was a Conference called by the General Conference Executive Committee led by A. G. Daniells, President of the General Conference. It was called for the most prominent leaders in the church. The Conference was:

"...The first major discussion of the inspiration of Ellen G. White's writings after her death in 1915. Altogether, there were 65 individuals in attendance, accompanied by between 7 and 9 stenographers. The conference was the first academic Bible conference of its kind where a

significant number of participants had advanced training in theology, history, and biblical languages. The meeting was by invitation only so that those present could “exercise care and good judgment” while discussing varying viewpoints. The conference was then nearly forgotten until 1975 when the conference transcripts were discovered in the General Conference Archives. Transcript excerpts were first published in 1979.²⁶⁰

“One notices that the meeting was by invitation only so that these leaders of the church could freely discuss the problems confronting them, and believe me, they had problems. One big problem was the mistakes that were in Ellen White’s writings. Some of the older men at this conference had personal experience with Ellen White and had better vantage ground than the younger men or us today to be able to judge such matters. It should be noted that the above quote says the transcript excerpts were first published in 1979. They had been locked in a vault since 1919.²⁶¹ Why was this not published until 1979? Because A. G. Daniells and others at the conference decided that these documents describing what they had discussed and their real beliefs and objectives could not be let out to the general laity of the church without a denominational disaster. Another question: Who likes darkness and who likes light? Jesus said:

“‘What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light: and what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the housetops.’²⁶²

“One needs to remember that Ellen White and her son were primarily responsible for A. G. Daniells' election to the presidency of the General Conference. He would be one of the longest continuously sitting presidents to ever hold office in the church. Mrs. White also held him in the utmost confidence at the end of her life. At times during his presidency, she did feel differently regarding him, but her faith was restored in him to the point of making him the Head Trustee of the White Estate upon her death. It was while holding this position, as well as that of General Conference President, that A. G. Daniells led out in the 1919 Secret Bible Conference.

“Ever since the 1880s, Ellen White’s mistakes had been, to some

²⁶⁰ Wikipedia, *1919 Bible Conference*, as of 2019.

²⁶¹ It should be noted that these minutes from the conference would probably never have been initially published except for the fact that someone snuck them out of the vault, without permission, and gave them to those who would publish them.

²⁶² Matthew 10:27

degree, hanging over the church leaders. First, there was the episode that Uriah Smith spoke of in his letters. Then there was Canright, who left the church and exposed information that was damning. No matter what one might think about him, he nevertheless had some questions and evidence regarding Ellen White that the church could not answer. Indeed, some of his questions have not been satisfactorily answered to this day. Then A. T. Jones and others in the early 1900s detected problems with Ellen White. These problems, gathering over the years, appear to have caused even the loyal leaders of the church of the time to have questions. After Ellen White's death, the leadership finally thought it was safe to discuss these issues, along with many others, when they happened to come up, in a secret meeting among themselves and try to figure out, among other things, what to do to preserve the future of the denomination. As we read excerpts from the transcript of the minutes of the Bible Conference, remember that many of these men were in contact with Ellen White and worked with her. They were in a much better position to judge Ellen White than we are. Indeed, we have often been told that the unanimous testimony of the brethren and those in her day regarding her inspiration is one of the proofs of her being a true prophet. Let us see what some of these men really felt when alone with each other in secret as they tried to find answers to the problems with her inspiration that seemed to threaten the organization:

Minutes From 1919 Bible Conference

W. E. Howell, Chairman: The topic for this hour, as arranged for on Wednesday, is a continuation, in a measure, of our consideration of the spirit of prophecy and the subject of inspiration connected with that, as related to the inspiration of the Bible. This hour is not intended to be a formal discourse occupying the whole period, but Brother Daniells will lead in the topic, and then he has expressed a wish that it might be a kind of roundtable in which we will study things together.

A. G. Daniells: Brother Chairman, I think there has been a misunderstanding among us. I protested against taking such a heavy topic the other day under the circumstances, and I dismissed it from my mind and have been thinking along another line, that of pastoral training and a further discussion of the question we had before us. I would not feel free, under the circumstances, to give a talk on the subject that I understand was looked for. As you know, there are two views held by eminent men regarding the verbal inspiration of the

Bible. You read their views in the books they have put out. One man—scholarly, devout, earnest, a full believer in the Bible in every sense of the word—believes that it was a revelation of truth to the writers, and they were allowed to state that truth as best they could. Another man—equally scholarly and pious and earnest in his faith—believes that it was a word-for-word inspiration or revelation, that the actual words were given—that every word in the original, as it was written by the prophets down from Moses to Malachi, was given to them by the Lord. These men differ and differ honestly and sincerely; and they have their followers among us, right here at the conference, both of them; and I see nothing to be gained by a man in my position, with my knowledge of these things, attempting to prove up on this. I do not wish to do it. We would all remain of the same opinion, I think, as we are now; so, I want to beg you to allow me to dismiss that part of it and either go directly into the other question of pastoral training or open the way for further questions and discussions of the matter we had before us. I feel more at home in that, for all these years since the Battle Creek controversy began, I have been face to face with this question of the Testimonies. I have met all the doubters, the chief ones, and have dealt with it in ministerial institutes and have talked it over and over until I am thoroughly familiar with it, whether I am straight or not. I do not know that there is a crook or a kink in it that I have not heard brought up by these men that have fallen away from us. I would be willing to hear further questions and further discussion if it is the wish of the convention.

[Our Note: Daniells discusses differing views regarding inspiration. One notices through these minutes the constant reference to verbal inspiration and thought inspiration as if that is the controversy and only verbal inspiration guarantees an inerrant (without mistakes) inspiration. The truth is that there are two views of those who believe in thought inspiration: those who hold that it permits mistakes and those who believe that God controlled the words enough that no mistakes were allowed to slip through. ²⁶³ Adventist laity have

²⁶³ While some might categorize this view as verbal inspiration, and might be technically right, the point this author is trying to make is that in Adventism it has traditionally been understood as thought inspiration. It becomes a straw man, and a muddying of the

historically been taught either verbal inspiration or inerrant thought inspiration. Either of these two positions is an honorable position that gives the scriptures the honor and authority that is their due. The problem is that in the past, as well as today, some defenders of Ellen White erect this straw man and try to act as if the issue is whether inspiration is verbally inspired or thought inspired. While it is true that the theory of thought inspiration was originally promoted by higher critics and leaves the door open to further development into an errant, faulty view of inspiration, we must not be sidetracked. Whichever way it is, that is not the issue here. The issue is whether inspiration is dependable and without mistakes,---can we take it to the bank or not? Many times, throughout this transcript, the term “verbal inspiration” is used to mean inerrant. We can see this by looking carefully at the context of the statement in relation to the whole document. The second thing to note is the words: “For all these years since the Battle Creek controversy began, I have been face to face with this question of the *Testimonies*. I have met all the doubters, the chief ones, and have dealt with it in ministerial institutes, and have talked it over and over until I am thoroughly familiar with it, **whether I am straight or not**. I do not know that there is a crook or a kink in it that I have not heard brought up by these men that have fallen away from us.” Daniells was fully familiar with the issue. He had heard all the reasons, and they were evidently strong enough that even as head of the church he used the words “**whether I am straight or not**.” Not exactly the words of confidence one might expect to hear.]

W. E. Howell: I am sure I do not want Brother Daniells to feel that he is disappointing us in any real sense this morning; and if I understand the wishes of the teachers, it has not been that he should discuss so much the rather technical question of the verbal or truth-revealed inspiration of the Bible, but rather that he will give us some further instruction along the line of the inspiration of the spirit of prophecy and its relation to that of the Bible. I have nothing further to press along that line, but as teachers have expressed themselves to me, I have felt that it might be well to consider some aspects of that question a little further, particularly the use of unpublished writings, letters, talks, etc., in the light of what was referred to here the other day. Sister White herself said that if we wanted to know what

waters, when an Adventist ignores this position and pretends it never existed, when discussing the issue.

the spirit of prophecy said on a thing, we should read her published writings. That is one question I think the teachers have in mind, Brother Daniells.

F. M. Wilcox: I have enjoyed these discussions very much. I enjoyed the evening of last week when the question of the spirit of prophecy was considered. I enjoyed very much the talk Elder Daniells gave on the question, and I think the view he took of the question very fully agrees with my own view. I have known for long years the way in which Sister White's works were brought together and her books compiled. I have never believed in the verbal inspiration of the Testimonies. I must say, however, that last Wednesday evening and also since then, some remarks have been made without proper safeguarding, and I should question the effect of those statements and positions out in the field. I know that there is considerable talk around Takoma Park over positions that have been taken here, and there will be that same situation out in the field. As Brother Wakeham suggested the other day, I think we have to deal with a very delicate question, and I would hate terribly to see an influence sweep over the field and into any of our schools that the Testimonies were discounted. There is great danger of a reaction, and I do feel concerned.

I have heard questions raised here that have left the impression on my mind that if the same questions are raised in our classes when we get back to our schools, we are going to have serious difficulty. I believe there are a great many questions that we should hold back and not discuss. I am not a teacher in a school, although I did teach the Bible 13 years in a nurses' training school, where I had a large number of young people; but I cannot conceive that it is necessary for us to answer every question that is put to us by students or others, or be driven into a place where we will take a position that will lessen faith. I think the *Testimonies* of the Spirit of God are a great asset to this denomination, and I think if we destroy faith in them, we are going to destroy faith in the very foundation of our work. I must say that I do view with a great deal of concern the influence that will go out from this meeting and from questions that I have seen raised here. And unless these questions can be dealt with most diplomatically, I think we are going to have serious trouble. I surely hope the Lord will give us wisdom so that we shall know what to say

and do in meeting these things in the future.

[**Our Note:** We notice that Wilcox says that: "...if we destroy faith in them [the *Testimonies*], we are going to destroy faith in the very **foundation** of our work." One can see that in spite of their public claim of their church resting on the foundation of the Bible that, in reality it rests on the foundation of the Testimonies. Years before, James White, one of the founders of Adventism and Ellen White's husband said essentially the same thing when he wrote: "Our position on the *Testimonies* [Ellen White] is like the keystone of the arch. Take that out, and there is no logical stopping place till all the special truths of the message are gone. ... Nothing is surer than this, that this message and the visions belong together and stand and fall together."

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The contents of these meetings were supposed to be secret. However, a few younger men who did not have very much personal experience with Ellen White nor her view of inspiration contained in her and Willie's secret letter felt that she was being betrayed at the conference. They leaked information, and that is undoubtedly what Wilcox is referring to. One sees throughout this document a constant fear that the laity might find out the truth too soon about Ellen White before they can be conditioned to avoid a crisis. One is also impressed in this document with what seems to be men who, while confronted with evidence to the contrary, cannot bring themselves to consider the possibility of Ellen White not being a true prophet. It is not an option for them! So if that is the truth and they refuse to even consider it, is that not closing their eyes to truth, and will not the Lord send them a strong delusion that they might believe a lie (**2 Th 2:11**) because they do not have the love of the truth when it may go against a cherished belief? More importantly, we must be careful that we do not fall into such a condition.]

C. L. Benson: I have felt very much concerned along the same line; and the question that has raised itself in my own mind goes a little further than has been brought up here; but it seems to me it is almost a logical step. That is this: If there are such uncertainties with reference to our historical position, and if the **Testimonies** are not to be relied on to throw a great deal of light upon our historical positions, and if the same is true with reference to our theological interpretation of texts,

²⁶⁴ *Review and Herald*, Aug. 14, 1883

then how can we consistently place implicit confidence in the direction that is given with reference to our educational problems, and our medical school, and even our denominational organization? If there is a definite spiritual leadership in these things, then how can we consistently lay aside the *Testimonies* or partially lay them aside when it comes to the prophetic and historic side of the message, and place these things on the basis of research work? That question is in my mind, and I am confident that it is in the minds of others.

Waldorf: That is in my mind. That is why I brought out that illustration on the blackboard this morning - those three rivers, history, spirit of prophecy, and the Bible.

J. N. Anderson: I thought when we dismissed the subject the other day the main question was how we as teachers should deal with this question when we stand before our students. I think we have come to quite a unanimous opinion about this matter among ourselves here, and we stand pretty well together, I should say, as to what position the *Testimonies* occupy--their authority and their relation to the Bible, and so on--but the question in my mind, and in the mind of some others too, I think, is, What shall we as teachers do when we stand before our classes and some historical question comes up, such as we have spoken of here, where we have decided that Sister White's writings are not final? Or shall we say there are many historical facts that we believe scholarship must decide, that Sister White never claimed to be final on the historical matters that appear in her writings? **Are we safe to tell that to our students? We hold it in abeyance? And can we hold something in the back of our heads that we are absolutely sure about, and that most of the brethren stand with us on? Can we hold those things back and be true to ourselves? And furthermore, are we safe in doing it? Is it well to let our people in general go on holding to the verbal inspiration of the *Testimonies*? When we do that, aren't we preparing for a crisis that will be very serious someday? It seems to me that the best thing for us to do is to cautiously and very carefully educate our people to see just where we really should stand to be consistent Protestants, to be consistent with the *Testimonies* themselves, and to be consistent with what we know we must do, as intelligent men,**

as we have decided in these meetings.

Of course, these are not such big questions because I do not teach along this line. Still, they do sometimes arise in my classes. But personally, I am not concerned about it. I am concerned about the faith of the young men and women that come into our schools. They are to be our leaders, and I think these are the days when they should be given the very best foundation we can give them. We should give them the most sincere and honest beliefs that we have in our own hearts.

I speak with some feeling because it does come close to my convictions that something should be done here in this place—here is where it can be done—to safeguard our people, **to educate them**, and to bring them back and cause them to stand upon the only foundation that can ever be secure as we advance and progress.

[**Our Note:** With regard to Ellen White not claiming to be an authority on history, it should be remembered that while she seems to have held this view privately of the matter, as stated in Willie's letter, and perhaps wanted the church to get conditioned to accept errors in her writings, that when it came to all of her statements made in a public and meaningful way, they left the impression that she was to be trusted in all that she wrote, including history. Indeed, later in this document, the men would lament that the people were ever misled regarding her writings. But I ask, who was the primary one who taught them what they believed regarding the Spirit of Prophecy? To be as generous, charitable, and indulgent as possible, such ideas that these men lament could not have developed without Mrs. White's approval in the form of silence, if not actual teaching.]

C. L. Taylor: With regard to the verbal inspiration of the *Testimonies*, I would say that I have heard more about it here in one day than ever before in my life. I think we have made a great big mountain of difficulty to go out and fight against. I do not believe that our people generally believe in the verbal inspiration of the *Testimonies*. I think that the general idea of our people is that the *Testimonies* are the writings of a sister who received light from God. As to verbal inspiration, I think they have a very ill-defined idea. I think they believe that in some way God gave her light, and she wrote it down, and they do not know what verbal inspiration means.

But I do see a great deal in the question Professor Benson

raised, and that is if we must lay aside what Sister White has said interpreting history, or what we might call the philosophy of history, as unreliable, and also lay aside as unreliable expositions of Scripture, the only natural conclusion for me, and probably for a great many others, would be that the same authorship is unreliable regarding organization, regarding pantheism, and every other subject that she ever treated on; that she may have told the truth, but we had better get all the historical data we can to see whether she told the truth or not. That is something I would like to hear discussed. I do not believe we shall get to the foundation of the question unless we answer Professor Benson's question.

A. G. Daniells: Shall we consider some points as settled and pass on? Take the matter of verbal inspiration. I think it is very much as Brother Taylor says, that among the most of our people there is no question. It is not agitated. They do not understand it, and they do not understand the technical features of the inspiration of the Bible, either. And the power of the Bible and its grip on the human race does not depend on a technical point as to their belief in it, whether it is verbally inspired or truth-inspired. The men who hold directly opposite positions have the same faith in the Bible. **I will not allow a man who believes in the verbal inspiration of the Bible to depreciate my faith in the Bible because I do not hold with him;** I will not consent to that a moment. I know my own faith in it; I know that I have enough faith in it to get forgiveness of my sins and companionship with my Lord and the hope of heaven. I know that, and a man that holds a different view need not try to depreciate my faith because I do not hold the same view that he does. I do not depreciate another man's faith or standing with God at all because he holds a different view. I think we could argue about the inspiration of the Bible—I was going to say till doomsday—till the end, and not come to the same view, but all have the same confidence in it, and have the same experience, and all get to the same place at last.

But now with reference to the *Testimonies*: **I think more mischief can be done with the Testimonies by claiming their verbal inspiration than can with the Bible.** If you ask for the logic of it, it might take some time to bring it out, and I might not be able to satisfy every mind; **but if you ask for practical**

experience, I can give it to you, plenty of it.

[Our Note: Once again we have them calling the position of inerrancy in inspiration as verbal inspiration. It is interesting to note that they admit that the Bible can stand up to the test of inerrancy much better than Ellen White. Notice Daniells' last words, "but if you ask for practical experience, I can give it to you, plenty of it." That is experience with Ellen White making mistakes. Farther up in the quote we see Daniells state: "I will not allow a man who believes in the verbal inspiration of the Bible to depreciate my faith in the Bible because I do not hold with him." So Daniells seems to not believe in an inerrant Bible. I wonder why? He says later in this document that he had to come to grips with the inspiration of Ellen White's books not being verbally inspired (i.e., inerrant as they use the word) while he worked with her closely in Australia. Could it be that his experience of working with a supposed prophet of God who got things wrong influenced his opinion of how reliable the Bible was? If this is so, is it good or bad fruit from Ellen White's ministry?]

F. M. Wilcox: Because we know how the *Testimonies* were brought together, and we do not know anything about the Bible.

A. G. Daniells: Yes, that is one point. We do know, and it is no kind of use for anybody to stand up and talk about the verbal inspiration of the *Testimonies*, because everybody who has ever seen the work done knows better, and we might as well dismiss it.

M. E. Kern: I am not so sure that some of the brethren are right in saying that we are all agreed on this question. I came in here the other day for the first time to attend the conference, and I would hear the same man in the same talk say that we could not depend on this historical data that was given in the spirit of prophecy and then assert his absolute confidence in the spirit of prophecy and in the *Testimonies*. And then a little further along, there would be something else that he would not agree with. For instance, the positive testimony against butter was mentioned, and he explained that there are exceptions to that. Later he would again say, "I have absolute confidence in the inspiration of the spirit of prophecy." The question is, what is the nature of inspiration? **How can we feel, and believe, and know that there is an inconsistency there—something that is not right—and yet believe that the spirit of prophecy is inspired? Do you get**

the question?

A. G. Daniells: Yes, I get your question all right!

[**Our Note:** Notice that Daniells understands the question but does not answer it.]

M. E. Kern: That is the difficulty we have in explaining this to young people. **We may have confidence ourselves, but it is hard to make others believe it if we express this more liberal view.** I can see how some might take advantage of this liberal view and go out and eat meat every meal and say that part of the *Testimonies* is not reliable.

Question: Can't he do the same thing if he believes in the verbal inspiration?

M. E. Kern: Not quite so consistently. If he believed every word was inspired, he could not consistently sit down and eat meat.

A. G. Daniells: But I have seen them do it.

M. E. Kern: But not conscientiously. But now take a man who delves into the Scriptures, and he reads the Hebrew and the Greek, and he goes out and tells the people, "If you understood the Greek, you would not get that meaning from the Bible," or, "If Sister White had understood the Greek, she would not have said that." Such a man can take a lot of license from this liberal view. Now, the question is running in my mind this way: In the very nature of the case, isn't there a human element in inspiration because God had to speak through human instruments? And can we, either in the Bible or the *Testimonies*, play upon a word and lay down the law and bind a man's conscience on a word instead of the general view of the whole scope of interpretation? I do not believe a man can believe in the general inspiration of the spirit of prophecy and still not believe that vegetarianism is the thing for mankind. I can understand how that testimony was written for individuals, and there are exceptions to it, **and how Sister White, in her human weakness, could make a mistake in stating a truth and still not destroy the inspiration of the spirit of prophecy; but the question is how to present these matters to the people. Brother Taylor may see no difficulty, but I see a lot of difficulty, not only in dealing with our students but with our people in general.**

[**Our Note:** This view is the exact view openly presented by the White Estate today. Notice that in order to justify the mistakes in Ellen White and help her pass the biblical test of a prophet, the Bible is brought down to her level. Is this some fruit of her ministry? If the foundations be destroyed, what then? Fruit can be tricky to identify. But Christ warned us of false prophets in the last days. We are told to test the prophets. It is not a request but an order from the King. Will we honestly obey that command?]

A. G. Daniells: On the question of verbal inspiration?

M. E. Kern: Brother Benson's question is to the point. We had a council here a few weeks ago, and we laid down pretty straight some principles of education, and also some technicalities of education, and we based our conclusions on the authority of the spirit of prophecy, as it was written. Now we come to those historical questions, and we say, "Well, Sister White was mistaken about that, and that needs to be revised." The individual who did not quite see the points that we made at the educational council may say, "Well, possibly Sister White is wrong about the influence of universities," and it is hard to convince him that she was right, perhaps. I want, somehow, to get on a consistent basis myself.

Many years ago I was in a meeting where Dr. Kellogg and others were considering a business matter. Dr. Kellogg there took a position exactly contrary to something Sister White had said. When asked how he explained what she had said, he replied that she had been influenced to say it. He was running down the *Testimonies* there. A short time after that I read one of his articles in the paper, in which he was laying down the law on the basis of the *Testimonies*. That made me lose my confidence in Dr. Kellogg. On one point that he did not agree with, he said she had been influenced. Then he took this other thing that pleased him and he said it was from the Lord. Perhaps he thought one was from the Lord and the other was not. **But we certainly do have difficulty in showing the people which is human and which is divinely inspired.**

G. B. Thompson: Wouldn't that be true of the Bible?

M. E. Kern: That is why I propose that we discuss the nature of inspiration. I have a sort of feeling that Sister White was a prophet just as Jeremiah was, and that in time her work will show up like Jeremiah's. I wonder if Jeremiah, in his day, did

not do a lot of talking and perhaps some writing which was, as Paul said, on his own authority. I wonder if, in those days, the people did not have difficulty in differentiating between what was from the Lord and what was not. **But the people make it more difficult now** because all of Sister White's articles and books are with us, and her letters, too, and many think that every word she has ever said or written is from the Lord. We have had sanitariums built on account of letters she has written from a depot somewhere. And undertakings involving great financial investments have been started because of a letter from her. There is no question but what many young people, and also ministers, have that idea, and it is a real problem with me. I wish we could get down to bedrock. I do not think we are there yet.

[Our Note: Where did the people get the idea that every word written on spiritual subjects was from the Lord? Was it not from her? See the above chapter *Ellen White and the Church Speak Out*.]

W. W. Prescott: I would like to ask if you think that, after his writings had been published a series of years, Jeremiah changed them because he was convinced that there were historical errors in them?

M. E. Kern: I cannot answer that.

W. H. Wakeham: **There is a real difficulty, and we will have it to meet.** We may say that the people do not believe in the verbal inspiration of the *Testimonies*. Perhaps technically they do not know what it means. But that is not the question at all. **They have accepted the Testimonies all over the country and believe that every identical word that Sister White has written was to be received as infallible truth. We have that thing to meet when we get back,** and it will be brought up in our classes just as sure as we stand here because it has come to me over and over again in every class I have taught. It not only comes out in classes but in the churches. **I know we have a very delicate task before us if we meet the situation and do it in the way the Lord wants it done.** I am praying very earnestly for help as I go back to meet some of the things I know I am going to meet.

[Our Note: Here we have what they mean by the words verbal inspiration. They define it for us.]

W. B. Howell: Surely, we are getting our difficulties aired well

this morning, and that is perfectly proper; but we have only ten minutes left of the period in which to give some attention to the solution of those difficulties. We have invited men of much larger experience than we are to come in and help us and give us their counsel. It seems to me we ought to give them some time.

G. B. Thompson: It seems to me that if we are going to preach the Testimonies and establish confidence in them, it does not depend on whether they are verbally inspired or not. I think we are in this fix because of a wrong education that our people have had. [Voice: That is true.] If we had always taught the truth on this question, we would not have any trouble or shock in the denomination now. But the shock is because we have not taught the truth and have put the Testimonies on a plane where she says they do not stand. We have claimed more for them than she did. My thought is this: that the evidence of the inspiration of the *Testimonies* is not in their verbal inspiration but in their influence and power in the denomination. Now to illustrate: Brother Daniells and I were in Battle Creek at a special crisis, and word came to us that some special testimonies were on the way to us from Sister White and for us to stay there until they came. When they came, we found they were to be read to the people. They were of a very serious character. They had been written a year before and filed away. Brother Daniells and I prayed about it, and then we sent out the word to the people that a meeting was to be held at a certain time. When the time came, about 3,000 people came into the Tabernacle, and they filled it up, even away back up into the "peanut gallery." There were unbelievers and skeptics there and all classes. Brother Daniells stood up there and read that matter to them, and I tell you there was a power went with it that gripped that whole congregation. And after the meeting was over, people came to us and told us that the Testimony described a meeting they had held the night before. I was convinced that there was more than ordinary power in that document. It was not whether it was verbally inspired or not, but it carried the power of the Spirit of God with it.

I think if we could get at it from that line, we would get along better. They are not verbally inspired—we know that—and what is the use of teaching that they are?

[**Our Note:** The words “... have put the *Testimonies* on a plane where she says they do not stand.” Either show the personal ignorance of what she wrote on the subject or, more likely, are an attempt to smooth things over in minds that are trying to justify their own beliefs, indeed their very jobs, and their prophet. Such things are easy to do without the individual realizing it. That is why Jesus warned that only those who have a love of the truth will make it through. Note He didn’t say those who have the truth, but rather those who love the truth. We also notice this delegate’s words: “the evidence of the inspiration of the *Testimonies* is not in their verbal inspiration, but in their influence and power in the denomination.” Since they have thrown out the test of the necessity of a prophet of God speaking truth, due to Ellen White’s mistakes, they are now suggesting that the proof or test of a prophet is if they have influence and power over their followers. I would ask, would not this reasoning prove that Joseph Smith was a true prophet? He had and has a large and powerful influence over his followers. For that matter, what prominent false prophet does not have such an influence? We also see that they are using an experience and the way they feel as a basis in their decision regarding Ellen White’s validity as a prophet rather than the Bible. This is mysticism. As Bible-believing Christians, we base our beliefs and judge all things, even our experiences, by the Bible. Experience is what we use as extra reinforcement and confirmation of the truths we have already established by the Scriptures. Those who go by their feelings and experiences as their primary evidence can be led by them just about anywhere. Some have even gone into the New Age due to similar reasoning, like a certain former Sunday School teacher I am aware of.]

M. E. Kern: I would like to suggest that this question of verbal inspiration does not settle the difficulty.

C. M. Sorenson: Does Sister White use the word “inspiration” concerning her own writings, or is that merely a theory we have worked up ourselves? I ask for information. I have never seen that in her writings.

A. G. Daniells: I hardly know where to begin or what to say. I think I must repeat this, that our difficulty lies in two points, especially. One is on infallibility and the other is on verbal inspiration. I think Brother James White foresaw difficulties along this line away back at the beginning. He knew that he took Sister White's testimonies and helped to write them out and make them clear and grammatical and plain. He knew

that he was doing that right along. And he knew that the secretaries they employed took them and put them into grammatical condition, transposed sentences, completed sentences, and used words that Sister White did not herself write in her original copy. He saw that, and yet he saw some brethren who did not know this and who had great confidence in the *Testimonies*, just believing and teaching that these words were given to Sister White as well as the thought. And he tried to correct that idea. You will find those statements in the Review and Herald, like the one Brother Wilcox read the other day. If that explanation had been accepted and passed on down, we would have been free from a great many perplexities that we have now.

[Our Note: Notice that Daniells says: “I hardly know where to begin or what to say.” One can hardly blame him. For as we have seen in our chapter *Ellen White and the Church Speak Out*, she is very plain in the fact that her writings are inspired even though she might not use those exact words. The meaning cannot be misunderstood. As far as articles published as to disclaiming verbal inspiration, saying that not every word was given her, it is hardly the point. The “elephant” in the room is whether she can get things wrong, and if so, was that ever taught to the people in a meaningful way. Ellen and James proved themselves very capable of getting any message they felt was important across to their followers. If they had not been so skilled, they would never have successfully founded the Seventh-day Adventist Church to start with. Looking once again at the chapter in this book, *Ellen White and the Church Speak Out*, it would seem that she did lay claim to verbal inspiration at times. Other times she denied that the very words were given to her. But again, that is not the issue. The issue is whether inspiration is inerrant or not. Can we trust it or not, and by extension, can we trust our Bibles?]

F. M. Wilcox: Articles were published in those early Reviews disclaiming that.

A. G. Daniells: Yes, but you know there are some brethren who go in all over. We could mention some old and some young who think they cannot believe the *Testimonies* without just putting them up as absolutely infallible and word-inspired, taking the whole thing as given verbally by the Lord. They do not see how to believe them and how to get good out of them except in that way; and I suppose some people would feel that if they did not believe in the verbal inspiration of the

Bible, they could not have confidence in it and take it as the great Book that they now see it to be.²⁶⁵ Some men are technical and can hardly understand it in any other way. Some other men are not so technical in logic, but they have great faith and great confidence, and so they can go through on another line of thought. **I am sure there has been advocated an idea of infallibility in Sister White and verbal inspiration in the Testimonies that has led people to expect too much and to make too great claims, and so we have gotten into difficulty.**

Now, as I have studied it these years since I was thrown into the controversy at Battle Creek, I have endeavored to ascertain the truth and then be true to the truth. I do not know how to do except that way. It will never help me, or help the people, to make a false claim to evade some trouble. I know we have difficulties here but let us dispose of some of the main things first. Brethren, are we going to evade difficulties or help out the difficulties by taking a false position? [Voices: No!] Well, then let us take an honest, true position, and reach our end somehow, because I never will put up a false claim to evade something that will come up a little later on. That is not honest, and it is not Christian, and so I take my stand there.

In Australia, I saw *The Desire of Ages* being made up, and I saw the rewriting of chapters, some of them written over and over and over again. I saw that, and when I talked with Sister Davis about it, **I tell you I had to square up to this thing and begin to settle things about the spirit of prophecy. If these false positions had never been taken, the thing would be much plainer than it is today.** What was charged as plagiarism would all have been simplified, and I believe men would have been saved to the cause if from the start we had understood this thing as it should have been. **With those false views held, we face difficulties in straightening up. We will not meet those difficulties by resorting to a false claim. We could meet them just for today by saying, "Brethren, I believe in the verbal inspiration of the Testimonies; I**

²⁶⁵ It should be noted that the Bible makes it clear that inerrancy in inspiration is a requirement for a prophet from God. Therefore, even if it could be proved that the Adventist church taught consistently that inspiration contains mistakes, which they did not; it would only cause them, by so doing, to brand Ellen White as a false prophet in light of the teaching of the Bible.

believe in the infallibility of the one through whom they came, and everything that is written there I will take and I will stand on that against all comers."

If we did that, **I would just take everything from A to Z, exactly as it was written**, without making any explanations to anyone; and I would not eat butter or salt or eggs if I believed that the Lord gave the words in those Testimonies to Sister White for the whole body of people in this world. But I do not believe it.

[**Our Note:** Here Daniells says that if he believed in the verbal inspiration of the testimonies (i.e., that there were no mistakes) "... I would just take everything from A to Z, exactly as it was written..." Here at last is cleared up the mystery of why Daniells, having worked so closely with Ellen White, could be so careless and disregard some of Ellen White's counsel at times. Why did he feel this way? It would seem that having worked with Ellen White and seen so much regarding the testimonies, such as the human element in them and mistakes that they contained, it destroyed his confidence in them and caused him to feel the need to exercise his own judgment in preference to them.]

M. E. Kern: You couldn't and keep your conscience clear.

A. G. Daniells: No, I couldn't; but I do not believe that; and I can enter upon an explanation of health reform that I think is consistent, and that she endeavored to bring in in later years when she saw people making a bad use of that. I have eaten pounds of butter at her table myself, and dozens of eggs. I could not explain that in her own family if I believed that she believed those were the Lord's own words to the world. But there are people who believe that and do not eat eggs or butter. I do not know that they use salt. I know plenty of people in the early days did not use salt, and it was in our church. I am sure that many children suffered from it.

There is no use of our claiming anything more on the verbal inspiration of the Testimonies, because she never claimed it, and James White never claimed it, and W. C. White never claimed it; and all the persons who helped to prepare those Testimonies knew they were not verbally inspired. I will say no more along that line.

D. A. Parsons: She not only did not claim it, but she denied it.

A. G. Daniells: Yes, she tried to correct the people.

Now on infallibility. I suppose Sister White used Paul's text, "We have this treasure in earthen vessels," as much as any other scripture. She used to repeat that often, "We have this treasure in earthen vessels," with the idea that she was a poor, feeble woman, a messenger of the Lord trying to do her duty and meet the mind of God in this work. When you take the position that she was not infallible, and that her writings were not verbally inspired, isn't there a chance for the manifestation of the human? If there isn't, then what is infallibility? And should we be surprised when we know that the instrument was fallible, and that the general truths, as she says, were revealed, then aren't we prepared to see mistakes?

[**Our Note:** The phrase "We have this treasure in earthen vessels" loses its significance if we hold that this means that there are mistakes in God's word because the human vessel is involved. One needs to ask, what is the treasure mentioned in this verse? It is undoubtedly the Word of God. What is the vessel? It is the human being. They are two separate things. The vessel is not the treasure. It only contains the treasure. It does not matter how horribly ugly a container is that contains the treasure; it has no effect on the treasure, for it is not the treasure. The whole point of this verse, as God gave it, was to highlight the beautiful fact that even though the container is so ugly, the treasure is beautiful and without blemish, and what a miracle it is. It should also be noted that some writers have quoted Ellen White as saying she is not infallible. The problem is that these quotes are taken out of context. What she was really referring to was herself in her personal life, not her writings. Again, the same with the above on earthen vessels gets at the same idea. That's why true inspiration is a miracle and is such a lovely treasure. After all, any of us can get things wrong. What would be special about that?]

M. E. Kern: She was an author and not merely a pen.

[**Our Note:** Here he admits more than he realizes. She was indeed the real author, and that is the whole problem. But we must remember that she claimed: "The Holy Ghost is the Author of the Scriptures and of the Spirit of Prophecy."²⁶⁶]

²⁶⁶ *Selected Messages*, Vol. 3, p. 30

A. G. Daniells: Yes; and now take that *Life of Paul*—I suppose you all know about it and knew what claims were put up against her, charges made of plagiarism, even by the authors of the book, Conybeare and Howson, and were liable to make the denomination trouble because there was so much of their book put into "The Life of Paul" without any credit or quotation marks. Some people of strict logic might fly the track on that ground, but I am not built that way. I found it out, and I read it with Brother Palmer when he found it, and we got Conybeare and Howson, and we got Wylie's *History of the Reformation*, and we read word for word, page after page, and no quotations, no credit, and really I did not know the difference until I began to compare them. I supposed it was Sister White's own work. The poor sister said, "Why, I didn't know about quotations and credits. My secretary should have looked after that, and the publishing house should have looked after it."

She did not claim that that was all revealed to her and written word for word under the inspiration of the Lord. There I saw the manifestation of the human in these writings. Of course, I could have said this, and I did say it, that I wished a different course had been taken in the compilation of the books. If proper care had been exercised, it would have saved a lot of people from being thrown off the track.

Mrs. Williams: The secretary would know that she ought not to quote a thing without using quotation marks.

A. G. Daniells: You would think so. I do not know who the secretary was. The book was set aside, and I have never learned who had a hand in fixing that up. It may be that some do know.

B. L. House: May I ask one question about that book? Did Sister White write any of it?

A. G. Daniells: O, yes!

E. L. House: But there are some things that are not in Conybeare and Howson that are not in the new book, either. Why are those striking statements not embodied in the new book?

A. G. Daniells: I cannot tell you. But if her writings were verbally inspired, why should she revise them?

B. L. House: My difficulty is not with the verbal inspiration. My difficulty is here: You take the nine volumes of the *Testimonies*, and as I understand it, Sister White wrote the original matter from which they were made up, except that they were corrected so far as grammar, capitalization, and punctuation are concerned. But such books as *Sketches of the Life of Paul*, *Desire of Ages*, and *Great Controversy* were composed differently, it seems to me, even by her secretaries than the nine volumes of the *Testimonies*. Is there not a difference? I have felt that the *Testimonies* were not produced like those other books.

A. G. Daniells: I do not know how much revision she might have made in those personal *Testimonies* before she put them out.

B. L. House: Did anyone else ever write anything that is found in the nine volumes of the *Testimonies*?

A. G. Daniells: No, I do not know that there are any quotations in the *Testimonies*.

B. L. House: Isn't there a difference, then, between the nine volumes of the *Testimonies* and those other books for which her secretaries were authorized to collect valuable quotations from other books?

A. G. Daniells: You admit that she had the right to revise her work?

B. L. House: Oh, yes.

A. G. Daniells: Then your question is, Why did she leave out of the revision some striking things that she wrote that it seems should have been put in?

B. L. House: Yes.

M. E. Kern: In the first volume of the *Spirit of Prophecy*, there are some details given, if I am not mistaken, as to the height of Adam. It seems to me that when she went to prepare *Patriarchs and Prophets* for the public, even though that had been shown her, it did not seem wise to put that before the public.

A. G. Daniells: And she also left out of our books for the public that scene of Satan playing the game of life.

B. L. House: In that old edition of *Sketches of the Life of Paul*, she is very clear about the ceremonial law. That is not in the new book, and I wondered why that was left out.

D. A. Parsons: I have an answer to that. I was in California when the book was compiled, and I took the old edition and talked with Brother Will White about this very question. He said the whole book, with the exception of that chapter, had been compiled for some time, and they had held it up until they could arrange that chapter in such a way as to prevent controversy arising. They did not desire the book to be used to settle any controversy, and therefore they eliminated most of these statements on the ceremonial law just to prevent a renewal of the great controversy over the ceremonial law in Galatians.

[Our Note: Does anyone have a right to suppress inspired writings for any reason? If God had not intended for us to have it, would He have given it to start with? Is it right to suppress it to keep it from being used to settle a controversy? Is not the Word of God for that very reason given to us? Is not that one of the reasons, according to Ellen White, that her testimonies were given, was to bring unity on differences of doctrine? Should we start revising and suppressing the Bible because it might offend those who might read it in the world that we witness to or because we don't want it to settle questions and differences on doctrine in the church?]

B. L. House: It is not a repudiation of what was written by her in the first volume, is it?

D. A. Parsons: No, not at all; but they just put enough in to satisfy the inquiring mind, but eliminated those striking statements to prevent a renewal of the controversy.

F. M. Wilcox: I would like to ask, Brother Daniells, if it could be accepted as a sort of rule that Sister White might be mistaken in details, but in the general policy and instruction, she was an authority. For instance, I hear a man saying, "I cannot accept Sister White on this," when perhaps she has devoted pages to the discussion of it. A man said he could not accept what Sister White said about royalties on books, and yet she devotes pages to that subject and emphasizes it again and again; and it is the same with policies for our schools and publishing houses and sanitariums. It seems to me I would have to accept what she says on some of those general

policies, or I would have to sweep away the whole thing. Either the Lord has spoken through her, or He has not spoken through her; and if it is a matter of deciding in my own judgment whether He has or has not, then I regard her books the same as every other book published. I think it is one thing for a man to stultify his conscience, and it is another thing to stultify his judgment. It is one thing for me to lay aside my conscience, and it is another thing for me to change my judgment over some views that I hold.

A. G. Daniells: I think Brother Benson's question on historical and theological matters has not been dealt with yet, and I do not know that I am able to give any light. Perhaps some of you may know to what extent Sister White has revised some of her statements and references or quotations from historical writings. Have you ever gone through and made a list of them?

W. W. Prescott: I gave nearly an hour to that the other day, taking the old edition of *Great Controversy* and reading it and then reading the revised edition. But that did not cover all the ground.

A. G. Daniells: We did not create that difficulty, did we? We General Conference men did not create it, for we did not make the revision. We did not take any part in it. We had nothing whatever to do with it. It was all done under her supervision. If there is a difficulty there, she created it, did she not?

F. M. Wilcox: She assumed the whole responsibility for it.

M. F. Kern: But we have to meet it.

A. G. Daniells: Well, now, which statement shall we take, the original or the revised?

B. L. House: My real difficulty is just here: Sister White did not write either the old edition or the revised, as I understand it.

A. G. Daniells: What do you mean by saying that she did not write either edition?

B. L. House: As I understand it, Elder J. N. Anderson prepared those historical quotations for the old edition, and Brother Robinson and, Brother Crisler, Professor Prescott, and others furnished the quotations for the new edition. Did she

write the historical quotations in there?

A. G. Daniells: No.

B. L. House: Then there is a difference between the *Testimonies* and those books.

W. W. Prescott: Changes have been made in what was not historical extract at all.

A. G. Daniells: Shall we not confine ourselves just now to this question of Brother Benson's and lead our way up to the real difficulty, and then deal with it? Do you have a clear conception of the way the difficulty arose? - that in making the first edition of *Great Controversy*, those who helped her prepare the copy were allowed to bring forward historical quotations that seemed to fit the case. She may have asked, "Now, what good history do you have for that?" I do not know just how she brought it in, but she never would allow us to claim anything for her as a historian. She did not put herself up as a corrector of history — not only did [she] not do that, but [she] protested against it. Just how they dealt in bringing the history along, I could not say, but I suspect that she referred to this as she went along and then allowed them to gather the very best historical statements they could and submit them to her, and she approved of them.

C. L. Benson: This is my query, and it underlies all of her writings: How did she determine upon the philosophy of history? If she endorsed our interpretation of history without any details, do we dare to set that aside? I understand she never studied medical science, but she has laid down certain fundamental principles; and that she has done the same with education and organization.

A. G. Daniells: Sister White never has written anything on the philosophy of history.

C. L. Benson: No, but she has endorsed our 2300-day proposition, from 538 to 1798.

A. G. Daniells: You understand she did that by placing that in her writings?

C. L. Benson: Yes.

A. G. Daniells: Yes, I suppose she did.

C. A. Shall: I think the book *Education* contains something along the line of the philosophy of history.

W. E. Howell: Yes, she outlines general principles.

C. M. Sorenson: Nobody has ever questioned Sister White's philosophy of history, so far as I know--and I presume I have heard most of the questions raised about it--along the line of the hand of God in human affairs and the way the hand of God has been manifested. The only question anybody has raised has been about minor details. Take this question as to whether 533 has some significance taken in connection with 538. She never set 533, but if there is a significance attached to it in human affairs, it certainly would not shut us out from using it, and that would not affect the 1260 years. Some people say antichrist is yet to come and is to last for three and one-half literal years. If you change those positions, you will change the philosophy.

W. W. Prescott: Do I understand Brother Benson's view is that such a statement as that in *Great Controversy*, that the 1260 years began in 538 and ended in 1798, settles the matter infallibly?

C. L. Benson: No, only on the preaching of doctrines in general. If she endorses the prophetic part of our interpretation, irrespective of details, then she endorses it.

W. W. Prescott: Then that settles it as being a part of that philosophy.

C. L. Benson: Yes, in this way: I do not see how we can do anything else but set up our individual judgment if we say we will discount that because we have something else that we think is better evidence. It is the same with education and the medical science.

W. W. Prescott: You are touching exactly the experience through which I went personally, because you all know that I contributed something toward the revision of *Great Controversy*. I furnished considerable material bearing upon that question.

A. G. Daniells: By request.

W. W. Prescott: Yes, I was asked to do it, and at first I said, "No, I will not do it. I know what it means." But I was urged

into it. When I had gone over it with W. C. White, then I said, "Here is my difficulty. I have gone over this and suggested changes that ought to be made in order to correct statements. These changes have been accepted. My personal difficulty will be to retain faith on those things that I cannot deal with on that basis." But I did not throw up the spirit of prophecy and have not yet; but I have had to adjust my view of things. I will say to you, as a matter of fact, that the relation of those writings to this movement and to our work is clearer and more consistent in my mind than it was then. But still you know what I am charged with. I have gone through the personal experience myself over that very thing that you speak of. If we correct it here and correct it there, how are we going to stand with it in the other places?

F. M. Wilcox: Those things do not involve the general philosophy of the book.

W. W. Prescott: No, but they did involve quite large details. For instance, before *Great Controversy* was revised, I was unorthodox on a certain point, but after it was revised, I was perfectly orthodox.

C. M. Sorenson: On what point?

W. W. Prescott: My interpretation was (and I taught it for years in *The Protestant Magazine*) that Babylon stood for the great apostasy against God, which headed up in the papacy, but which included all minor forms, and that before we come to the end, they would all come under one. That was not the teaching of *Great Controversy*. *Great Controversy* said that Babylon could not mean the Romish church, and I had made it mean that largely and primarily. After the book was revised, although the whole argument remained the same, it said that it could not mean the Roman Church alone, just that one word added.

F. M. Wilcox: That helped you out.

W. W. Prescott: Yes, but I told W. C. White I did not think anybody had any right to do that. And I did not believe anybody had any right to use it against me before or afterward. I simply went right on with my teaching.

J. W. Anderson: Would you not claim other portions of the book as on the same basis?

W. W. Prescott: No, I would refuse to do that. I had to deal with A. R. Henry over that question. He was determined to crush those men that took a wrong course concerning him. I spent hours with that man trying to help him. We were intimate in our work, and I used to go to his house and spend hours with him. He brought up this question about the authority of the spirit of prophecy and wanted me to draw the line between what was authoritative and what was not. I said, "Brother Henry, I will not attempt to do it, and I advise you not to do it. There is an authority in that gift here, and we must recognize it."

I have tried to maintain personal confidence in this gift in the church, and I use it and use it. I have gotten great help from those books, but I will tell you frankly that I held to that position on the question of Babylon for years when I knew it was exactly contrary to *Great Controversy*, but I went on, and in due time I became orthodox. I did not enjoy that experience at all, and I hope you will not have to go through it. It means something.

C. L. Benson: That is the pivotal point. You had something that enabled you to take that position. What was it?

W. W. Prescott: I cannot lay down any rule for anybody. What settled me to take that position was the Bible, not any secular authority.

J. N. Anderson: Your own findings must be your authority for believing and not believing.

W. W. Prescott: You can upset everything by applying that as a general principle.

C. P. Bollman: Could you tell, in just a few words, how the Bible helped you?

W. W. Prescott: That would involve the whole question of the beast.

Voice: To your knowledge, has Sister White ever made a difference between her nine volumes and her other books?

W. W. Prescott: I have never talked with her about it. In my mind, there is a difference between the works she largely prepared herself and what was prepared by others for sale to the public.

A. G. Daniells: You might as well state that a little fuller, the difference in the way they were produced.

W. W. Prescott: If I should speak my mind frankly, I should say that I have felt for years that great mistakes were made in handling her writings for commercial purposes.

[**Our Note:** One can't help but wonder why a prophet's writings would be prepared for commercial purposes rather than for the edifying of the church?]

C. M. Sorenson: By whom?

W. W. Prescott: I do not want to charge anybody. But I do think great mistakes were made in that way. That is why I have made a distinction as I have. When I talked with W. C. White about it (and I do not know that he is an infallible authority), he told me frankly that when they got out *Great Controversy*, if they did not find in her writings anything on certain chapters to make the historical connections, they took other books, like *Daniel and the Revelation*, and used portions of them; and sometimes her secretaries, and sometimes she herself, would prepare a chapter that would fill the gap.

C. A. Shull: I would like to ask if Brother Prescott wishes to be understood that his attitude is that wherever his own judgment comes in conflict with any statement in the spirit of prophecy, he will follow his judgment rather than the spirit of prophecy?

W. W. Prescott: No, I do not want anybody to get that understanding. That is the very understanding that I do not want anybody to get.

C. A. Shull: Then that was an exceptional case?

[**Our Note:** I wonder who is to decide when it is an exceptional case and when it is not?]

W. W. Prescott: Yes, I was forced to that from my study of the Bible. When I made up my mind to that, I did not parade it before the people and say, "Here is a mistake in *Great Controversy*, and if you study the Bible you will find it to be so." I did not attack the spirit of prophecy. My attitude has been to avoid anything like opposition to the gift in this church, but I avoid such a misuse of it as to set aside the Bible. I do not want anybody to think for a moment that I set up my

judgment against the spirit of prophecy.

A. G. Daniells: Let us remember that brethren and not say a word that will misrepresent Brother Prescott.

B. L. House: Did Sister White herself write that statement that the term Babylon could not apply to the Catholic Church, or was that copied from some other author?

W. W. Prescott: That was in the written statement.

B. L. House: Has she ever changed any of the nine volumes of the *Testimonies*?

W. W. Prescott: *Great Controversy* is the only book I know of that has been revised.

C. M. Sorenson: Hasn't *Early Writings* been revised? I understand some omissions have been made in the later editions.

W. W. Prescott: Perhaps some things have been left out, but I do not think the writing itself has been revised.

A. G. Daniells: You know there is a statement that the pope changed the Sabbath, and another one, that the papacy was abolished. What do you do with those?

B. L. House: There is no trouble with that.

A. G. Daniells: Why not? The pope did not change the Sabbath.

B. L. House: But the pope stands for the papacy.

A. G. Daniells: There are people that just believe there was a certain pope that changed the Sabbath because of the way they follow the words. She never meant to say that a certain pope changed the Sabbath; but do you know, I have had that brought up to me a hundred times in ministers' meetings.

B. L. House: I have never had any trouble on that.

A. G. Daniells: But you are only one. There are about 2,000 others. I have had to work with men just gradually and carefully and all the time keep from giving out the idea that I was a doubter of the *Testimonies*.

I know it is reported around that some of us men here at Washington, in charge of the general administrative work, are

very shaky and unbelieving, but I want to tell you that I know better. I know that my associates have confidence right down on the solid platform of this whole question; and I know that if many of you had gone at this thing and experienced what we have, you would have passed through an experience that would have given you solid ground. You would have shaken a bit, and you are beginning to shake now, and some of you do not know where you are going to land. These questions show it. But that is not to say there is not a foundation. It is to say that you have not gone through the toils yet and got your feet on solid ground.

I want to make this suggestion, because with all these questions we cannot follow one line of thought logically: We must use good sense in dealing with this whole question, brethren. Do not be careless with your words. Do not be careless in reporting or representing men's views. I have had this thing to deal with for years and years, as you know, in every ministers' meeting; and I have been called into college classes over and over again and have had to say things that those ministers and students never heard before about this; and I have prayed for wisdom and for the Spirit of the Lord to direct them and to give faith and to cover up those things that would leave doubt. And I have never had it come back on me that a careful, cautious statement made in the fear of God has upset a single person. It may have done it, but it has never come back to me. You take our ministers: This brother [meaning Brother Waldorf] knows how much this was brought up in our ministers' meetings over in Australia, and we dealt with it plainly. We did not try to pull the wool over the people's eyes, and I believe you will find the Australian preachers and churches as firm believers in the spirit of prophecy and in Sister White's call by the Lord as you will find any place on the face of the earth. Take New Zealand: I brought them up there, and I think it is well known that there is not a place in the world where the people stand truer to this gift than they do there. I do not believe it is necessary to dissemble a bit, but I do believe, brethren, that we have got to use wisdom that God alone can give us in dealing with this until matters gradually work over. We have made a wonderful change in nineteen years, Brother Prescott. Fifteen years ago we could not have talked what we are talking here today. It would not have been safe. This matter has come

along gradually, and yet people are not losing their confidence in the gift. Last year we sold 5,000 sets of the *Testimonies*, and they cost eight or nine dollars a set. In one year, our brethren and sisters, under the influence of the General Conference, and the union conference and local conference men, and our preachers—under their influence, without any compulsion—our brethren came along and spent forty or fifty thousand dollars for the *Testimonies*. What would you consider that an indication of?

Voice: Confidence.

A. G. Daniells: Yes, confidence, and a friendly attitude. They did not buy them as critics to tear them to pieces. We must be judged by our fruits. I want to tell you that the clearer view we get on the exact facts in the case, the stronger the position of our people will be in the whole thing. Now, Brother Benson, I see the whole line running through there that you referred to. We cannot correct that in a day. We must use great judgment and caution. I hope you Bible teachers will be exceedingly careful. I was called up here twice to speak on the spirit of prophecy to the Bible and pastoral training classes. They brought up this question of history. I simply said, "Now, boys, Sister White never claimed to be a historian nor a corrector of history. She used the best she knew for the matter she was writing on." I have never heard from a teacher that those boys buzzed around them and said, "Brother Daniells does not believe Sister White's writings are reliable." I believe the Lord will help us to take care of this if we will be careful and use good sense. I think that is all I can say in this sort of discussion.

"The following quote is from the conference on a different day by Herbert Camden Lacey, who lived from 1871-1950 and was Bible and Biblical Language Professor at Washington Foreign Missionary Seminary; and for a time was Professor of Biblical Exegesis at Loma Linda University. He said:

In our estimate of the spirit of prophecy, isn't its value to us more in the spiritual light it throws into our own hearts and lives than in the intellectual accuracy in historical and theological matters? Ought we not to take these writings as the voice of the **spirit of our hearts**, instead of the voice of the teacher to our heads? And isn't the final proof of the Spirit of

Prophecy its spiritual value rather than its doctrinal accuracy?

(A. G. Daniells agreed with this statement when he replied)

'Yes, I think so.' ²⁶⁷

"What is the spirit of our hearts? The Bible has the answer:

""The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" ²⁶⁸

John looked up; Lily's eyes were closed. He wondered if she had gone to sleep on him. But no, her eyes were opening. They looked at each other without saying a word for a moment or two. Then Lily said, "Well, if those who worked with her had so little confidence in her writings, how can I be expected to have any confidence in them? John, look at the deception that they are playing! They are not concerned, it seems, with the truth but rather in not having a crisis and saving an organization! But what about the cause of God and truth?"

"I don't know," John said, "I just don't know."

"Anyone who professes a faith founded on a source that cannot be trusted is a fool, is naïve, or is deluded." (Dr. Harold Lindsell, *Battle for the Bible*, p.18)

²⁶⁷ 1919 Bible Conference quoted in *The Greatest of All the Prophets*

²⁶⁸ Jer. 17:9



Three Troubled Men

Lily had been quite disturbed with John's presentation the other night. She decided to do more research herself. Several days had gone by with her using every spare minute on her project between the household duties that pressed on her. She couldn't wait to show John what she had found. That evening over dinner, she handed him some papers. "Here Honey, take a look at this."

"What did you find?" he asked.

"Just read it," Lily said. John slowly unfolded the papers and began to read:



THE PRESCOTT LETTER TO W. C. WHITE²⁶⁹

Takoma Park, D.C., April 6, 1915. Elder W. C. White Sanitarium, Napa County, California

Dear Brother White:

I appreciated your letter of March 12, and I thank you for your message of sympathy concerning my father's death. I have noted what you have said about your mother's condition, although you neglected to enclose the statement which you mentioned. When I see these early believers, like your mother, my father, and Elder Olsen passing away so rapidly, and then think of how little has really been accomplished in seriously warning the whole world of the impending second advent, I am led to wonder whether any of us now connected with this movement will, after all, live to see the consummation. It is a serious question.

It seems to me that a large responsibility rests upon those of us who know that there are serious errors in our authorized books and yet make no special effort to correct them. The people and our average

²⁶⁹ William Warren Prescott was one of the best, if not the best, formally educated leaders in Adventism in his day. He was probably the first Adventist leader to know Greek, having taught a class in it before he even graduated from academy. He was college president of Battle Creek College, which was Seventh-day Adventism's first college. He helped to found other Adventist colleges and was president at one point of three different Adventist colleges all at one time spread over the U.S.A. He served as chairman of the Review and Herald Publishing Board, which was the first and main denominational publishing house. He also served as editor of the *Review*, which was the main denominational paper. For twenty-two years, he was Field Secretary of the General Conference. He also served as vice president of the General Conference. He was considered, until his death, one of the chief intellectuals in Adventism and consulted regarding any difficult question that arose. Ellen White had great respect for him, and when revising her book, *Great Controversy*, she asked for his input and accepted many of his suggestions for improving her book.

ministers trust us to furnish them with reliable statements, and they use our books as sufficient authority in their sermons, but we let them go on year after year asserting things which we know to be untrue. I cannot feel that this is right. It seems to me that we are betraying our trust and deceiving the ministers and people. It appears to me that there is much more anxiety to prevent a possible shock to some trustful people than to correct error. Your letter indicates a desire on your part to help me, but I fear that it is a little late. The experience of the last six or eight years, and especially the things concerning which I talked with you, have had their effect on me in several ways. I have had some hard shocks to get over, and after giving the best of my life to this movement, I have little peace and satisfaction in connection with it, and I am driven to the conclusion that the only thing for me to do is to do quietly what I can do conscientiously and leave the others to go on without me. Of course, this [is] far from a happy ending to my life work, but this seems to be the best adjustment that I am able to make. The way your mother's writings have been handled and the false impressions concerning them, which is still fostered among the people, have brought great perplexity and trial to me. It seems to me that what amounts to deception, though probably not intentional, has been practiced in making some of her books, and that no serious effort has been made to disabuse the minds of the people of what was known to be their wrong view concerning her writings.

But it is no use to go into these matters. **I have talked with you for years about them, but it brings no change.** I think, however, that we are drifting toward a crisis which will come sooner or later, and perhaps sooner. A very strong feeling of reaction has already set in.

It has been very quiet here for a few weeks, as many of the brethren are in the field. The weather has been quite cold, and we had about five inches of snow last Sabbath, but it is more like spring today. My mother is quite feeble, although she bears up full better than I really expected. She misses Father very much. They lived together more than 67 years.

The work of the office seems to be prospering, and we are all very busy trying to meet the demands upon us. I should be glad to hear from you at any time. If you can properly do so, I would be glad to have you express to your mother my sympathies for her in her affliction.

Yours faithfully,

W. W. Prescott



Letter to Ellen G. White by W. S. Sadler ²⁷⁰

(This letter was never answered.)

April 26, 1906

Mrs. E. G. White,

Sanitarium, California

Dear Sister White:

A few days ago, I saw a communication from you in which my name was mentioned, and in which you invited those who had difficulties regarding the testimonies to write direct to you. There are many things that have come up recently that perplex me; many things which I find myself unable to explain to those who are perplexed; so, while I do not have doubts concerning the "Testimonies," I do have many difficulties. I have not written to you concerning this matter before, for the reason that I held to the position that if the Lord had spoken, it was not proper for me to question and criticize, even though I might be wholly unable to understand or comprehend the message. But since you have asked for those who have difficulties to present them

²⁷⁰ W. S. Sadler was a medical doctor and an Adventist minister. He rubbed shoulders with those in circles of leadership and was personally acquainted with Ellen White. He never did give up his belief in Ellen White being a true prophet. However, it would appear that due to Ellen White not being able to explain her problems and after intellectually considering the phenomenon of mistakes in her inspiration, he came to believe that true inspiration can have mistakes and therefore lost his ability to test and discern true revelation/inspiration from false. Due to this, he was later deceived by false revelations and left Adventism. It is a sober warning as to the danger of removing the testing/requirement of inerrancy in inspiration to substantiate it coming from God. After all, if revelation/inspiration can have mistakes, they can therefore also conflict with each other and still be from God. While critics of Ellen White over the years tried to get him to release the above letter, which he mailed to Ellen White, he refused to do so because he did not wish to damage her in any way. After his death, those going through his papers found the above letter and released it.

direct to you, and inasmuch as my name was mentioned directly, I now feel at liberty to write to you fully respecting my difficulties. In order to correctly state my present attitude, it will be necessary for me to go back ten or twelve years, to the time when I had just finished a systematic study of your writings, having made a large index of all your published works, including your articles which appeared in the Review, Signs, and other papers, from back in the fifties. The study of your writings did wonders for me; my soul was ablaze with their value and power, and I conducted frequent public studies at the Sanitarium, at camp meetings, and before the churches concerning the subject. It was while conducting such a series of studies with the South Side Church in Chicago, taking the position that all your writings were from the same divine source, in harmony with what you state in Volume 5, page 57,

"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 mind things that had been shown me. In these letters which I write, in the testimonies which I bear, I am presenting to you that which the Lord has presented to me. I do not write one article in the paper expressing merely my own ideas. They are what God has opened before me in vision, the precious rays of light shining from the throne."

... and was earnestly presenting these matters to the church at that time, that an older minister questioned the soundness of my position. But I read the passage above quoted and took my stand firmly on that. So, for years I have been holding that all communications from you were "Testimonies." Was I right? Or, as it is claimed, are some "letters" and only refer to and deal with that which is Testimony?

A short time after this, your letter to Dr. Kellogg concerning the buildings in Chicago ²⁷¹ came, and of course it troubled me, but I took

²⁷¹ This is referring to a testimony sent by Ellen White to Dr. John H. Kellogg in which she claimed that the Lord had shown her that Dr. John H. Kellogg was erecting expensive buildings in Chicago, denounced him for wasting sanitarium money on them, and ordered him to stop. Dr. Kellogg had not erected any such buildings nor had any plan to do so. The sanitarium charter made it illegal for him to invest sanitarium money in another state. But she would not listen to those who informed her of that fact and accused him of being a liar. Upon her return to America, it was finally proven to her embarrassment that no such buildings had been built. According to one witness, that Ellen White confided in just before originally writing to Dr. John H. Kellogg, Mrs. White had gotten a newspaper article from the U.S. on Dr. Kellogg's work in Chicago that had misinformation in it. But, in her testimony to Dr. Kellogg, she intimates that her information came from God. As this shows, due to space, we could not include in this book all the examples of the problems that we discovered in our research. For more

this position: I know that the Testimonies come from a source that is higher than human; therefore, although I have now encountered a thing that I cannot explain, a thing which I do not understand—a matter which even appears to me to be without foundation, I will hold unswervingly to my position.

Later, I heard from you the explanation of this matter, which, so far as I was concerned, satisfied me, but left my mind in this trouble, which I now ask you to help me to understand—Since the Lord showed you those buildings in Chicago, and since you supposed they had been erected, and it afterwards developed that they had not, and that the representation was made merely to prevent their being, may this not be applied to other representations that have been made to you? That is, when the Lord gives you these views of things that are not, but which are likely to occur, for the express purpose of preventing their occurrence, as in the case of the Chicago buildings above referred to? Accordingly, I find myself in a quandary when I seek to understand certain things that you have recently written. I am often at a loss to know how to choose between the following two positions:

(1) Am I to acknowledge the conditions or accusations which are stated in the Testimony as true, and as conditions which really exist at the present time, even though after prayerful search and careful inquiry I am still unable to recognize that these things do exist? Or,

(2) Is this another instance like the Chicago buildings, in which you presented a thing that does not really exist, but which the Lord is seeking to forestall? With these two positions before me, concerning some matters, I do not know how to choose, and therefore have held the entire matter in abeyance in my mind, watching and praying for light. For instance, I recently read a communication from you to Dr. Paulson and his wife. From reading this, I would suppose that at the present time Dr. Paulson was completely under Dr. Kellogg's influence; yet, having been associated with him very closely for years, especially since my return from California, I have not seen this; in fact, it had appeared to me that Dr. Kellogg exercised less influence over Dr. Paulson in recent years than over any other of his former colleagues and present associates. I could write at great length to

information on this, we refer the reader to ELLEN G. WHITE AND THE CHICAGO BUILDINGS VISION FIASCO by Kerry B. Wynne. It contains information that proves that the traditional explanation for this vision/testimony falls far short of an adequate explanation. You may find this document for free download by Googling it. Also, it is available on one of the suggested websites for further information that is listed in the appendix of this book.

show how in many important matters, Dr. Paulson has during the past two and a half years stood stiffly by his convictions of right and been unyielding to the end in various matters respecting Dr. Kellogg. These matters I have not given serious attention to until recently, for I had settled it in my mind that I believed the Testimonies; I had a personal experience in and with them; and, so far as I know my heart, I had settled it that I believed them so well that I did not think anyone could unsettle my faith in them. But during the last few months such a denominational issue has been made out of your writings, and I have been so sorely pressed for a statement of my position that I saw it was necessary for me to go to the bottom of these difficulties and, if possible, reach some definite position. You must know, therefore, my joy when, having reached this conclusion, I received this letter from you inviting me to come direct to you with my difficulties. I know your invitation is extended in good spirit, and I believe you will receive this letter as the questions of one who is honest, although perplexed. Another matter which I find is perplexing many is your words to Dr. Kellogg at the General Conference five years ago in which you stated that you had probably written too strongly to Dr. Kellogg. If you wrote too strongly concerning any matter which the Lord presented to you, might you not also write too weakly?

Again, it is asked, if you wrote too strongly then, how are we to know that you are not writing too strongly now? The part of your talk referred to is as follows:

"I thank God that Dr. Kellogg has not sunk into despondency and infidelity. I have been afraid of it, and I have written some very straight things to him; and it may be, Dr. Kellogg—if he is here—that I have written too strong, for I felt as though I must get hold of you and hold you by the power of all the might I had. But I have seen the work, I have seen the work that has been carried on, and how can anybody see it and not see that God is at work? That is a mystery to me; I cannot understand it; I cannot explain it."

[Our Comment: This was stated by Ellen White in a special meeting for leaders in a library room just before the General Conference of 1901 officially opened and only two or three days after her finding out in her stop in Chicago on the way to the General Conference Session that the buildings in Chicago were not built. It was her first time seeing Dr. Kellogg since returning to the U.S. One can find this statement in SpM. 172; this appears to be the same wording for this page as the notes submitted by Dr. John H. Kellogg. It also is available as (Ms. 43a, 1901 Transcript of notes taken by C. C. Crisler, Ellen White's secretary. All of them are essentially the same, but Crisler's

has a word or two more added after the quoted statement above which makes it even clearer.]

Are all of the things specified in your writings actually in existence, or are some things prophecies of the dangers that are ahead, and which we are to avoid?

I cannot afford to be wrong, whichever way this is: I must be right, and I expect the Lord to help me into the light on all these matters, although they seem very perplexing now, and they seem more perplexing as I continue to investigate. I turned a deaf ear to these things for years, but now, since our attitude on the Testimonies is becoming a test throughout the denomination, I realize that I must go to the bottom of all these things and know just where I stand on all these points.

Some four years ago, when my wife and I were having one of those pleasant and profitable occasions in your upper chamber at St. Helena, you stated to us that you were "not a prophet," but simply "little Ellen White, a messenger with a message." On returning to San Francisco, my wife and I had considerable prayer and discussion concerning this. I had always supposed you were a prophet, but I could not maintain that you were after hearing from your own lips that you were not. However, I resolved to say nothing about this to anyone. My wife, however, did tell someone about your statement, and in some way, as told by Sr. — — that Sr. — — had made this statement; so, upon returning to Battle Creek, the first thing that was handed us upon alighting from the carriage at the Sanitarium was a letter from Bro. W. C. White, criticizing Mrs. — — for having made this statement and stating that such an idea would greatly hinder your work; and that if it really had been stated, it would be necessary for him to issue a denial.

This greatly perplexed my wife. She knew she had heard you say it, and she did not see any reason why it should be denied; but her perplexity was relieved at the time you stated in public, in the tabernacle at Battle Creek, that you were not a prophet, and it was subsequently published in the "Review;" but, in the same Review, there was an article by the editor directly contradicting your statement and proving that you were a prophet.

Now, Sr. White, what am I to believe? Until I get more light from you, I shall take your word. I have confidence that you know more about your gift than anybody else in the world. My personal contact with you and your work at St. Helena and in California satisfied me, not only of the gift which God has given you, but of your sincerity and

earnest faithfulness; and I have therefore purposed in my heart that no man nor any set of men shall explain to me what you meant when you said you were not a prophet. I will take an explanation from no one but you.²⁷²

Another matter: that is, Willie's influence over the Testimonies. I came into this truth about 20 years ago, and just before I was baptized by Elder Wm. Coverl (about 18 years ago), I thoroughly made up my mind concerning the Testimonies. In short, I accepted them; but from that day to this, especially the last ten years, and more especially since your return to this country from Australia, I have been hearing it constantly, from leaders, ministers, from those sometimes high in Conference authority, that Willie influenced you in the production of your Testimonies; or, as they would often designate it, the "letters" you sent out. This talk made little or no impression on me. I resolutely refused to believe it, year after year. I have been given a copy of the communication written by you under date of July 19th, 1905, addressed to Brethren I. N. Evans and J. S. Washburn, and I have since then not known what to do or say concerning this matter. I refer to the following quotation—

"After seeing the representation, I awoke, and I fully expected that the matter would take place as it had been presented to me. When Elder Haskell was telling me of the perplexity that they were in to carry forward the Southern work, I said, have faith in God; you will carry from this meeting the five thousand dollars needed for the purchase of the church! I wrote a few lines to Elder Daniells suggesting this be done, but Willie did not see that the matter could be carried through thus, because Elder Daniells and others were at that time very much discouraged in regard to the condition of things in Battle Creek. So I told him that he need not deliver the note. But I could not rest. I was disturbed and could not find peace of mind."

²⁷² Even though he was asked by Ellen White to present his questions, Saddler never received an answer to any of them, including this one. Ellen White finally felt forced to answer this particular question later the same year when another man wrote asking the same question of her. She said: "Why have I not claimed to be a prophet?--Because in these days many who boldly claim that they are prophets are a reproach to the cause of Christ; and because my work includes much more than the word "prophet" signifies." (*Selected Messages*, vol. 1 p. 32) In actual practice, she did claim to be a prophet and, in addition, much more.

Please won't you help me to understand this? It is the most serious of all the difficulties I have encountered in my experience concerning the Testimonies; and I have it frequently presented to me, and I don't know what to say in answer. Until recently, I had but little difficulty in answering all the objections I ever met against the Testimonies, but I am now encountering things which I am not fully able to meet. When I returned to Battle Creek from California, I brought with me a large number of your recent communications to read to the family there. In the course of my reading, I read a statement reprimanding the managers of the Battle Creek Sanitarium for making their workers sign contracts.

Then I was immediately confronted with a communication from you stating that the managers should place workers under contract. In this case, I refer to the communication found in the *General Conference Bulletin* (1895) pages 162, 163, which says:

"Before persons are admitted to our Missionary Training Schools, let there be a written agreement that after receiving their education they will give themselves to the work for a specified time. This is the only way our missions can be made what they should be."

Now, what could I do to explain this? I did say that this might be an instance similar to that in the Scriptures where Christ told his disciples at one time to take no purse nor provision, and in another, He told them to take scrip and a cover of raiment. I said, 'Maybe the conditions have changed, therefore the instruction changes.' What is your explanation of this? I would like to see from your pen a statement of what you mean in your writings along the line of God in nature, etc. I refer to the following passages, and others:

"Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are. No man can of himself cast out the devil throned that have taken possession of the heart. Only Christ can cleanse the soul temple." *Desire of Ages*, p. 161

"They have taken a rigid course, and lived so very plain that their health has suffered, disease has strengthened in the system, and the temple of God has been weakened." *Testimonies*, Vol. 1, p. 205.

I know many honest souls who are in confusion respecting these passages, in view of your recent writings. Another thing I want help on is with reference to the use of the Testimonies.

(1) Do you approve of sending personal testimonies which the Lord has given for men broadcast to other people?

(2) Is it not the Bible rule that when we have any criticism of a brother, it should be presented to him, then afterwards to two or three, and then, if he reject it, to the church? That is why I am now writing direct to you. Does the Lord follow a different rule from this with regard to the Testimonies? For instance, the letter to which this is an answer, although it has my name in it, I have not received personally. It was shown me by one who did receive it, but whose name is not mentioned in it at all; and I have in mind many instances of this kind. It does not seem right to me that personal testimonies should be multiplied and scattered broadcast unless they have been rejected by the individual to whom they were given, and further, that they were of general interest to the church. Am I right in this?

Again, is it right for me to use a testimony given to Bro. A. in my efforts to get brother A. to do the thing I think is referred to in the testimony which the Lord sent him? Are the Testimonies for men to use upon the souls of their fellow men, or are they messages from God for the Holy Spirit to send home to the human heart with convicting power? I had supposed the Lord intended the latter to be the case; and it has been a great trial to me to see the public and private use that has been made of your writings during this present difficulty between the General Conference and the Medical Missionary Work.

Another matter that has bothered me since it happened, although it did not at the time, is that during the Conference at Berrien Springs, which Prof. Prescott was preaching against Pantheism, you sent for Doctor Paulson and me one morning to come and see you; and during our conversation, you presented to us many things that had been shown to you during the night and gave us to carry away a copy of a letter addressed to Bro. Prescott, forbidding them to make these public attacks, etc.

We read this and supposed the matter would stop, but that evening and the following, things continued as they were and when the matter developed further, it appeared that you had given the Testimony to Willie to give to Brother Prescott, but that he had failed to do so, as he publicly stated before the Conference, thinking that the purpose of the Lord would be better served by his withholding it and allowing matters to proceed as they were. I have never been able to fully see through this. Do you give the directions as to when, how, in what order, and to whom your writings shall be sent, or is it left for others to decide?

Near the close of this meeting at Berrien Springs, I was talking with Brother J. E. White concerning the unpleasantness that had arisen there, and he spoke very positively against his brother Willie and his relation to you, and how Willie was seeking to manage things in his way and make them come his way by his influence over you. When I asked him what this all meant, he answered that it meant one of three things—either

(1) That you would be removed from the midst of this confusion, so that your gift could not be used to further the purposes of your son Willie and others; or

(2) That the gift would be taken from you because men were perverting it; or

(3) That it would be necessary for him to expose his brother and others who were doing those things. He further told me that it was almost impossible for him to see you alone in California when he went to see you; that Willie denied him the privilege of a private interview with his own mother. I have since learned, Sister White, that this was told to many others besides myself, and can you wonder at the trouble and confusion that is abroad in the land when your own son takes such a view of the matter?

I don't know what to make of such as this, but since you asked me to come direct to you with all that is bothersome, I could not be a Christian man and could not pray with my eyes upturned to heaven unless I told you the whole story. I am writing in this letter all that bothers me personally, and in addition, these other things that I am constantly meeting, and I don't know how to explain.

Are the letters you write to the leaders in our work, in answer to letters they write, Testimonies? Must I receive everything you write as from the Lord—just as it is, word for word—or are there communications you send out which are your personal letters—personal communications from Sister White? In view of all that has happened and is happening before my eyes, I am becoming unsettled with reference to this, and I ask for word direct from you that will clear up this confusion and state the exact facts and truth.

In this connection, I will explain why I have never written to you or consulted you on any matter, even when so near you in California. I have wanted to, scores, yes hundreds of times, but years ago I took the position—and I know you will be free to tell me whether I am right or wrong—that man had no business tampering with God's messenger.

I observed that when David went to Nathan seeking information concerning building the temple, he was told to build a temple. He knew Nathan was a prophet; he had confidence in the messages he gave. But immediately after, Nathan was instructed by the word of the Lord to forbid David's building the temple. From this, I concluded that God's messengers were for God to use, and not man; they were not to be used as Intelligence Bureaus, Courts of Appeal, or anything of that kind; therefore, I had no right to go to you for information.

If it were human information and counsel I sought, I had better be on my knees seeking counsel from God; and if it were divine counsel I wanted, I reasoned that I would get it anyway without going to you for it; for when the Lord had shown you aught for me, you would write it out and send it to me, without my writing to you. That is why, although I have so highly appreciated your counsel and advice, which you often gave me in California, and which I can never forget, I say this is why, though often perplexed, I did not write to you for advice. I have often written to Brother W. C. White, asking him if he knew anything that had been shown you along a certain line, and if he knew you had any light along that line, to send it to me; and occasionally he has sent me manuscripts and copies of your writings in answer to such requests.

For one, Sister White, I would like to see an earnest effort to get this matter straightened out among us. I know many who will stand up in public and say they believe the Testimonies, and try to drive other people into believing them as they do; yet I know, from personal conversation with some of these men, they do not believe these Testimonies. Some who are now talking so loudly for the Testimonies are the very ones who first told me, in past years, that Willie influenced you, etc., and I see these people eating meat and engaging in other things that are certainly contrary to the light you have so plainly given in the Testimonies. What am I to think?

Moreover, I have frequently been advised to "lay low" and be quiet; to say to the people, "These things are all right," and smooth them over; but Sister White, I can't do that. I have got to meet God before the Judgment bar. I want to be right. I want to get out of this confusion into the clear daylight, and then stand like a man in defense of that which I know to [be] right; but I can't possess a double personality in this matter, as it seems to me many are doing. I have kept still for many years, for I believe the Testimonies; and the only reason I am making a diligent effort to get to the bottom of these things and get to the bottom now is that I am pressed on all sides to define my attitude concerning the Testimonies and these difficulties that have arisen.

Another question—I would like to know from you, as a minister, what use am I to make of the Testimonies as a test of fellowship? Is it right for me to baptize and receive people into the church who have not positively accepted the Testimonies? I refer not to those who have rejected the Testimonies, but those who have not yet felt able to take their stand yet are otherwise in harmony with the Third Angel's Message. What is my duty in this respect?

It has been reported to me—in fact, was told by a brother before I left San Francisco—that you sent certain manuscripts to the Pacific Press to be published, and after they were set up in type, you recalled and materially changed them, so as to give them an entirely different meaning, and then they were published. Is this so? I did not believe it when it was told me. The brother who told me said he could prove it, but I told him I was not looking for that kind of evidence. I have heard this many times since and would like to know if this is so.

I have no inclination to go into these things, but in the fierce contention that is raging over these matters, it is necessary for me to go to the bottom of these things, in order to tell my brethren where I stand, that they may know whether they will choose to fellowship me or not.

I will not be a hypocrite. I will never say to my brethren that I believe all these things unless I do; and I cannot conscientiously nor consistently say I do believe them all till I have gone to the very bottom of every feature of our present misunderstandings.

This is a matter which circumstances have forced upon me, and although it is exceedingly unpleasant, and though I would have much preferred to have gone about my work and let the Lord work these things out in His own good time, yet I could not do this in view of the situation in which I find myself, and more especially after you yourself personally addressed me and straightly directed that all these difficulties should be sent direct to you. I am now fully and honestly complying with that request and hope to get the desired and much-needed light.

Another matter: What shall be my attitude toward those who hesitate in accepting a Testimony, or apparently reject the Testimonies? Shall I leave them alone with God and their Bibles, or shall I publicly denounce them and make war upon them? Or shall I give them a little time in which to be led of God? . . .

Another matter, the one that is most confusing of all to me, is your recent writings concerning the Battle Creek Sanitarium. I cannot

possibly arrive at a conclusion as to just what you mean with reference to the helpers at Battle Creek, etc. From what the Lord has shown you, is it right for any Seventh-day Adventist to labor in the Sanitarium? Is the institution to be turned over to the world? What attitude should I take toward the situation that I find it in today? I fully understand that young and inexperienced workers are not to go there, and I fully agree with it; but does that mean experienced workers are not to go? I am perplexed to know what really is your present attitude toward the Sanitarium with reference to these matters?

Is it true that your testimonies of recent date are any more of the Lord's than older ones? Does a late Testimony abrogate all former communications touching the same theme?

Another thing: with reference to the American Medical Missionary College. The impression is going throughout our ranks that it would be better for students to go to outside medical schools than to this school. Now, Sister White, I don't believe this. I am willing to be convinced if I am wrong; but I have been in two outside medical schools and cannot conscientiously advise any of our young people to go to these outside schools: and I have in my possession a communication from you, written ten or twelve years ago, in which you forbid Doctor Kellogg and others to advise our students to go to Ann Arbor or other worldly medical schools. How am I to understand this former communication in which you forbid students to go to outside medical schools and later ones which are interpreted as forbidding our people to go to the American Medical Missionary College? Where would you advise me to recommend Seventh-day Adventist young men and women to go to obtain a medical education? In view of what I have seen and heard in worldly medical colleges, I certainly could not conscientiously advise my sister to attend such schools as long as our medical college is in existence. Now please help me to know what I am to do in this situation. This is just how it looks to me—I am ready to be set right if I am wrong.

Several years ago, you sent a Testimony to the Conference concerning the Mount Vernon Sanitarium, in which you stated that the Conference should not engage in establishing and conducting sanitariums, yet now I observe that our entire denominational policy is that none, but conference committees and Conference organizations should own and conduct sanitariums. Is it wrong for earnest and well-meaning individuals to engage in private medical missionary work? Can I not be a part of the work of this Message along medical lines unless my work is owned and immediately supervised by the

Conference? In view of the Mt. Vernon communication, I took my position on the subject; now on what grounds am I to change?

Concerning the use of the word "denominational," I think there is great misunderstanding on the part of some as to exactly what you mean by this word. You have recently said concerning our medical work that it should be "denominational"; yet I have before me a communication addressed to "Dr. Kellogg and all who are connected with him in the Sanitarium Board and Council," dated Mar. 11, 1899, in which you speak of the medical missionary work as being "undenominational." If some knew just what you mean by the word and in what sense it was used, I think it would clear up considerable confusion. The passage refers to reads:

"Our brethren in America who are engaged in Medical Missionary work can, by appealing to the outside people, obtain help because theirs is not a denominational work."

Concerning Reform Dress and the change of instruction concerning its length, you wrote in the Review and Herald that the apparent discrepancy was due to the fact that the objects were presented to you, and you were left to describe them in your own language. Is your position today any different from that which you took then and which is stated in the article above referred to?

The article I refer to is an answer to a question asked you and appeared in the "Advent Review and Sabbath Herald," October 8, 1867, and is as follows: "Does not the practice of the sisters in wearing their dresses nine inches from the floor contradict the Testimonies No. 11, which says that they should reach somewhat below the top of the lady's gaiter boot? Does it not also contradict Testimony No. 10, which says that they should clear the filth of the street an inch or two without being raised by the hand? "

"Distance from the bottom of the dress to the floor was not given me in inches. Neither was I shown the ladies' gaiter boot; but three companies of females passed before me with their dresses as follows with respect to length:

"The first were of fashionable length, burdening the limbs, impeding the step, and sweeping the street and gathering its filth; the evil results of which I have fully stated. This class, who were slaves to fashion, appeared feeble and languid.

"The dress of the second class which passed before me was, in many respects, as it should be. The limbs were well clad. They were free from the burdens which the tyrant, Fashion, had imposed upon the

first class, but had gone to that extreme in the short dress as to disgust and prejudice good people, and destroy in a measure their own influence. This is the style of the "American Costume," taught and worn by many at "Our Home," Dansville, New York. It does not reach to the knee. I need not say that this style of dress was shown to me to be too short.

"A third class passed before me with a cheerful countenance and free and elastic step. Their dress was the length that I described as proper, modest, and healthful. It cleared the filth of the street and sidewalk a few inches under all circumstances, such as ascending and descending steps, etc.

"As I have before said, the length was not given me in inches, and I was not shown a lady's boot, and here I would state that although I am as dependent upon the Spirit of the Lord in writing my views as I am in receiving them, yet the words that I employ in describing what I have seen are my own, unless they be those spoken to me by the angel, which I always enclose in marks of quotation. As I wrote upon the subject of dress, the view of those three companies revived in my mind as plain as when I was viewing them in vision, but I was left to describe the length of the proper dress in my own language as best I could, which I have done by stating that the bottom of the dress should reach near the top of the lady's boot, which would be necessary in order to clear the filth of the street under the circumstances before named.

"I put on the dress, in length as near as I had seen and described as I could judge. My sisters in Northern Michigan also adopted it, and when the subject of inches came up, in order to secure uniformity as to length everywhere, a rule was brought, and it was found that the length of our dresses ranged from eight to ten inches from the floor. Some of these were a little longer than the sample shown me, while others were a little shorter.

"Numerous letters came to me from all parts of the field inquiring the length of the dress shown me. Having seen the rule applied to the distance from the floor of the several dresses and having become fully satisfied that nine inches comes the nearest to the sample shown me, I have given this number of inches in number twelve as the proper length of the dress in which uniformity is very desirable. If it is said that a lady's boot is not nine inches high, and when I have walked before my sisters with it uncovered, as those properly dressed walked before me in the vision, they could not see the top of my boot."

In your writings, you have stated that all the twelve disciples were present at the last supper; but in "Christ our Saviour," it is stated that but eleven were present; Judas being absent. A number of years ago, I was told that your son made this change in the manuscript. Is this so? Does anyone have authority to in any way change your writings? To what extent and in just what way are the Testimonies edited after they leave your pen, before they are crystallized into type?

Now, Sister White, this is all I have to write. Of course, there are scores of rumors in the air at this time, but I am not concerned with rumors. My wife and I are concerned, either personally or in the case of very dear friends, with all I have written in this letter. The questions I have raised are those which must be speedily settled in our own minds. The situation we find ourselves in demands it. Our souls desire it. But we cannot settle them until we know we are settling them rightly.

I stood unmoved for years in the face of many of these objections, but now the whole matter has taken such a peculiar turn that we find ourselves sorely perplexed and are so persistently questioned concerning these matters, and in view of your invitation to write direct to you if we had difficulties, I feel it is my duty as a Christian and a minister to send you things I have noted in this letter and await from you that which the Lord may direct you to offer as a means of answering, explaining, denying, or otherwise making clear these things; and I shall forever appreciate anything you may do in this direction and promise to give it careful and prayerful attention.

We have been made sad to learn of the terrible and disastrous earthquake in San Francisco; and just to think, we ourselves lived there but two short years ago! I see many evidences of the approaching end in the earth, not the least of which is the confusion that has come into our own ranks and the unsettled condition in which I see many minds. I pray the Lord will guide His own people and bring them once more into unity.

It has saddened our hearts to see these difficulties and perplexities descend upon you in your declining years, and we would not add the least thing to your burdens if we could possibly help it, and would not lay these perplexities before you at this time, but for the reasons that you have requested it; that we must have them settled and that we know of no other way in which they may be explained and finally disposed of.

_____ joins with me in wishing you much of the sustaining strength and blessed ministry of our Master's good Spirit, and I remain

Most faithfully,
Your brother in the Work,
W. S. Sadler



A.T. Jones' Letter to Mrs. E.G. White ²⁷³
(This Letter Was Never Answered)

Battle Creek, Mich., April 26, 1909

Mrs. E. G. White,

Takoma Park, Washington, D.C.

Dear Sister White:

²⁷³ Through self-study, A. T. Jones became one of Seventh-day Adventism's most intellectual leaders in the areas of history, prophecy, and religious liberty. He even corrected Uriah Smith, who had been the unchallenged authority on history and prophecy in Adventism regarding certain mistakes Smith had made. Jones was co-editor of *Signs of the Times* magazine as well as the *Review* for a while. He attempted to direct Adventism to a more Christ-centered, cross-oriented Gospel. In this, he and his friend Waggoner partially succeeded and left a lasting impact on the denomination. He was editor of the *American Sentinel*, which was the forerunner of *Liberty* magazine of today. He also served as a member of the General Conference Committee. Due to being confronted with irrefutable evidence of Ellen White's mistakes in inspiration and the injustices that he perceived in relation to that fact, he moved from being favored by Ellen White to coming under Ellen White's condemnation. His ministerial credentials were withdrawn in 1907 and eventually his church membership. He remained a seventh-day Sabbath keeper his whole life.

In April 1906, you sent out a communication dated March 30th, 1906, in which are the following words:

"Recently in the visions of the night I stood in a large company of people. There were present Dr. Kellogg, Elders Jones, Tenny, and Taylor, Dr. Paulson, Elder Sadler, Judge Arthur, and many of their associates. I was directed by the Lord to request them and any others who have perplexities and grievous things in their minds regarding the testimonies that I have borne, to specify what their objections and criticisms are. The Lord will help me to answer these objections and to make plain that which seems to be intricate.

"Let those who are troubled now place upon paper a statement of the difficulties that perplex their minds and let us see if we cannot throw some light upon the matter that will relieve their perplexities. . . . Let it all be written out and submitted to those who desire to remove the perplexities.

"I ask that the leaders in the medical work at Battle Creek, and those who have been associated with them in gathering together criticisms and objections to the testimonies that I have borne, shall open to me the things that they have been opening to others. They should certainly do this if they are to be loyal to the directions God has given. . . I am now charged to request those who are in difficulty in regard to Sister White's work to let their questions appear now, before the great day of judgment comes, when every work shall be made to appear with the motive underlying it, when the secrets of all hearts shall be made known, and every thought, word, and deed shall be tested by the Judge of the whole world, and each one will receive sentence according as his works have been. I present this before you all."

That appeal presents the solemn consideration of "loyalty to the directions God has given" and "the great day of judgment," as considerations requiring that the men named should write to you; and it is upon that consideration alone that I do write this to you. For when in view of loyalty to God and the great day of judgment, you call upon me to write upon these things, I do not want to appear in the Judgment as disloyal to God through having failed to do what ought to have been done by me. Therefore again, I say, it is upon this consideration alone that I now write this to you. For there has come to my attention now a matter which, in view of "the great day of Judgment" which you have cited, ought to be brought to your consideration and which, in justice to other people, ought to be corrected and counteracted. Therefore, I write this in the interests of justice and truth, and also somewhat to speak on God's behalf.

And first of all, it is proper for me to state why I have not written before:

1. I never received from you, nor in any way by your instructions, any copy of that communication.

2. It was a long time before I obtained a copy. And only then did I get a copy from a brother who had never received any copy from you, although he was named in it; and he had obtained his copy from yet another brother to whom you had sent a copy though he was not named in it.

3. Before I obtained a copy of it, the word came to me that you had called on certain ones, and me amongst them, to write out what difficulties might be perplexing their minds concerning your writings, in order that you might explain, etc., and thus it was only that special point that came to my attention. But upon that consideration, I would not write and never would have written; and this is for the reason that such a proposition in itself surrenders at once the whole ground of the claim in behalf of your writings as the word of God or as given by inspiration of God. For if the writings were really the word of God -

a. They need no explanation.

b. If the writings to be explained were **not** the word of God, then I would not want any explanation of them; for I would not care anymore for them than for any other writings that were not the word of God.

Further, I knew that the things that could be written, you simply **could not** explain; and that any explanation would be worse than no explanation. And the event has fully justified this view.

For when, in honest response to your call, Brother Sadler and Brother Paulson wrote to you in all sincerity their difficulties, in a communication dated June 3rd, 1906, you wrote the following words:

"Sabbath night, a week ago, after I had been prayerfully studying over those things, I had a vision, in which I was speaking before a large company, where many questions were asked concerning my work and writings.

"I was directed by a messenger from heaven not to take the burden of picking up and answering all the sayings and doubts that are being put into many minds."

When Brother Sadler had his letter to you all written and ready to send, he read it to me before he sent it. And then I said to him, "My

Brother, you will never get an answer to that. Any answer would be worse than no answer." And just so it turned out. To this day Brother Sadler has received no answer to his letter; though in acknowledging the receipt of his letter, you promised that you would answer. This promise you made in a letter dated June 14, 1906, in the following words:

"As soon as I can, I will clear up, if possible, the misunderstanding regarding the work God has given me to do. "

To Brother Paulson's letter, you did make somewhat of an attempt at an answer on **just one point**, and this most largely by quoting from "Great Controversy" and from the printed Testimonies, matter with which he was already familiar.

That as relates to Sadler and Paulson; but it is even worse as relates to Dr. Stewart: To Dr. Stewart, there was sent a copy of your communication calling for a writing out of doubts, objections, etc., though he was not named in the communication. In response to that call, Dr. Stewart wrote a letter to you presenting just what you called for. This letter he sent to you alone, in the confidence of a personal letter. At the same time, he sent a letter to W. C. White, your son, in which he asked that an answer should be made to his letter, and that this answer might be received by him within thirty days.

The next thing that Dr. Stewart heard from his letter, it was in the hands of Elder A. G. Daniells in Takoma Park, Washington, who was then making public use of it to the effect that "Here is a manuscript of seventy-eight pages of objections to the testimonies," etc.; with no intimation that you had written or sent to the author of the manuscript and others a communication calling upon them to do just what he had done; but conveying the impression that the whole thing of the manuscript was, on the part of the author, only a willful and voluntary attack upon the Testimonies. And that is the only kind of an answer to his letter that Dr. Stewart has ever seen or heard of. Neither from you nor from W. C. White has he ever received a word in answer to his letter.

Now, Sister White, you wrote in the name of God and appealed to men's Christian integrity, and in the presence of the judgment, that **they should state to you** their perplexities: "Let it all be written out." And you put God under pledge for answer—"The Lord will help me to answer these objections." That communication was sent personally to Dr. Stewart. He accepted the communication as honestly intended and wrote accordingly: then, in the presence of all that, can you think, or can you expect any Christian man to think, that the Judgment of

God will justify or vindicate as fair, true, and Christian, the course that was pursued with Dr. Stewart's letter?

Now in the presence of the Judgment, it is only fair that I should believe and recognize the probabilities are that you never saw Dr. Stewart's letter and never even had a chance to see it. For your sake, it is only fair to suppose that the probabilities are altogether that W. C. White received the letter and read it, and then, without ever giving you a chance to see it, posted it off to Elder Daniells at Washington.

That, in fairness to you, may be considered the probability. Nevertheless, the question still recurs: Will the Judgment vindicate as fair, true, and Christian such treatment of a man in the name of God?

And will the Judgment vindicate as fair, true, and Christian the public use of Dr. Stewart's letter to you, with the impression that it was a willful attack upon you and your writings, while concealing the fact made perfectly plain in Dr. Stewart's letter itself, that it was only and altogether in response to the call that you had made in the name of the Lord, which call itself was copied in the very letter of Dr. Stewart's that was being used? And then the public use of his letter has so advertised it that there was such a call for it that another man published it; then again, Dr. Stewart was charged with attacking the Testimonies and warring on you. Will the Judgment of God vindicate as the righteousness of God such dealings as that? Can anybody who knows God or has any respect for Him believe of Him that He would sanction any such procedure as all this?

Thus the whole case, as your communication calling for the writing out of doubts and perplexities concerning your writings, **as that case has been worked out**, requires that we shall think of God things that are impossible.

Now please let me say a word on God's behalf: In your communication of May 30th, 1906, calling upon certain men by name to place upon paper the statement of the difficulties that perplexed their minds, you wrote the following words:

"In the **visions of the night**----- I was **directed by the Lord** to request them and any others who have perplexities and grievous things in their minds regarding the Testimonies that I have borne, to specify what their objections and criticisms are. The **Lord will help me to answer** these objections and to **make plain** that which seems intricate.... **Let it all be written out.**"

After having received in answer to that call what some brethren had honestly written, you wrote under date of June 3rd, 1906, the following words:

"**I had a vision** in which I was speaking before a large company, where many questions were asked concerning my work and writings. **I was directed by a messenger from heaven** not to take the burden of picking up and answering all the sayings and doubts that are being put into many minds."

Both of these communications profess to be as from God. As representing God, therefore, they present the impossible situation as to God, **in truth**, that God asked certain men **by name** that they put in writing a statement of all their difficulties, etc., with the promise of an answer, and then, after He got the statement, refused to answer.

I repeat, therefore, that as to God, in truth, and to any mind that has ever received the revelation of God, that presents an impossible situation. For no person that knows God and Jesus Christ whom He has sent can ever believe it possible **of God** that **He** would call men personally by name to **Him** only that they should receive a slap in the face or to be condemned.

Didn't the Lord know what responses could be made to that call? Didn't **He** know what response **might** be made? Yea, didn't **He** know what responses **would** be made? Accordingly, didn't He know before these statements were written that there was to be no answer? And **He**, knowing all that, then can anybody expect sensible Christian men ever to believe of God that **He** would deliberately resort to an unworthy trick of mere child's play with sober, well-meaning, manly men, believers in His own Son?

Let us set these two statements of yours side by side:

"Recently in the **visions of the night I stood in a large company** of people... I was **directed** by the **Lord to request them** and any others who have perplexities and grievous things in their minds **regarding the Testimonies** that I have borne, to specify what their objections and criticisms are. **The Lord will help me to answer** these objections and to make plain that which seems intricate... Let it **all be written out** and submitted to those who desire to remove the perplexities."

"I had a vision in which I was speaking before a large company where many questions were asked concerning my works and writings. I was directed by a messenger from heaven not to take the burden of picking up and answering all the sayings and doubts that are being put into many minds."

Sister White, can you or anybody else believe it possible for any person who knows God or has respect for Him to accept both these statements as coming from God? Can you or anybody else expect that Christian men will believe of God that **He** will act like that, or that He will treat men in any such way as that?

Can you or anybody else expect that Christian men will accept any view of inspiration that involves the holy, just, and good God in any such a slim and unworthy trick as that? Are we to believe of God that He is such an underling and so irresponsible of Himself that He can be pledged to a thing that utterly fails? That He can be pledged and under pledged? That when under pledge He can be whiffled about, as the workings out of this case show, so that His pledge shall be worse than nothing? And all this in order to be loyal to the Testimonies?

Why, Sister White, to believe that and such as that of God, the God of the Bible, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, would be nothing short of the utmost limit of irreverence.

Again: In those letters, you were asked these questions:

1. "Do you approve of sending personal testimonies which the Lord has given to men, broadcast to other people?"
2. "Is it not a Bible rule that when we have any criticism of a brother, it shall be presented to him personally, then afterwards to two or three, and then if he rejects it, to the church?"

These are vital questions.

It is the truth that copies of the Testimonies to individuals are sent to the officials of the denomination at the same time, or even before they are sent to the individuals to whom they pertain.

It is the truth that Testimonies to individuals are sent to others than the ones most concerned and are made public use of, and are even used in print and published everywhere, without their ever having been received, or seen, or heard of, by the individual or the ones named in the Testimonies.

When Brother Tenney was cast out of the church, there was read and used against him, as a basis and authority for casting him out, passages from a Testimony that he never saw and that he never knew anything about until it was used against him in that meeting.

In the controversy over the Battle Creek Sanitarium, Testimonies that the Sanitarium Board never saw or heard of have not only been published and used against them but have been printed and spread broadcast before the Sanitarium people ever knew were such communications in existence.

Also, myself: I have received letters from different parts of the country stating that in the camp meetings Testimonies concerning me have been read, or quoted from, or referred to; but Testimonies that I had never seen.

That is exactly the case of your communication of February 4, 1907, to Bro. Russell Hart, in which I am twice mentioned by name, saying that I would "work in every way possible to get possession" of the Tabernacle. That was used by men (**not by Brother Hart**) as a "Testimony" to denounce and decry me, and yet I never saw it, nor knew of any of its contents till February 20, 1909—more than two years after it was written.

Now does anybody expect me or anybody else to believe that in the Judgment I or any other man will be condemned or held in any wise accountable for something we never knew and never had a chance to know: that we will be held accountable for disregarding Testimonies that we never saw or even heard of?

In the Bible, the Lord has directed that when a brother trespasses or is overtaken in a fault, he is to be **gained** and **restored**: not **condemned** and **denounced**; and that in seeking to **gain** and **restore** him, first of all, **he** is to be told his fault: "between thee and him alone." If that fails, then he is to be told a **second time** in the presence of "one or two more." These two steps must be taken before it shall be told even to the **congregation** of which he is a member. And when it is told to the

congregation of which he is a member, then that congregation is to seek to gain him. And only when all these efforts have failed to **gain** and **restore** him — only **then** is it to be known **before the public**.

This is the word of the Lord directing us how we are to do toward the one that is overtaken in a fault or who has trespassed. But in the use of your Testimonies, this order has been and even disregarded altogether. A man's fault is published to the world in print or told to everybody but himself. And he is **condemned** and **denounced**, without the thing having been told him at all, much less told to him in Christian kindness a second or a third time.

And this way is taken by you in the Testimonies and their use as **the way of the Lord**: and all are expected to conform to it or else be counted in rebellion against God, apostates from the truth, and be excluded from heaven because of such rebellion and apostasy.

This again presents an impossible situation as to God. For it makes it appear that God goes directly contrary to **His** own word: that while calling and requiring **us** to be **followers of Him** strictly according to His word **in the Bible**, yet in the Testimonies and their use, He, Himself, is made to set us the example of going directly contrary to the way that He requires **us** to go in His word **in the Bible**.

I repeat that this is impossible as to God. For it is impossible for God to go thus contrary to His own word. And it makes it **impossible for us** to be **followers of God** while He requires us to go one way, and He goes the opposite way. And in the Judgment I would far rather risk the consequences of following strictly God's word in the Bible in telling to a brother his fault "between thee and him alone," and then telling it to him a **second time** in the presence of "one or two more," and then telling it to the **congregation** of which he is a member, with the purpose to gain and restore him, than to risk the consequences of the Testimonies and their use in telling the faults of a brother not to "him alone" at all, but telling it to everybody but him, and in publishing it to the world, and this be the first that he knows of it.

But there is more that should be said of that communication of February 4, 1907, to Brother Russell Hart in which I am twice named.

September 7, 1907, this communication was copied with the usual filing marks "Sept. 7, 1907-8 . . . H. 38 07." It is only fair to suppose that at least seven of these indicated "-8-" copies were sent to as many different persons and places, and that they have been diligently used to publish and emphasize what is said in the communication concerning me. Yet I never saw it till February 20, 1909; more than two

years after it was written. I saw it then only because a brother told me that Brother Hart had a copy, and that others had a copy and were using it. Then when I met Brother Hart, I said to him that I had heard that he had a copy of a Testimony in which I was personally mentioned; but that I had never seen it nor known that it was in existence and that I thought it only fair that I should have a chance to see it. He thought so too and let me take it. The passages that mention me are the following:

"I must act in accordance with the light that the Lord has given me; and I say to you that Brother A. T. Jones and Dr. Kellogg will make every effort possible to get possession of the Tabernacle, in order that they may present their doctrines. We must not allow that house to be used for the promulgation of error. The Tabernacle was built by the Seventh-day Adventist people. It is their property and their loyal representatives should control it. On this question I will stand firm, and if you and others will take a decided stand with us, you will be doing that which God requires of you at this time.

"We must make sure the control of the Tabernacle; for powerful testimonies are to be borne in it in favor of the truth. This is the word of the Lord to you and others. Elder A. T. Jones will work in every way possible to get possession of this house, and if he can do so, he will present in it theories that should never be heard. I know whereof I speak in this matter, and if you had believed the warnings that have been given, you would have moved understandingly."

Now in all kindness, with no feeling of resentment whatever, but with perfect good humor, I say to you, Sister White, and to everybody; and I say it solemnly before God to be met in the Judgment **as the truth**: that those statements concerning me **are not true**. They were not true when they were written, they **have** never been true at any moment since they were written, and they will never come true in any sense whatever. I not only never **did** "all" that I possibly could to get possession of the Tabernacle, I never thought **on** it, nor **thought of** it. This I know in the same way that I know that I am alive, or that I am here this moment writing this to you.

It cannot be said that the communication prevented me from doing what is there said that I would do; for I did not know that the writing was in existence for more than two years after it was written, nor until after the Tabernacle had passed into the sure possession that "safe-guarded" it against all possibility that I could ever have gotten it.

And all this time of a year and a half or more **after it was copied**, while the communication was being used far and wide to warn the

people of my great wickedness, apostasy, and antagonism, there was I going quietly along, totally ignorant of any such thing being in existence, and at the same time as innocent of what it charged as was any child in the world.

Yet in that communication, you say: "I know whereof I speak." In respectful reply, and in all kindness, I say: Sister White, you did not know whereof you spoke; for there is not a vestige of truth in it; and neither you nor anybody else can **know** what is **not so**. And while I cannot absolutely **know** of another as I know of myself, yet I do firmly **believe** that what is said of Dr. Kellogg is just as completely untrue as **I know** to be untrue what is said of me.

Further, there stand the words: "In accordance with the light **the Lord** has given me ... I say to you that Elder A. T. Jones and Dr. Kellogg will make every effort possible to get possession of the Tabernacle."

There stand the words: "This is the word of **the Lord** to you and to others. Elder A. T. Jones will work in every possible way to get possession of this house."

Sister White, the simple truth is that that is not light at all, for it is not **true** at all. And the Lord never gave it to you, for the Lord does not give nor tell what is not true. This is not "the word of the Lord" at all; for it never was true; and I know that the Lord never says what is not true. Besides, if that were truly from the Lord, it would have been given to me first of all, instead of to everybody but me, and never at all to me. Do you suppose that I am going to believe that the Lord disregards His own word and takes a course directly contrary to that laid down for us to take that we may "follow in His steps?" That is impossible.

The Lord knows perfectly well that I never made any effort at all, that I never worked in any way at all, and that I never thought at all to get possession of the Tabernacle. And the Lord knows perfectly well that I and Dr. Kellogg never acted together, nor spoke together, nor thought together, to any such purpose as getting possession of the Tabernacle.

Yet, Sister White, none of that, nor all of it, has done any harm whatever to me. In it, you have not injured me at all. Those who have read that to the people to expose me and to warn the people against me have done no harm at all to me. This because it is not true; and what is not true can't harm me. But all of this **has harmed other people**, for they believed it, and so have been deceived. And since it has been publicly used; and since the only effect of it could be to deceive; then it will be perfectly proper that I should tell publicly what

I have here told, to relieve as far as possible those deceived ones from that deception.

Also, Sister White, you may remember that this is not the first time that I have been placed by you under the necessity of telling you that what you had said was not at all true. The other time was in July 1903 in your home at "Elmshaven," when you had called me at the Sanitarium to come down to your house. You began very positively to talk to me. When I had listened with some surprise for a considerable length of time, you may remember that I halted you and, looking straight into your eyes, said: "Sister White, there is not a particle of truth in what you are saying." Upon this, you instantly dropped that strain and turned the conversation to another subject.

You may remember that I called your attention to this fact at your house at "Elmshaven" July 31, 1908. And I say to you now what I said then: The Judgment will confirm the truth of that occurrence as I have stated it. The Judgment will confirm also the truth of what I have said on what you have stated in that communication of February 4, 1907.

At Berrien Springs, Michigan, in the time of the Lake Union Conference in 1904, speaking of the book "Living Temple," you said publicly to the congregation in the assembly hall:

"I never read the book; but Willie sat down by my side and read to me some of the most objectionable passages. And I said to him, 'Willie, that is just what was back there in New England,' etc."

Now, Sister White, I said then, and I say now, and I shall say forever, that I have not a particle of confidence in Willie's inspiration to select and read to you "the most objectionable passages" of that book, or any other writing, as a basis for your denouncing the book or writing a Testimony on the subject. I know that John Huss and Jerome were burned at the stake, and Wycliffe and Luther were pursued and persecuted to their graves, solely upon "some of the most objectionable passages" of their writings selected and read by opposing and prejudiced people.

I know that Willie presented to me some of these "most objectionable passages" of his selection. And I know that the objectionable **meaning** which **he put into** the passages to make them "objectionable passages" was directly contrary to the meaning that stands in plain passages in the plain printed words.

There has been published a communication from you in which I am reproved for what I did at the Lake Union Conference in Berrien Springs, Michigan, in 1904. Since, in view of the Judgment, you have

called upon me to write, it is proper that I should state the facts and the history of that matter.

In the six months preceding the Conference at Berrien Springs, in the Union Conferences that had been held from the Atlantic to the Pacific and back again, Elder W. W. Prescott had given addresses in which he set forth his views of "Pantheism" and some other things.

In 1902 there had been printed a leaflet sermon of mine on "The Revelation of God." I had been informed that in his addresses in these Union Conferences, Brother Prescott had taken a single sentence from this sermon of mine and had read that single sentence in with passages from books that he said were "Pantheistic" (and books not one of which I ever saw) in such a way as to make it appear that I was teaching "Pantheism" equally with those others. This information I made no use of in any way. But as I was to be at the Lake Union Conference, I made up my mind that if Brother Prescott should take up that thing there, I would answer him on it, and I went to Berrien Springs with the material in my possession with which to answer him if he should take that thing up there.

On Friday morning, in the midst of that Conference session, you gave to your son W. C. White Testimony to take to Brother Prescott, in which Brother Prescott was instructed not to take up in that meeting the discussion of this question of "Pantheism," etc., that it was not good to make prominent before the people these erroneous things even for the purpose of exposing or refuting them. But instead of this, to dwell only upon the truth, etc. Though you gave this testimony to W. C. White on Friday morning to deliver to Brother Prescott, Brother White kept it in his possession and did not deliver it. And on the same Friday evening, Brother Prescott did enter upon the discussion of that very subject as he had in the other Union Conferences. I took notes of his sermon for the purpose of replying to him.

That same Friday morning, you had sent to Elder Daniells the Testimony addressed to him and Elder Prescott, in which they were instructed to stretch out their hands to Dr. Kellogg as Christ was doing. A copy of that Testimony came into my hands on Sabbath forenoon. But I was surprised to find the whole days' passing with no token whatever of their stretching out their hands to Dr. Kellogg or their taking any other move in the direction indicated by the Testimony. That Testimony said that the same words were to be given to the others at that meeting, for them to carry to those who were not at the meeting. But after the Testimony had been received by Brother

Daniells, days had passed without the Testimony having been made known.

Under these circumstances of this Testimony and Brother Prescott's sermon, I concluded that it would be proper to make known the Testimony as well as my answer to Brother Prescott's sermon of Friday night. But even then, I waited a whole day and a night, in which time I prayed earnestly to God for guidance as to whether or not I should really do it. And late in the night before I did it; the last thing that I did was to pray concerning that and to say to the Lord in prayer that I had no personal choice in the matter; that indications were that I ought to do it; but if He should in any way show me otherwise, I would not do it. And then I said to the Lord that on the next morning when the early morning meeting should be opened, if **anything** should occur to occupy the time of the meeting, I would take **that** as evidence that I should not say anything; but that if when the meeting should be opened, nothing should occur to occupy the time, that I should take that as an indication that the way was opened for me. The next morning, Elder Daniells opened the meeting and then said, "Brethren, the meeting is yours," and sat down in the audience. Everything was quiet. Nobody said anything nor did anything; there was no sign of anybody's doing anything; until I arose and stepped to the front and did what I did. And what I did that day did undoubtedly stop, in those meetings at least, Brother Prescott's discussion of that question of "Panthemism," etc.

Now, Sister White, when it was of such importance that the discussion of that subject should be stopped; and when the Lord so wanted it stopped; that He would have you write a Testimony to stop it; and when you sent that Testimony by W. C. White on Friday morning, in ample time to have stopped it; and when it was not stopped just because Brother White chose not to deliver that Testimony; then was not my action that did stop it, directly in line with that Testimony? And was not my action that did stop it, the fulfillment of the purpose of the Lord in sending the Testimony to stop it? but which failed because W. C. White did not deliver the Testimony?

When it was the will of the Lord, expressed in the Testimony, that that discussion should be stopped, then in the Judgment will I be reproved for having done what did stop it? And will W. C. White at the same time be justified in withholding from Brother Prescott the Testimony that would have stopped it?

If Brother White had delivered that Testimony at any time on Friday, it is safe to say, and I believe, that Brother Prescott would not have

spoken at all on the subject. If he had not spoken on the subject, I should not have had a word to say on the subject. Then when what I did was only because of what he did, and when what he did was because of Brother White's not delivering the Testimony that would have prevented it all, then in the Judgment will I be condemned for doing just what the Lord wanted done? But which could not be done in the Lord's first chosen way, because of W. C. White's intentional withholding of the Lord's message that would have done it?

Knowing all this, Sister White, can you wonder that I have never felt at all sorry [for] what I did? And have never been ready to confess that I was wrong in doing what I did that day in the Lake Union Conference at Berrien Springs?

In the former part of this letter, I said that to this day Brother Sadler has never received from you any answer to his letter. This is the truth. In your letter to Dr. Paulson, June 14, 1906, you did say: "Now I must respond to the letters received from you, Elder Sadler, and others." But in truth and in fact, you did not respond to Brother Sadler's letter; not to a single thing written in it – unless it be in these words:

"To some of the questions you have asked, I am not to answer yes or no. I must not make any statements that can be misconstrued."

This can be verified by anyone who will read the two letters.

Yet one of the questions asked by both Doctors Paulson and Sadler, while not worded exactly the same by both, was in effect this:

"Is everything that you speak and write inspired of God and to be received as the word of God?"

Under all the circumstances, this is one of the most important questions that could be asked of you. Yet the only thing from you that can even be construed into an answer to it is the words: "I am not to answer yes or no. I must not make statements that can be misconstrued."

Sister White, do you intend that to be your answer to that question? If it is claimed that your letter to Dr. Paulson, June 14, 1906, is an answer to his and Dr. Sadler's letters, then that will have to be held as your answer to that question. But if you were to answer "Yes," how could it be misconstrued if it were true?

If you were to answer "No," how could that be misconstrued if it were true?

Sister White, plain yes or no simply never can be misconstrued if it be true.

Then since to the question, "Is everything that you speak or write inspired of God and to be received as the word of God?" you are not to answer yes or no because either statement "can be misconstrued," then it plainly follows that:

"Yes" would not be true because some things that you speak and write are not inspired of God and are not to be received as the word of God, and it would be a misconception to say that they are.

"No" would not be true because some things that you speak and write are inspired of God and are to be received as the word of God, and it would be a misconception to say that they are not.

Upon analysis, therefore, of the only words that you have given that can even be construed into an answer to that question, it stands as the inevitable and inescapable consequence that the one straight and true answer to that question is the simple and easy word "no."

Yet that is exactly what I hold. It is the truth.

And, Sister White, do not you know full well that this is the plain truth?

But more than this: In the Judgment, in the presence of which you called me by name to write—in the Judgment, Sister White, your plea that if you should answer truly in the word "No," it would "be misconstrued," and some would "take advantage of the answer," will not be sufficient. In the Judgment, nothing will stand but the truth. You have been standing as one who is a mouthpiece for God. As such, it is your place to tell the truth and bear witness unto the truth. You have nothing whatever to do with what people make of the truth that you have to tell.

It is your place to tell the truth. In the Judgment, it will be the part of those people and not you to answer for whatever misconception or wrong use they make of the truth.

And whatever the wrong use that a few perverse-minded people might make of the truth will not, in the Judgment, prove a sufficient counterbalance to the willing, if not known, deception of thousands upon thousands of innocent, confiding, and honest-minded people, the Judgment will certainly settle. But meantime, it is an issue that is certainly and justly open to very serious question and doubt in Christian minds. And upon that issue now, Sister White, I assure you that I would far prefer to see you write the plain and simple truth in

that plain and simple word "No," which I have reason to believe that you well know is the truth, than to see you longer risking the awful decision of the Judgment upon the alternative and the consequences of your refusal to write the pure truth in that simple word "No," which is the unescapable consequence of your refusal to say either yes or no, because either could be misconstrued.

And what a world of relief would be given to a deplorable situation by your writing the truth, that I am sure you must know is the truth in that word "No."

Infinite good and no possible harm could alone come of it. It is true that many people would be disappointed, and others would be considerably perplexed. But is it not far better that they should be allowed to awake to that disappointment and perplexity now, while there is time to get their true bearings, than to awake to it all when it will be forever too late? Then everything would stand only in the truth; and would be received and known only in and by "the Spirit of truth."

Therefore, even yet, before it shall be for you too late, will you not, Sister White, write that truth in that word "No" to that honest, pertinent, and very important question?

Now, Sister White, I bring this letter to a close. In view of your communication calling upon me by name to write a "statement of difficulties," etc., those things that I have here written have seemed to me of sufficient importance for me to state to you. Other items might be mentioned, but I have no disposition at all to heap up matters.

Also, Sister White, allow me to assure you that I am not opposing you, and have not opposed you, and do not intend to oppose you. When in view of "the great day of Judgment" and by my "loyalty to the directions God has given," you call upon me to write to you on these matters, it cannot fairly be counted as opposing you when in answer to that call I wrote what I have written.

I respect you as a sister in Christ and in the truth of God. I honor you for the truth you have told and that you have written and maintained all these years. I do not deny that you have divine enlightenment. I do not deny that you have the Spirit of prophecy. But I do deny that everything that you have ever written is of the divine inspiration of the Spirit of Prophecy. I do deny that you are infallible, and I do deny that everything you have written is the infallible word of God. And, indeed, you in reality deny all this yourself in your refusal to say either Yes or No to the plain question, because either word could be

misconstrued or taken unfair advantage of. Then, why cannot I be allowed to agree with you in this and follow the directions of the Scriptures to "prove all things and hold fast that which is good?"

Another thing: Please, Sister White, do not blame Dr. Kellogg or anybody else for anything that I have here written. Please do not connect Dr. Kellogg or anybody else in any way with this that I have written. Not a soul in the world knows that I have written it, but the stenographer who has taken it down and written it out. Not a soul knows that I have sent this copy to you; and nobody but the stenographer and myself knows that it is in existence.

But will this copy that I send to you ever reach you? Will you ever have a chance to read it? Or will my letter be treated as was Dr. Stewart's, and the next thing I hear from it, it will be in the hands of Bro. Daniells, or someone else, exhibited before an audience as so many "passages of objections to the Testimonies?"

Will this letter reach you so that you will have a chance to read it yourself, or will Willie sit down by your side and read to you "some of the most objectionable passages?"

However this may be, it will not affect me personally. In view of the Judgment, you called upon me to write: Because of that, and in view of the Judgment, I have written. And there I personally leave it. Whatever others may do in view of the Judgment or not, just as they choose; for there only will they have to answer, and not to me.

And now wishing you only all blessing and all good from the Lord in all things always, and only all of Romans 15:13 forever, I remain,

(Signed) Alonzo T. Jones.

[Our Note:] I feel that the above letters are self-explanatory. While A. T. Jones seemed to feel, in this letter, that Ellen White was a true prophet that at times got things wrong, one must point out that according to the Bible, inspiration does not ever get things wrong (see the chapters *The Bible Speaks Out*, and *The Bible Speaks Again*). Some today who take a similar stance, that inspired writings can have mistakes, realizing that they now have no way of telling what is inspired by Satan and what is inspired by God, try to maintain that the only way to tell whether it is from God or not is by the fruit. ²⁷⁴ But

²⁷⁴ The author well remembers an old friend telling of her son who had lived a fast and horrible life. Upon becoming a Mormon, his whole life changed. He became a responsible, moral family man. If that woman was to only have fruit, to use the loose

this is, first of all, to ignore that not having mistakes in inspiration itself is indicated in Scripture as a particular quality that is present in God's inspired inspiration and is not just an option but rather a requirement for it coming from God. Therefore, if it is absent, it is in itself a bad fruit. One should also realize that if inspired writings can have mistakes, it makes it no longer possible to use the test of fruit as to whether they are of God or not. For if mistakes can and are indeed present in inspired writings, how can one know for certain that the admonition to test things by their fruit is itself not one of those mistakes? While some of us might be able to reject logic and still hold to an imagined certainty on this point, will others that we deal with be able to do the same? In addition, if there are errors in the inspired writings, can one even know what good fruit really is? Even if we were to throw logic aside and still believe that fruit is a test, it would seem doubtful we could know with certainty what good fruit really is. After all:

"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" ²⁷⁵

Also, one remembers Paul's admonition:

"... Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet." ²⁷⁶

So, who is to decide this now that we can't really be sure what is correct and what is not in inspired writings? How do we not know that perhaps a small item that seems to be condemned in scripture is not in actuality really a mistake and therefore not really a bad fruit at all? Imagine witnessing to one who has just become a Christian and telling him that his fornication, with the girl he has lived with for twenty years and had children by, must stop. But, on him pressing us, we have to admit that there are indeed mistakes at times in inspiration and that it is true one can't really be sure this could not be one of them. How will that effectually convict him that he is wrong and living in sin when perhaps his heart tells him he is not doing anything that is hurting anyone and therefore it is not wrong? He is, after all, doing to her as he would have her do to him, he reasons. What a mess one may get themselves into when we try to manipulate facts to fit our preconceived ideas rather than depending on the test God has

sense of the word, to test things by, she might well have become a Mormon. The Devil often tries to counterfeit the work of God on the surface in order to deceive.

²⁷⁵ Jer. 17:9

²⁷⁶ Rom. 7:7

provided us to discern between what God has inspired and what He has not. God has promised that His true writings are free from error, and praise God we can depend on that!

Getting back to what A. T. Jones pointed out in his above letter regarding Ellen White's two opposing visions, it leaves only two possibilities for Mrs. White. Either she was inspired by a lying spirit or she disregarded and lied about what God showed her, thus making her so unreliable that one would not know what to believe and what not to believe. Either position destroys the value of her writings. One is reminded of Paul's words:

"For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly to you-ward." ²⁷⁷ "But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God." ²⁷⁸ "Receive us; we have wronged no man, we have corrupted no man, we have defrauded no man." ²⁷⁹

Because Paul fulfilled these requirements of a true prophet, we can trust what he wrote. Praise God we can take it to the bank.

John finished reading and laid down the papers. "What do you think?" asked Lily.

"Amazing," said John. "How did you find all this?" he asked.

"Oh, I have my ways," Lily laughed.

"I guess you do indeed," John said as he grabbed her and gave her a kiss as he said, "Yes, you always have amazed me!" Laughingly, they went into the living room to discuss things more thoroughly before heading off to get some much-needed rest after a long and tiring day.

"Behold, I am against the prophets, saith the Lord, that use their tongues, and say, He saith. Behold, I am

²⁷⁷ 2 Cor. 1:12

²⁷⁸ 2 Cor. 4:2

²⁷⁹ 2 Cor. 7:2

against them that prophesy false dreams, saith the Lord, and do tell them and cause My people to err by their lies, and by their lightness; yet I sent them not, nor commanded them. JEREMIAH 23:32

“These six things doth the LORD hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him: A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, A false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren.” Proverbs 6:16-19

“They have seen vanity and lying divination, saying, The LORD saith: and the LORD hath not sent them... Have ye not seen a vain vision, and have ye not spoken a lying divination, whereas ye say, The LORD saith it; albeit I have not spoken? Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Because ye have spoken vanity, and seen lies, therefore, behold, I am against you, saith the Lord GOD.”

EZEKIEL 13:6-8

“Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.”

1 CORINTHIANS 4:1-2



Ellen White & Her Strange Forerunner

John stared intently at his computer screen as he went down the list of items on the internet. Then his eyes caught sight of *The Christian Experience of Wm. E. Foy, Together With the Two Visions He Received* (1845). Wow, that sounds interesting. Quickly, he hit the download button as his mind went into gear. He couldn't help remembering how, since a child, he and his wife had been told by parents, grandparents, in stories for children produced by the church, and even in respected church histories that William Foy was one of two men who had been called to the prophetic office before Ellen White. They had been God's first choice because they were men. However, they refused to be prophets. Foy had even died shortly after because of his refusal. So, God was forced to use Ellen White. However, John had never read any of the visions of Ellen White's forerunner before. He had not realized that they were available. He remembered that Ellen White had indicated that Foy's visions were genuine.

Eagerly, John opened the document and began to read. Yes, Foy's visions were similar in a few places to Ellen White's, he thought, and yet it seemed strange the way Foy described leaving his body and looking down at it as he went off into vision. It made John feel uneasy. Wasn't that like the experiences he had heard of Spiritualists who had out of body experiences, he wondered? He read it again:

"... it appeared to me that I was a spirit separate from this body.... It appeared to me that I was a spirit separate from this body, standing upon the earth alone.... My guide now informed me what I must do; saying, 'Thy spirit must return to yonder world.... My guide then spread his wings and brought my spirit gently to the earth, then

soared away; and immediately I found myself in the body.”²⁸⁰

That seems strange, John thought. But even more mystifying was Foy’s description of dead saints who had died that he saw in heaven.

“I then saw an individual, which had passed through death. Her brightness was beyond the expression of mortals, and at her right side stood a guardian angel: the angel’s raiment was like pure gold, and his wings like flaming fire; and as she passed me, she cried with a lovely voice, ‘I am going to the gate to meet my friends.’ An angel then appeared, flying through the midst of this boundless place, and came to the spirit of one of those that had not passed through death, and cried with a loud voice, saying, ‘This is my mother.’ He then became her guide.”²⁸¹

Wow, John thought, this vision is saying that when the saints are taken to heaven, they are going to find saints waiting for them that have recently died. After all, this lady that had passed through death and the angel were going to the gate of the city to meet the redeemed coming from earth. The question is, what were they doing in heaven before everyone else? How did they get there? It was said they were going to meet a mother and friends. In reading the vision, it is apparent that those at the gate, that the lady who had passed through death was going to meet, were those who had not passed through death. She says they are her friends. This means she could not be one of those whom Christ took to heaven with him at his resurrection. For if that were the case, she could not have friends who are alive at the second coming who had not tasted death and were coming from the earth.²⁸² This is also true regarding the angel who flies to meet his mother. He becomes her guide because he knows the place better than her since he has been there before her. In another place, the vision states that at least some of these angels are those who were gospel ministers upon the earth. No doubt this explains why this angel has a mother from earth. He was a minister who died before his mother. John couldn’t help noticing also that the vision described the angels’

²⁸⁰ *The Christian Experience of Wm. E. Foy, Together With the Two Visions He Received* (1845). This pamphlet describes visions that Foy had in 1842.

²⁸¹ *Ibid.*

²⁸² It must be remembered that Ellen White taught, on the authority of her visions, that those who die do not go to heaven at death but remain in their graves until the second coming. She also taught that there is no conscious spirit separate from a body. The spirit is just one’s breath or spark of life. This was her teaching. Therefore she and her forerunner who was supposed to be inspired by the God were contradicting each other.

mother as a spirit. This contradicts Ellen White's teaching and the teaching of Adventism. In fact, such a doctrine regarding the state of the dead as Foy's visions seem to have promoted was stated by Ellen White in her writings to be one of the key doctrines that defines the character of Babylon in the book of Revelation. She said:

Through the two great errors, the immortality of the soul and Sunday sacredness, Satan will bring the people under his deceptions. While the former lays the foundation of spiritualism, the latter creates a bond of sympathy with Rome.²⁸³

"What a stark contrast and contradiction between Foy and Ellen White.," John thought, He kept reading. Before long, he read:

"Behind the angel, I beheld countless millions of bright chariots; they had the appearance of pure gold and were perfectly square. Each chariot had four wings like flaming fire. And while I was beholding, one of the chariots arose upon its wings of fire, and an angel followed after the chariot; and the wings of the chariot and the wings of the angel cried as with one loud voice, saying, 'Holy! Holy!' I watched the chariot, listening to the lovely sound of the wings. It passed towards the earth; and there appeared a spirit arrayed in white raiment, as it were, standing upon a mountain, and there was given him a crown of brightness; and he stepped into the chariot with the angel, and in a moment he was in this boundless place. Although he shone with great brightness, yet this individual I knew; it was the one referred to by the witness who said, "I see the chariot coming!" He departed this life, in just two weeks after I saw him in vision." ²⁸⁴

Wow! John thought to himself, there he goes again! These visions contradict the visions of Ellen White in regard to the state of the dead! If Foy was chosen by God first and then later Ellen White was chosen, and if the same spirit that inspired Foy inspired Ellen White, it must be a lying spirit, for it contradicts itself! John was in shock! Once again, something that he had been taught by Adventist literature was proving to be a lie that did not match the facts when the original source documents were examined. Had he not read one of the traditionally most esteemed historians, John Loughborough, who was a pioneer and lived through these times? Yet did not he state

²⁸³ *Great Controversy*, p. 588.

²⁸⁴ *The Christian Experience of Wm. E. Foy, Together With the Two Visions He Received* (1845). He received these visions in 1842, but they were published in 1845.

emphatically that Foy was inspired by God like Ellen White and also that he was Ellen White's forerunner? Furthermore, Loughborough was always in touch with Ellen White while writing his history and was always asking her questions. She would have almost certainly known what he had written, and she never corrected it. In addition, John knew that somewhere Ellen White herself gave that idea. I will have to research into this a little more, he thought. I will check out some of the books I have on this subject. Slowly, John began the process. He opened a volume titled *A Gift of Light* and read:

In 1842, William Ellis Foy, a mulatto, received two visions several weeks apart in Boston, Massachusetts. The first (on January 18) lasted 2 ½ hours, and the second (on February 4) an incredible 12 ½ hours! His physical condition in the trancelike vision state resembled the description found in Daniel 10. Like Daniel, he did not breathe (though his heart continued functioning normally) during the visions. (See especially Daniel 10:17.)

William Foy, however, did not actively pursue his calling to the prophetic office. By the summer of 1844, God called another man, Hazen Foss. Foss, likewise, defaulted after temporizing. And so, in December 1844, God turned to one who was "the weakest of the weak." Ellen knew about the prior visions of William Foy and Hazen Foss mentioned in the previous chapter. She realized that Foy was no longer active, and that Foss had refused the assignment offered him. With great reluctance, she accepted her responsibility, but not without misgivings. Thus, she became God's **third choice**, "the weakest of the weak."²⁸⁵

Well, that pretty much confirms what I have always heard in the past. Foss was God's first choice, and Ellen White was His third choice. And of course, that would mean that the same spirit that inspired Foss also inspired Ellen White as well. John then pulled out *The Great Visions of Ellen White* and read:

James White, her husband of 35 years (who probably viewed his wife in the vision state more than any other individual), estimated that her visions typically ranged from 15 minutes to three hours.

²⁸⁵ *A Gift of Light*, pp. 15-26, 1983, 1998, by Roger W. Coon

The four-hour vision at Randolph was not, however, the longest on record in the 1840s. William Ellis Foy, God's first choice for the prophetic office, received two visions in Boston in 1842. The first, on January 18, lasted two and a half hours; but the second, on February 4, ran a remarkable 12 1/2 hours.

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There it was again, thought John. Foy was Ellen White's forerunner and God's first choice!

Next, John opened *A Prophet Among You* by T. Housel Jamison, who was associate secretary of the Ellen G. White Publications at the time he wrote the book in 1955. It was written especially to be used at the college level as a textbook for the Spirit of Prophecy (Ellen White) class. It was the main textbook for training laymen and ministers on the subject for years. John began to read:

William E. Foy, a member of the Freewill Baptist Church, who was preparing for the ministry, was given two visions in Boston in 1842—one on January 18 and the other on February 4. In the first of these revelations, Foy viewed the glorious reward of the faithful and the punishment of sinners. Not being instructed to relate to others what was shown him, he told no one of his vision; but he had no peace of mind. In the second revelation, he witnessed the multitudes of earth arraigned before heaven's bar of judgment; a "mighty angel" with silver trumpet in hand about to descend to earth by "three steps;" the books of record in heaven; the coming of Christ and the reward of the faithful. He was bidden, "Thou must reveal those things which thou hast seen, and also warn thy fellow creatures to flee from the wrath to come." The Christian Experience of Wm. E. Foy, Together With the Two Visions He Received (1845).

Two days after this revelation, he was requested by the pastor of the Bloomfield Street church in Boston to relate the visions.

Although he was a fluent speaker, he reluctantly complied, fearing that the general prejudice against visions, and the fact that he was a mulatto, would make his work difficult. The "large congregation assembled" was spellbound, and with this initial encouragement, Foy traveled three months, delivering his message to "crowded houses." Then, to secure

²⁸⁶ *The Great Visions of Ellen G. White*, pp. 33-34, Roger W. Coon, 1992

means to support his family, he left public work for a time, but, finding “no rest day nor night,” he took it up again. Ellen Harmon, when but a girl, heard him speak at Beethoven Hall in Portland, Maine. (Interview of D. E. Robinson with Mrs. E. G. White, 1912. White Publications, D. F. 231.)

Near the time of the expectation in 1844, according to J. N. Loughborough, Foy was given a third vision in which were presented three platforms, which he could not understand in the light of his belief in the imminent coming of Christ, and he ceased public work. (*The Great Second Advent Movement*, pages 146, 147.)

It so happened that a short time after this, Foy was present at a meeting in which Ellen Harmon related her first visions. She did not know that he was present until he interrupted with a shout and exclaimed that it was just what he had seen. (D. F. 231) Foy did not live long after this.²⁸⁷

Yes, once again that was what he had always understood regarding Foy: that he was God’s choice and that he died shortly thereafter because of his refusal to act as an active prophet. Yet, John also could not help but be shocked when, upon a little more research, he found that Foy had not really died shortly thereafter as he had always been told. But rather, Foy was buried in Birch Tree Cemetery in East Sullivan, Maine, in 1893 at age 75. All those years he was a Free Will Baptist minister. John Loughborough, in his work on Adventist history, *The Great Second Advent Movement*, also said that Foy had died shortly after refusing to act as a prophet. Since childhood, it had been impressed upon John that Foy had died soon after refusing to be God’s last-day prophet because he had rejected God’s call. Now, however, John was beginning to realize that not only was this not true, but that, while there was evidence of a reluctance, there really was no evidence that Foy refused to be God’s prophet at all. Even Ellen White displayed a reluctance to be a prophet. John also remembered Paul’s words:

“For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.”²⁸⁸

²⁸⁷ *A Prophet Among You*, pp. 485-486, T. Housel Jamison, 1955)

²⁸⁸ Rom. 11:29

After all, the prophets of old were created by God especially for their office. Would God throw someone aside who had not really even refused the office but was only slow and reluctant because of not being able to understand a vision or needing more faith? Isn't it God's normal procedure to punish such prophets and thus help them to develop the attributes that they need rather than just throw them out? John's mind went to Jonah and how rebellious he had been in his prophetic office, and yet God did not reject him. Nowhere does there seem to be any indication that Foy ever came close to being as rebellious as Jonah if he was even rebellious at all.

Confronted with the critics of Adventism pointing out the real facts, it was beginning to appear that Adventist sources were finally beginning to tell more of the truth in their more recent publications. One example of this John found in a book entitled *Messenger of the Lord*, 1998. This book was the one John earlier had found was teaching new erroneous views of inspiration and that inspiration contains mistakes. John read:

More relevant to early Seventh-day Adventists are the experiences of William Foy and Hazen Foss. Both had visions similar to the first vision given to Ellen Harmon. William Ellis Foy (c. 1818-1893), a black American in his early twenties, received several dramatic visions in 1842, several years prior to those received by Hazen Foss and Ellen Harmon. The first one (January 18) lasted two and one-half hours, and the second one (February 4), twelve and one-half hours! His physical condition during the visions resembled Daniel's trancelike state. Sometime before October 22, 1844, Ellen Harmon heard Foy speak in Beethoven Hall in Portland, Maine. A few weeks later, shortly after her first vision in December 1844, Foy was present in a meeting held near Cape Elizabeth, Maine, during which she spoke of her first vision. "As she began, Foy became engrossed in what she was saying; he was caught up in the enthusiasm and pathos that accompanied her presentation. She talked of heavenly things—of guides, of lights, of imagery—things familiar to Foy. . . . Caught up in the jubilation of the moment, he could hold back no longer. All of a sudden, right in the middle of Ellen's presentation, Foy let out a shout of joy, rose to his feet, and excitedly "jumped right up and down." As Ellen remembered, "Oh, he praised the Lord, praised the Lord."

He repeated again and again that her vision was just what he had seen. He knew there was no way to falsify such an experience—hers was legitimate.

In 1906, Ellen White recalled her conversations with William Foy. She remembered that he had four visions, all before her first vision: “They were written out and published, and it is . . . [odd] that I cannot find them in any of my books. But we have moved so many times.” And then she gave Foy a very meaningful compliment: “It was remarkable testimonies that he bore.” (Ellen White, “William Foy,” Ellen G. White Estate, Document File 231. ²⁸⁹

However, if Foy’s visions were authentic and faithfully disclosed, should we not expect similarities and parallels, at least to some extent? But the general conceptual content of Foy’s published visions does not parallel those of Ellen White.

²⁹⁰

John noticed that in this newer denominational book on Ellen White, the enthusiasm in regard to Foy being a forerunner of Ellen White was greatly diminished, and for obvious reasons. The author had to admit that “...the general conceptual content of Foy’s published visions does not parallel those of Ellen White.” What an admission! He also admits that Ellen White “...gave Foy a very meaningful compliment: “It was remarkable **testimonies** that he bore.”” In other words, Ellen White, who had heard Foy relate his visions before she became a prophetess when her father took her to hear him relate them around 1844, and who also for years had copies of his visions in writing in her possession and was therefore well informed regarding their content, says that he had “**remarkable testimonies.**”

Next, John looked up a document where Ellen White discusses Foy. He read:

“Then another time, there was Foy that had had visions. He had had four visions. He was in a large congregation, very large. He fell right to the floor. I do not know what they were doing in there, whether they were listening to preaching or

²⁸⁹ *Messenger of the Lord*, Herbert E. Douglas, 1998, p. 38-39

²⁹⁰ *Messenger of the Lord*, 1998, p. 40-41

not. But at any rate, he fell to the floor. I do not know how long it was, about three-quarters of an hour, I think, and he had all these [visions] before I had them.... But it was remarkable testimonies that he bore.” ²⁹¹

Here Ellen White says that Foy had all these visions before her. In other words, she seems to be indicating that Foy was her forerunner and that he was inspired by the same source as her. Once again, we see the statement that they were remarkable testimonies. “Testimonies” is the word Ellen White used for her inspired writings. In other words, she is equating Foy’s visions to the same level as her own. It is not likely that Ellen White, having been so well informed regarding the content of Foy’s visions at the prime of her life, as well as the importance that Foy’s endorsement was to her at the beginning of her ministry, would forget the basic content of his visions. Nor does it make sense that if she was in danger of such a thing, that God would allow her to make such a blunder as an inspired prophetess. It is also beyond question that she is endorsing him. Next, John read from *Legacy of Light* that was produced by the Ellen G. White Estate in 2008.

“It is evident that she [Ellen White] considered his [Foy’s] experience genuine.... The experience of visions in early Adventist history reminds us that our God is a God of diversity, giving three young people an opportunity to function as His messengers, two of whom accepted and one who did not.” ²⁹²

John couldn’t believe what he read. This was actually claiming that Foy had not refused to be God’s prophet, but that he and Ellen had accepted, and both of them were God’s true prophets. How the story seemed to be changing from what had always been taught. If Foy did accept his calling, why did God turn to Ellen White to be his prophet? Especially when she was a woman, which is not biblical except under the circumstances of no worthy man being available for the office. ²⁹³

²⁹¹ Ms 131-1906

²⁹² *Legacy of Light*, Photograph Gallery, William E. Foy, 2008, produced by the Ellen G. White Estate

²⁹³ This is the traditional teaching of Adventists in regards to women prophets.

Obviously, clear back in 1955, the author of *A Prophet Among You*, who summarized Foy's written visions, would have had to have read them in order to summarize them. Yet he chose only to mention the few items in his summary that would somewhat correlate with Ellen White's visions and leave the rest out. He also chose not to mention the fact that the visions contradicted Ellen White's and were so different. But it is also obvious that with the facts becoming more widely known and being trumpeted by Ellen White's critics, her defenders have finally decided that their best option is to face the truth and make the best of it, John thought. They also confirm in this quote that Ellen White did consider Foy's experience genuine. But if Ellen White taught that Foy had the visions before her and that they were genuine, then how could she be a real prophet of God? For her visions and Foy's contradict each other. Also, would not God keep a real prophet of God from promoting a false prophet if Foy was one? After all, one of the main reasons for God calling Ellen White as a prophetess was in order for her to keep the Advent movement from falling into error. He couldn't help also remembering that Ellen White had claimed that:

"The Spirit of God works upon my mind and **gives me appropriate words** with which to express the truth." ²⁹⁴

"...that He would give me tongue and utterance wherever I should go." ²⁹⁵

Does not that apply to pointing out false prophets and/or endorsing other prophets to God's people?

John shook his head in sadness. How could he explain this strange forerunner of Ellen White? How could he explain Ellen White's endorsement of him? How could he account for what seemed to be Adventist leadership's suppression of the facts for so many years and their changing story? As John got up and walked towards the kitchen to tell Lily what he had found, he looked up to God and cried in anguish, "Lord, these facts would only make sense with a false prophetess. But they make no sense at all for a true one. Oh, God, help us to find the answers! Help us to not be deceived! Lead us, O Lord, into Your truth!!!"

²⁹⁴ *Selected Messages*, vol. 3, p. 51; Letter 90, 1907

²⁹⁵ Letter 84, 1909



A Modern Infallible Church

John sat down at his desk and sighed. It seemed like such a long time since he and Lily had started their search for answers into the Herod mistake. All the many things they had discovered were almost beyond belief. The winter was now gone. It had been made up of snowplowing, getting wood for the fire, going to town for supplies, and studying on Ellen White. John wondered if the study would ever end. He picked up his papers and started to read. About six hours later, he heard Lily walk in. "How is it going, Honey?" she asked. "Oh, just fine. Listen to what I have found so far:

"In 1875, Ellen White wrote: 'You reason that you must have light and evidence for yourself in reference to your duty. I have been shown that no man's judgment should be surrendered to the judgment of any one man. But when the judgment of the General Conference, which is the highest authority that God has upon the earth, is exercised, **private independence and private judgment must not be maintained, but be surrendered.**' ²⁹⁶

"Then in 1889 she said: 'The question of the great need of the soul deserves in these meetings of the [General] Conference far more attention, and many questions that are tossed into the Conference should never appear; be worked out in your State Conferences. It has become habit to pass laws that do not always bear the signature of heaven.' ²⁹⁷

"We see here what seems to be a contradiction between these two quotes:

²⁹⁶ *Testimonies*, vol. 3, p. 492

²⁹⁷ November 4, 1889, Ms. 6-1889

"Let's read now what she wrote in 1890 regarding the 1888 GC session:

"The opinion of men was looked to as the voice of God. The enemy took possession of minds and their judgment was worthless; their decisions were evil, for they did not have the mind of Christ. They were doing continual injustice to the persons they talked about, and they had a demoralizing effect upon the conference."²⁹⁸

"One notices that in the above two quotes she is decrying the fact that there are those who are looking to the General Conference as the voice of God. But remember, she was telling them, as stated in the first quote above, to do this very thing in 1875. Was this not indeed the fruit of her teaching? Here in her statements of 1888 and 1889, we have Satan controlling the minds of those at the conference, and decisions were made that were evil. Was she trying to ascertain duty direct from God separate from the General Conference, which is the voice of God, like the man she rebuked in 1875? Remember, if she is inspired, her writings and counsel are not hers but are God's, and a prophet is just as obligated as everyone else to obey God's writings. The prophets of old studied their own writings to find out the will of God. They were not necessarily better able to explain them than anyone else. They had to study them. So, Ellen White should not necessarily have an edge on explaining what was meant by a certain statement. They were not her writings but God's. She was the instrument, but God was the author, if she is a true prophetess. Then again in 1890 she said:

"I do not expect to be at your General Conference. I would rather run the other way."²⁹⁹

"If we take her statements quoted above seriously, we might have to ask: was Mrs. White running away like Jonah from the voice of God and the highest authority on earth? Why would she not consider it a great privilege to be at the Conference so she could bask in the light from heaven? After all, if she is a faithful true prophet from heaven and the General Conference is God's voice from heaven that we are to surrender our judgment to rather than ascertaining our own duty before God, then they could never be in conflict, right? And if they are

²⁹⁸ February 1890, Ms. 37-1890

²⁹⁹ EGW to O. A. Olsen, General Conference President, May 8, 1890, Lt.46-1890

in conflict, one wonders how one could tell which has gone astray. I guess we would have to decide the General Conference had the truth, for she said we can't use our own judgment but must submit it to the General Conference. If we can't use our own judgment, then we could never decide Ellen White was in the right and the Conference wrong, for that would not be submitting our judgment to the Conference, would it? The point is that we can see how seriously she took her own counsel when it was inconvenient for her and how inconsistent the whole situation was. Going on, we find her saying in 1909:

“‘I have often been instructed by the Lord that no man's judgment should be surrendered to the judgment of any other one man. **Never** should the mind of **one** man **or** the minds of a **few** men be regarded as sufficient in wisdom and power to control the work and to say what plans shall be followed. But when in a General Conference, the judgment of the brethren assembled from all parts of the field is exercised, private independence and **private judgment must not be stubbornly maintained, but surrendered.** Never should a laborer regard as a virtue the persistent maintenance of his position of independence, contrary to the decision of the general body.

“‘At times, when a small group of men entrusted with the general management of the work have, in the name of the General Conference, sought to carry out unwise plans and to restrict God's work, I have said that I could no longer regard the voice of the General Conference, **represented by these few men**, as the voice of God. **But this is not saying that the decisions of a General Conference composed of an assembly of duly appointed, representative men from all parts of the field should not be respected.** God has ordained that the representatives of His church from all parts of the earth, when assembled in a General Conference, shall have **authority.** **The error that some are in danger of committing is in giving to the mind and judgment of one man, or of a small group of men, the full measure of authority and influence that God has vested in His church in the judgment and voice of the General Conference assembled....**

“‘Let us give to the highest organized authority in the church that which we are prone to give to one man or to a small group of men.’ ³⁰⁰

“This declaration of Ellen White's that attempts to explain her past statements, while answering some peripheral questions we might

³⁰⁰ Vol. 9 *Testimonies*, pp. 260-261

have, still falls short of answering any of our main questions. She says in the last quote that:

“I have said that I could no longer regard the voice of the General Conference, represented by these few men, as the voice of God. But this is not saying that the decisions of a General Conference composed of an assembly of duly appointed, representative men from all parts of the field should not be respected.’

“This may provide a partial answer to her past statements that use the term 'General Conference' loosely to describe a few officers that manage things between sessions. But it fails to explain her statements that we quote above where she uses the term 'General Conference' in a very precise manner to designate the General Conference in session with representatives from the church making authoritative decisions. Furthermore, this offers no explanation as to why she said, as we read earlier, in 1875 that:

“‘But when the judgment of the General Conference, which is the highest authority that God has upon the earth, is exercised, **private independence and private judgment must not be maintained, but be surrendered.**’

“If we look at the context, it is easy to see that she is speaking of the General Conference in session. Her declaration that the Conference in session is the highest authority on earth is false. Also, her assertion that we must surrender private judgment to the General Conference in session is also false, and her explanatory statement does not answer the question as to why she taught these false doctrines. Nor does her explanatory statement answer the question as to why she contradicted herself in her 1889 statement that we quoted above, where when referring to the General Conference in session, she says:

“‘It has become habit to pass laws that do not always bear the signature of heaven.’³⁰¹

“This statement would seem to more than justify the hesitancy and concern of the man she rebuked in 1875 who wished to have things confirmed in his own mind by seeking the will of God for his life.

“For all practical purposes, Ellen White essentially went back to her position of 1875 in this 1909 statement. For, as we read before, she says:

³⁰¹ November 4, 1889, Ms. 6-1889

“‘But when, in a General Conference, the judgment of the brethren assembled from all parts of the field is exercised, private independence and private judgment must not be stubbornly maintained but surrendered.’

“Does God ever state such a principle as this in the Bible for the Christian church? Now I know this is a hard one. But let’s be honest, for you don’t have to answer to me or anyone else but only to God. There will come a day when you will have to stand before God and answer as to why you did or did not accept Ellen White as a prophetess. If she is a false prophetess, do you think that God will hold you guiltless for not honestly testing her by the Bible and taking seriously the warning that Jesus himself gave regarding false prophets in the last days? So, as hard as it is, let’s be honest with ourselves: does this concept that she presents not sound similar to the submission that the Papacy requires of its adherents in regard to its claims of being the highest authority and the voice of God on earth? Does this concept sound Protestant? Would the Reformation ever have happened if the Reformers had maintained such a doctrine regarding the church? ³⁰²

“Is not the Holy Spirit God's highest authority on earth? Has not Mrs. White put the General Conference in the place of the Holy Spirit? This would seem to indicate that she is a false prophetess. When Jesus was on earth teaching his disciples, He was the Highest Authority on Earth. When He went back to Heaven, He appointed a Vicar to take His place, the Holy Spirit. ³⁰³ The Catholic Church says, "No, but the true Vicar of Christ is the Pope." This statement is blasphemy against the Holy Ghost and is not forgivable. For anyone to claim to do this, the worst curse in the Bible is pronounced against them (Revelation 14:9-12). When Ellen White put the General Conference above the Spirit, she was doing the same thing. It would seem she was following

³⁰² One Christian historian brings out this fact in these words: “The right of private judgment in religion, and the principle of individual responsibility to God, are two **essentials** of the Protestant Reformation. Without these there never would--there never could--have been any Reformation. But these are not only essentials of the Protestant Reformation. They are essentials of Christianity itself.” (*Lessons From The Reformation*, p. 13, by A. T. Jones)

³⁰³ This was the teaching of the Reformation. On 7th January 1528, at the famous debate and conference held in Berne, Switzerland, that decided this city in favor of the Reformation, and at which Zwingli was present, it was said: “Christ has left a vicar here below.... The vicar that Christ left is the Holy Ghost.” (*History of the Reformation of the Sixteenth Century*, Dr. J. H. Merle d’Aubigné, p. 605.)

the instructions of a lying spirit, blaspheming the Holy Spirit and counseling all her followers to do the same.”³⁰⁴

John looked up from his papers.

“Wow, that’s intense!” said Lily. “I would have never thought of that. It is almost scary. I always wondered why she made some of the statements she did regarding the Conference. It always seemed like a contradiction. So many Adventists have such a problem with an unnatural and unbiblical loyalty to the Conference. I must admit it does seem to some extent almost cultish.”

“Yes, I know,” said John. “I had one Adventist Bible worker tell me once that she did not care what the Adventist church did. Even if it committed murder, it was still God’s church.”³⁰⁵ Yes, one can see where they get such ideas. I have always tried to explain such statements of Mrs. White away and rationalize them, but I think there was much more to the picture than I realized.”

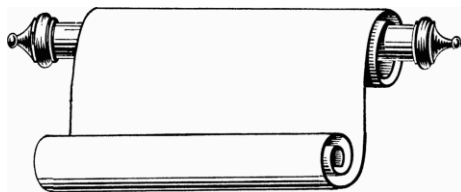
Lily looked hard at John. “You said in your notes that this seems to indicate she was a false prophetess. Have you actually settled definitely on that?”

John swallowed hard and stared into the eyes looking up at him. “Well,” he said, “I think you know we have been toying with the idea for a while without actually saying it. But I am to the point of being more than suspicious. It seems that red flags are flying everywhere. However, I am not going to make a final decision until we finish fully studying everything from the Bible. We must follow truth no matter where it leads.”

Lily dropped her eyes. “Yes, I know you are right. We must follow truth even if it is hard.”

³⁰⁴ <http://www.truthorfables.com>

³⁰⁵ This statement was made to the author in a private phone conversation.



Scriptures & Prophets ³⁰⁶

John and Lily sat in John's study as John read out of an old book published in 1841 on inspiration. The book fought against the higher

³⁰⁶ This chapter and the next two are taken from L. Gaussen's book *Theopneustia* 1841 edition. It gives a good view of what the higher critics were promoting at this early date (see Appendix A for a link to it). We have updated the language to be more pleasing to the modern reader, and have cut some out sometimes without ellipses. In short, what is presented here is our abridgment of his book. Gaussen, D.D. was the good friend of J. H. Merle d'Aubigné the author of the *History of the Reformation of the Sixteenth Century* (E. G. W. often quoted from this book in her book *Great Controversy*). He also was a Bible translator into the French tongue. Gaussen was a man who gave his life to promoting the Bible and battled against the papacy. He valued the Word and fought against the higher critics' destruction of the Bible in his day. In the 19th century, his work was considered by conservative Christians as one of the finest and best works on the subject, a virtual touchstone. The 1890s edition put out by Moody Bible Institute, at that time, contains the following endorsements:

"The turning point of the battle between those who hold 'the faith once delivered to the saints' and their opponents lies in the true and real inspiration of the Holy Scriptures. This is the Thermopylae of Christendom. If we have in the Word of God no infallible standard of truth, we are at sea without a compass, and no danger from rough weather without can be equal to this loss within. 'If the foundations be removed, what can the righteous do?' and this is a foundation loss of the worst kind. **In this work, the author proves himself a master of holy argument. Gaussen charms us as he proclaims the Divine veracity of Scripture. His testimony is clear as a bell.**" (**CHARLES H. SPURGEON**)

"The milestones on my spiritual pathway have been marked by certain books I have read, and one that stands out in my memory more than any other is Gaussen's great work, '*The Plenary Inspiration of the Scriptures*' [*Theopneustia*]. The day it came into my hands as a young minister just beginning his work marks an epoch, and I speak from experience when I say that a Christian who reads and studies it need never again be troubled by attacks on the Word of God." (**JAMES M. GRAY, D.D., Dean of The Moody Bible Institute of Chicago**)

critics of that day who sought to tear down the Bible. "Lily, this book is a dandy! It is written by L. GAUSSEN, D.D., the esteemed friend of J. H. Merle d'Aubigné. They both taught at the seminary they founded in Geneva. Both dedicated their lives to promoting true Protestantism and revealing the errors of the Roman Catholic system. I would like to read you a part of a chapter I just finished reading, if that is okay."

"Sure, John, I would like to hear it," said Lily. John flipped open the book and started to read:

Several systems [of inspiration] we have said have been proposed by some. There are persons who, while they fully admit that the thoughts found in Scripture have been given by God, would maintain, nevertheless, that its style and expressions are purely human; others have excluded the inspiration of the historical books; others would make an exception of certain details, at least, which to them have appeared too small and too remote from edification to admit of our attributing them to the Spirit of God.

[Our Note:] This book defending the Bible against the views of the higher critics was first published in English in 1841. The above quote presents several views that were at that time promoted by the higher critics of that day who were trying to tear apart the Bible. One can see that one or more of a combination of these new views presented above and below are essentially the view of the White Estate and is the view promoted in Willie White's letter that Ellen White endorsed. In many of Ellen White's well-known statements, she maintained that the "style and expressions are purely human." This too was first promoted by the higher critics that came before her. Were they right? Did God give new light regarding His Word to men who were trying to tear it down? Willie White said:

""She [Ellen White] was an interested reader of religious journals, and during the many years that Uriah Smith was editor of the Review, it was her custom to request him, after having made use of the religious exchanges, to pass them over to her, and she would spend a portion of her time in scanning them selecting precious things which sometimes appeared in the Review. In these, she also gathered information regarding what was going on in the religious world."³⁰⁷

³⁰⁷ *Selected Messages*, vol. 3, p. 462

"She was evidently an avid reader of the religious journals of the day. It seems likely she would read about some of these theories discussed in these works. Returning to the 1841 book that we are looking at, we read:

MIGHT NOT INSPIRATION PERTAIN TO THE THOUGHTS ONLY, WITHOUT EXTENDING TO THE WORDS?

In writing their sacred books, say some, the prophets and apostles were undoubtedly inspired regarding their language; so that, in this written revelation, the ideas are given to us from God, but the expressions by man. The task of the sacred writers resembled, in some sort, that of a man to whose view very highly colored pictures were successively presented, with the charge that he should simply describe them just as they had passed before his eyes.³⁰⁸ So, also, the Divine Spirit

³⁰⁸ On July 24, 1911, a few days after receiving a copy of the new book, [*Great Controversy*], W. C. White wrote a letter addressed to "Publishing House Managers," which he repeated the next day in a letter to "Our General Missionary Agents" (publishing department leaders). This he later included in a statement read to the General Conference Committee in its Autumn Council held in Washington, D.C. These W.C. White letters of explanation carried Ellen White's written approval. AN AFFIDAVIT TO THIS EFFECT READS:

YESTERDAY AND AGAIN THIS MORNING I HAVE READ THE LETTER WRITTEN BY W.C. WHITE TO OUR GENERAL MISSIONARY AGENTS, AND HIS LETTER TO THE MEMBERS OF OUR PUBLICATION COMMITTEE, REGARDING THE NEW EDITION OF GREAT CONTROVERSY. AND NOW I WISH TO SAY TO YOU THAT WHAT HE HAS WRITTEN REGARDING MY WISHES, AND DECISIONS, AND INSTRUCTION RELATIVE TO THIS WORK IS A TRUE AND CORRECT STATEMENT. (SIGNED) ELLEN G. WHITE. ST. HELENA, CALIFORNIA, JULY 27, 1911 -- LETTER 57, 1911.

In this document, W.C. White says:

"Mother has never claimed to be authority on history. The things which she has written out are descriptions of flashlight pictures and other representations given her regarding the actions of men, and the influence of these actions upon the work of God for the salvation of men, with views of past, present, and future history in its relation to this work." (*The Later Elmshaven Years*, pp. 322-337, by Arthur L. White) One can't but see how this description of her inspiration is almost word for word the description given by Gaussen in quoting the new views on inspiration of the higher critics that were tearing down the Bible in 1841. It seems that it would have to be more than coincidental that the identical words were used. How could it possibly be that these Bible deniers (higher critics of the 1840s) would be the first to have God reveal to them this new truth

may have presented the sacred truths to the minds of the prophets and evangelists, only leaving to them the care of expressing them. And this manner of viewing their work, it is added, will very well supply us with the reason for the striking differences of style which their respective records display. We answer that this system is directly contrary to the testimony of the Scripture. The Bible declares itself to have been written, "not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth" (1 Cor. 2:13). It calls itself the word of God; the words of God; the voice of God; the living oracles of God (Romans 3:2; Acts 7:38); the Holy Scripture (2 Tim. 3:15); the writings of God. Writings consist of letters and words, and not alone of invisible thoughts; now "all Scripture is inspired by God," we are told (2 Tim. 3:16). What is written is, therefore, inspired of God, **(θεόπνευστος)** and that which is inspired of God is "all Scripture." This comprehends all that is written **(πάντα γραφή)**. Second, if this system is contrary to the Scripture, it is also irrational. The ideas of our fellow men take a form in words: and in this way only can they be understood. Mind can only be revealed to us through the flesh. Its character is unknown; its desires, its experience, we know not; we do not even suspect their existence, nor can we trace their associations until after they have been invested with a body (as it were) and received organs through which to manifest themselves to us. My most intimate friend is known to me only by his voice and gestures. If he employed not these, in vain would he be near me for twenty years; he would be to me as though he were not in existence.

Furthermore, such is the intimate connection which exists between mind and its organs, between ideas and words, that we learn not only the existence of the one by the language of the other; but (even after they have spoken) we doubt the true character of the communication so long as we have not the assurance that the organ is a faithful interpreter of the mind, that the word bears the exact impress of the idea, and the expression that of the thought. As long as we fear that the

regarding inspiration that was hidden from all Jews and Christians for almost six thousand years?

language has not been the ready and competent handmaid of the will, so long shall we be uncertain whether or not we are mistaken. When we know that God himself has instilled the pure thoughts of heaven into the mind of a writer, in order that we might receive, by his words, a sure revelation, must he not also continually assure us that the language is intelligent, that the representations are exact, and that the objects deposited in that mind are reproduced unchanged?

Language is therefore the wondrous mirror which reflects to us the mysteries of our being.

Supposing you were a bereaved and sorrowing son, and to console you, God should decide to present, for a few moments, as in a glass, the dear features of your absent mother; would it suffice that He should place it close to you, even in a position favorable to your gaze? No, without doubt, the mirror must also be free from curvature or blemish. If unequal or unfaithful, what would it avail you? You might, it is true, have before you the gladdening features of a mother, whose heart would beat in response to your own with the liveliest emotions, and whose tender looks might beam towards you with the ardent expression of motherly love: but all this would be in vain; your eyes would see only a stranger; perhaps the repulsive appearance of one deformed, from whose features you would turn away, exclaiming "Oh, my mother, this is not thy countenance!" So, also, would it be for us with the thought of God, if we were obliged to receive it disfigured by the errors of the human language which served as its medium. This is not thy thought, O my God, we must exclaim. It is necessary, therefore, that God should secure as much the fidelity of the recital as the reality of the objects.

This conclusion will, doubtless, enable us to understand how very irrational is the supposition of receiving, with exactitude and certainty, the thoughts of another, through the medium of inexact and uncertain expressions. Are they received otherwise than by words? And without the words of God Himself, how could we be sure of possessing the thoughts of God?

Thirdly: this theory of a divine revelation, in which you would have the inspiration of the thought without the inspiration of the language, is so without logic that it cannot be sincere: and it presently fails even those who advance it;

for they must see that it forces them to descend much lower with their arguments than it would appear. Let us hear them. If the words are of man, say they, the thoughts are those of God. And how will they prove this to us? Alas! Once more, by attributing to this written word of God contradictions, mistakes, and misconceptions! Is it, then, only the words that are wrong? And are not these pretended errors much more in the thoughts than in the words? So true it is that we cannot separate the one from the other: and that a revelation of the mind of God involves the inspiration of the Word of God.

Fourthly: this theory is not only unscriptural and irrational, but it is, moreover, arbitrarily assumed; and is merely asserted without any real proof or merit.

Fifthly: it is, moreover, very useless, for it determines nothing. You have a difficulty, you say, in understanding how the Holy Spirit could have given the words of the Holy Scriptures; but can you better tell us how He gave the thoughts to which they give expression? Would it, for instance, be easier for you to explain how God suggested to Moses a knowledge of the operations of the creation, or communicated to John those of the last day, than to conceive how He dictated³⁰⁹ to them the recital in the Hebrew or Greek language?

Number six: but we add further that which, in this theory, ought especially to strike the attentive mind, is its extremely inconsequential character; since those who most strenuously insist upon it are yet obliged to admit that by far the greater

³⁰⁹ While Gaussen uses the word "dictated," like Calvin and others before him, yet he makes it clear in his book, that we have quoted from earlier in the chapter "Willie's Secret Letter," that he only insists on the full inspiration of the Bible and inspiration being free of mistakes. One must remember that the word dictated, in all its varied forms, had a much looser meaning in 1841 than it often is thought of today. (See Webster's 1828 Dictionary) However, in spite of its unpopularity, looking at the experience of Balaam, it would not seem unreasonable to believe the Bible was dictated using the modern meaning of the word. But it is not necessary for our purposes in this book for one to take that view. Despite the impression of certainty that radiates from the writings of some modernist scholars when describing their modern theories of inspiration, the exact details as to what transpired in the minds of the prophets are not revealed to us. What is plainly revealed, however, is that God did inspire the words and ensure their accuracy, inerrancy, and that they reflect God as the author, thus making them the Words of God. They were not from the prophet. This is the burden of Gaussen's book that is quoted above.

proportion of Scripture must have been inspired by God through men, even in its words.

Suppose that the Holy Ghost, this morning, called you to stand in a public place to proclaim the marvelous things of God in Russian or in Kalmuc. What would become of you if He deemed it sufficient to supply you with thoughts without giving you words? You might have before your eyes the third heaven and in your heart the emotions of archangels, but you must, nevertheless remain silent and abashed before the assembled multitude. In order that your inspiration should, in any degree, avail them, it would be necessary that the sentences, phrases, and least words of your address should be entirely supplied to you. Indeed, they would readily dispense with your own thoughts, provided that you gave utterance (even without your understanding) to the thoughts of God in His own words. Well! Carry this supposition to Jerusalem and to the persons of the apostles. When the fishermen of Capernaum and Bethsaida assembled together in their upper room on the day of Pentecost, received the order to go forth and proclaim to every nation under heaven the tidings of God's salvation in the Latin, Parthian, Elamite, Chaldean, Coptic, and Arabic dialects, must not the words have been supplied to them? What could they then have done with the thoughts without the words? Nothing; whilst with their words they could convert the world!

When, at a later period, in the church of Corinth, believers who had received miraculous powers spake in the assemblies in unknown tongues and required a brother gifted to interpret to translate after them the unknown words which they had addressed to the brethren, was it not equally required that the words, as well as phrases, should be dictated to them? (1 Cor. 14) When the prophets, one and all, after having penned their sacred pages, applied themselves to study with as much reverence and care as they would have studied the oracles of another prophet; when they meditated, night and day (as we are told by Peter, 2 Peter 1:10-11), "searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glory which should follow," must not their every word, under those circumstances, have been supplied to them? When Moses narrates the creation and the formation of the world from chaos; when Solomon describes Eternal

Wisdom; when David a thousand years beforehand gives utterance to the prayer of the Son of God upon the cross; when Daniel records, in detail, and without himself well understanding them, the future destinies of the world and church; and when, finally, John continues, in his own prophecies, the revelations of the prophet Daniel; was it not necessary that even the least important words should have been given to them? And does not every interpreter, in reading them, acknowledge how far we may be led astray from the true sense by a change in the position of even the most trivial word, by the wrong rendering of the tense of a verb, or by the inconsiderate placing of a single particle?

We are bound, therefore, to conclude that since so considerable a portion of the Scriptures is necessarily inspired, even in its words, the system of an inspiration of the thoughts without the inspiration of the language is entirely inconsequential. There are not two species of the word of God in the Holy Scripture; there are not two kinds of oracles of God. If "holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost," all the sacred writings are divinely inspired; and that which is divinely inspired in the sacred writings is all scripture.

But these last reflections lead us to something at once more simple and important; and objectors need beware, here, for the question has been asked by them erroneously. They have said that the sacred writers were inspired by God; and they have inquired how far they could have been inspired? This was not, however, the point to be inquired into. We have said that the question is with the book, and not with its writers. You think that God always gave them the thoughts, but not the words; but the Scripture tells us the contrary, that God always supplied the words, and not always the thoughts. With regard to their thoughts, God might have inspired these to them, whilst they were writing, with more or less vigor or elevation: this, however, only concerns my love, not my faith. The Scripture which they have transmitted to me, perhaps without having themselves known its meaning, at least without having always fully understood it—this is what concerns me.

Paul may have been mistaken in his thoughts when, on being brought before the Jewish council, and not knowing the person of "God's high priest," he went so far as to say to him,

"God shall smite thee, thou whited wall!" This matters little, provided I know that when he wrote the Word of God, it was Jesus Christ speaking in him. (2 Cor. 13:3)

Peter may have been mistaken in his thoughts when, refusing to believe that God designed to send him among the heathen, he did not acknowledge that "in every nation, them who turn to God are accepted of him." He might be still more seriously mistaken when, at Antioch, he obliged Paul to "withstand him to the face" before all "because he was worthy of blame," and "walked not uprightly, according to the truth of the gospel." (Gal. 2:11-14) But, again we ask, what after all, matters this to our faith? Faith is not concerned to know at all at what moment, or in what measure, Paul, John, Mark, James, or Peter were inspired in their thoughts, or sanctified in their conduct: what especially concerns it is to know that their written words were the words of God, and that in giving them to us, they spake "not in the words suggested by man's wisdom, but in those dictated by the Spirit of God." (1 Cor. 2:13)

(οὐκ ἐν διδακτοῖς ἀνθρωπίνης σοφίας λόγοις) Thus, then, it is not they who speak, but the Holy Ghost; (Mark 13:11) in a word, it is "God who hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began." (Acts 3:21)

The sacred writers were sometimes inspired, but the Holy Scriptures always. The time, measure, degree, and intervals of the inspiration of the men of God are not, therefore, to us an object of faith: but the object of faith is this, that the Scripture is divinely inspired, and that it is the entire Scripture which is divinely inspired. "A tittle of it can never fail."

There is, unquestionably, an inspiration of thoughts, as there is an inspiration of words; but the inspiration of thoughts makes the Christian, while it is the inspiration of words which makes the prophet. A true Christian is inspired in his thoughts: the Spirit of God reveals to him "the deep things of God;" (2 Cor. 2:10) Flesh and blood hath not revealed to him the counsels of God and glory of Jesus, but the Father; (Matt. 16:17) for the Spirit guides him into all truth; (John 16:13) and he could not truly in heart acknowledge Jesus Christ as Lord (the Lord of lords), but by the Holy Ghost. (1 Cor. 12:3) The thoughts of every true believer are, therefore, more or less

inspired of God, but his words are not. He is a Christian; but he is not a prophet. The most sanctified productions of Wesley, Luther, Calvin, Beza, and Leighton are but the words of men about the truths of God's words. Of venerable character, no doubt, precious and powerful, and worthy of our attention on account of the wisdom with which they were endowed, and of the abundant expression which they give of the mind of God; but, after all, they are the words of men. It is altogether different with the prophet. At one time he may have, and at another he may not have, the mind of God in his thoughts. Whenever he shall speak as a prophet, he will assuredly have the word of God in his mouth. "The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and the word of Jehovah was upon my tongue" (2 Sam. 23:1-2), said David. He will be the medium of God; whether intelligent or unintelligent, voluntary or involuntary, it matters not, provided the oracles of God are imparted through him, and that I thereby receive the mind of my God in his own words.

In a word, I may be a Christian without having upon my lips the words of God; and one may be a prophet without having the thoughts of God either in the heart or the understanding; but I cannot be a Christian without having the thoughts of God in my heart; and I cannot be a prophet without having the words of God upon my lips.

In the language of the Bible, (which we will presently show) a prophet is a man in whose mouth God puts, for a season, the words which he designs to promulgate on the earth. Such a man may prophesy only at intervals as the Spirit gives utterance. (Acts 2:4) He may, like King Saul, prophesy twice only in the course of his life; (1 Sam. 10:10) or, like Saul's messengers, but a single time. (1 Sam. 19:20) The words of God may, therefore, be uttered intelligently or without understanding them; often even without forethought; and sometimes even unwillingly. When Daniel had completed his testimony, he tells us himself (Dan. 12:8) that he did not understand what the Spirit had caused him to write. When Caiaphas uttered those prophetic words, he said them "not of himself"; he had the will, but he neither knew nor understood what God would have him utter. (John 11:49-52) When Balaam advanced three times to the summit of the rock to curse Israel, and three times successively words of blessing flowed from his lips, as it were, in spite of himself, it was

because "the Lord had met Balaam and put a word in his mouth:" (Num. 23:18, 24) he had the conscience, but he had neither full intelligence nor entire control with regard to his prophecy. When the soldiers of Saul sought David in Ramah, and the Eternal Spirit came upon them, so that they themselves also prophesied; and when he sent others even three times in succession, who also prophesied like the first; and when Saul profanely went himself, and when God (to display His own power and to manifest to us more clearly what is the character of a prophet and what the importance of His word) caused His Spirit to fall also upon this faithless man; when he then pursued his journey prophesying when the word of the Lord was in his mouth (at other times so profane) and when he prophesied before Samuel during the whole day and all the night; what had happened to this son of Kish: "Is Saul also among the prophets?" (1 Sam. 19:18, 24) Yes; and Saul was conscious of his state and of the part he was acting as prophet; but he neither willed, nor foreknew, nor understood fully what he uttered.

When the old prophet was happily seated at the table with the man of God, whom he had turned out of his way by a faithless act of natural kindness; and when suddenly, by a power from on high, he loudly predicted the displeasure of the Lord against his guest for his disobedience; he prophesied with a consciousness of what he was doing, but without having desired to do it (1 Kings 13:21). But more; did not God cause His voice to be heard in the wilderness from the mountain of Sinai before Moses and all the people? Did He not make Himself heard by a sleeping child in the tabernacle of Shiloh? In the ears of three apostles and the two saints who appeared on Mount Tabor? And to the ears of John the Baptist and all the people on the banks of the Jordan?

Let it then be well understood that the sacred writings are **τὰ ἱερά γράμματα**, that it is all that is written; that is to say, the sentences and the words which are **θεόπνευστοι**. The question is, therefore, as to the word and not as to the men who wrote it. With regard to the latter, we are little concerned; the Spirit may have more or less associated their individuality, conscience, recollections, and affections with what He caused them to say; we are responsible to know not only this, but we are called upon especially to know (as Peter

has recorded) that “now written prophecy came not by the will of man;” but that “holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost” (2 Peter 1:21). And as it was at the feast of Belshazzar, they were little concerned to ascertain what was in the fingers of the hand which came from the wall, over against the candlestick; every eye was rather riveted upon the fearful record which it traced there: mene, mene, tekel, upharsin, because they well knew that these words were from God; so in like manner, **it matters little to us, as far as faith is concerned, to know what was passing in the minds of the four evangelists whilst they were engaged in writing the scroll of their Gospels; our attention should rather be turned to the words which they have written, because we know that these words are from God.** Let the prophet be as holy as Moses, wise as Daniel, an enemy to God as Caiaphas, ignorant of the language in which he speaks to us as the prophets of Corinth, polluted as Balaam, I may say insensible as the hand upon the palace wall at Babylon, formless, soulless as was the air through which sounded the voice of God at Sinai, on the banks of the Jordan, and on Mount Tabor. We repeat, all is to little consequence, except where the personality of a writer might become an essential part of his revelation. Thy thoughts, O my God, Thy mind and Thy words, are what concern me!

Should the apparent insignificance of certain Scriptural details authorize their exception from Inspiration? Was it consistent with the dignity of inspiration to be associated with the thoughts of the apostle Paul, even in the trivial details into which we see him descend in some of his epistles? Would the Holy Spirit go so far as to dictate to him the common salutations with which he concludes them? Or the commissions with which he uses respecting his parchment and a certain cloak that he left at Troas with Carpus when he quitted Asia? We ask the reader here to take heed, whenever, with the Bible before him, he does not, at first glance, recognize traces of the Deity in any portion of the Word, lest with profane hands he should think to cast out a single verse from the temple of the Scriptures. Your hands hold an eternal book. Of which all the authors have said, with Paul, “I think that I also have the Spirit of God.” So long, therefore, as divine features therein portrayed are not seen, the fault is in the reader, and not in the passage.

Let him rather say with Jacob, "Surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not" (Gen. 28:16). It is a book which can bear the light of science, for it will bear that of the last day. The heavens and the earth will pass away, but not one of its words, even the smallest particle of a letter, shall pass away. God Himself attests to every man who shall hear the words of the prophecy of this book that if anyone take away from the words, God will take away his part out of the book of life (Rev. 22:18-19).

Let us now examine somewhat more closely the passages referred to. Paul, in the dungeon of a prison, asks for his cloak. He had left it with Carpus at Troas; he begs Timothy to endeavor to come to him before the winter and not to forget to bring it with him. This domestic detail, which (since the time of Anomeens, of whom St. Jerome makes mention,) (See Proemium in Epist. ad Philem) has so many thousand times been advanced as an objection against the inspiration of Scripture, this detail appears to you too trivial for an apostolic pen, or at least too insignificant and unedifying for the dignity of inspiration. Unhappy, however, is he who does not discern its touching import! Jesus Christ also, on the day of his death, spoke of his cloak and vesture. Would you have this passage erased from the number of inspired words? It was after a night of fatigue and anguish: infuriated men had been ruthlessly hurrying him blindfolded about Jerusalem, from street to street, from tribunal by torchlight, during seven successive hours.

And striking him continually on the head with their staves: ere sunrise the following morning, his hands bound with cords, they bring him again into the high priest's palace, and afterwards before Pilate, in the hall Pretorium: there, lacerated with rods and streaming with blood, he is delivered to the ferocious soldiers to be put to death: they strip him of his garments, put on him a scarlet robe, spit upon him, place a reed in his hands, and in mockery of worship, bow the knee before him: then, before placing the cross on his mangled shoulders, they cover his wounds with his own clothes and lead him forth to Calvary: but when about to proceed to the last act of execution, they, for the third time, strip him of his raiment, and without garment or vesture, stripped of everything, he suffers the death of a malefactor on the cross, in the sight of the immense assembly. Was there ever a man

under heaven's canopy who did not find these details soul-moving, sublime, and inimitable? Which one of these details from the account of such a dying scene would one consider as useless or trivial, a notice of the vesture which was parted and of the garment for which the soldiers cast lots? Has not incredulity itself said of the Scriptures that their majesty is astonishing; that their simplicity speaks to the heart; that the death of Socrates was that of a sage, but that of Jesus Christ, of a God? (See Rousseau's *Emile*) And if divine inspiration had been confined to a portion only of the sacred book, would it not have been for these very details? Would it not have been for the history of that love which, after having sojourned upon earth more destitute than the birds of the air and the foxes of the field, had been willing to die yet more wretched still, despoiled of everything, even of his garment and his vesture, his naked body stretched and nailed, like that of a malefactor, to the cross? Oh, be not anxious on the Holy Spirit's account! He has not compromised his dignity. Far from thinking it humiliating to transmit these facts to us, he has even hastened to relate them.

More than a thousand years ago, in the times of the siege of Troy, it was the lament of the prophetic lyre of David: "They look and stare upon me, they part my garments among them and cast lots upon my vesture" (Psalm 22:18-19).

Well, then, this is the same Spirit who has desired to show to us Paul writing to Timothy and asking for his cloak. Mark what he says. He too was spoiled of everything. Even while as yet but a youth, he was great among men, a favorite of princes, admired by all: he forsook all for Jesus Christ. For thirty years and more he has been poor: in labors more abundant than others, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent; of the Jews five times received he forty stripes save one; thrice was he beaten with rods; once was he stoned; thrice he suffered shipwreck; in journeying often, in perils of waters, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils on the sea; in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in cold and nakedness (we quote his own words.) [2 Cor. 11:23-27] Mark now what he says: He is Paul the aged, in his last prison in Rome, expecting sentence of death: he has fought the good fight. He has finished his course; he has kept the faith: but he is suffering from cold as the winter sets in and lacks clothing. Thrust into a dungeon of the Mamertine prisons, he

bore a name so vile that even the Christians of Rome were ashamed to acknowledge him; so that, on his first arraignment, no man stood with him. Ten years before this period, when a prisoner at Rome and loaded with chains, he had at least received some relief from the Philippians, who, knowing his miserable condition, had notwithstanding their own need laid themselves under restraint in order to minister to his wants; but now he is altogether friendless. Luke only is with him; he is forsaken of all others, and the winter about to set in. He would need a cloak; he had left his own with Carpus at Troas, two hundred leagues away; there was not one in the chilly dungeons of Rome to lend him one. Had he not joyfully quitted all for Jesus? Had he not counted all the honor of the world but dung, that he might win Christ? And was he not prepared to "endure all things for the elect's sakes"? (Phil. 3:8) We were ourselves, last year, in Rome, at the beginning of November, on a rainy day; and with what vivid reality, under the influence of the evening cold, could we imagine the apostle Paul down in the deep dungeons of the Capital, dictating the last of his letters, regretting the absence of his cloak, and begging Timothy to bring it before the winter?

Who is there that would now remove from the inspired epistles so striking and touching a feature? Does not the Holy Ghost thereby introduce us into Paul's prison, to catch a sight of his affecting self-denial and his poverty, just as he enables us to see, as it were with our own eyes, earnest love when, a short time previously, writing to the Philippians, he says: "I weep as I write, because there are many among you who mind earthly things, whose end is destruction"? Do we not feel as if we beheld him in the prison, bound with his chains, his tears falling upon the parchment whilst thus writing? Can we not see his poor body today ill-clad? Call to mind your brother Paul, shut up in the dungeons of Rome, suffering from cold and lack of raiment, asking for his cloak! Oh! How unhappy must one be who is insensible to such feelings, the affecting freeness of such details, the provident and divine sympathy they display, the depth and the charm of such a mode of instruction! But more unhappy still, he who declares it to be human, because he does not understand it. We would here quote the beautiful language of the excellent H. Haldane, Esq. on this verse of Paul. He observes, "If the place which

this passage occupies in the epistle and in the solemn farewell of St. Paul to the disciples be considered, it presents the apostle to our view in the situation of all others the most calculated to awaken the feelings. He has just been arraigned before the emperor; he is about to finish his days as a martyr; the hour of his departure is at hand; the crown of righteousness is laid up for him; and we behold him on the threshold of eternity. Looking at what he is about to leave, doomed to be beheaded like a malefactor by the orders of Nero; and to that which he is hastening to possess, crowned as a righteous man by the King of kings and Lord of Lords: on the one hand, forsaken by men; on the other, welcomed by angels; now wanting a worthless cloak for a covering; soon covered with the righteousness of saints, "clothed upon with his heavenly mansion of light and joy and every vestige of mortality swallowed up of life." Oh! Rather than object to such passages and thereby rob the Scriptures of their infallibility, surely we must adore that compassionate condescension which stoops even to our weakness: which has been pleased not only to reveal to us the highest thoughts of heaven in the simplest words of earth, but which moreover exhibits them to us in forms so vivid and so touching, often condensing them within some single verse, that we may seize them the more readily.

It is thus that Paul, by these words, thrown, as it were, negligently among the closing commissions of a familiar epistle, sheds a glancing light upon his ministry, and in a passing remark enables us to see the character of his whole apostolic life; as a flash of lightning will sometimes in the darkness reveal the summits of our Alps, or like some persons who reveal their whole soul in a single look. What strong appeal might we not adduce! They crowd upon us, but we must forbear; feeling it rather our duty to take up the particular passages against which objections are advanced.

Before proceeding farther, however, we are constrained to say that we are almost ashamed of defending in this way the Word of the Lord, and our conscience might well revolt from its character of apology. Is it entirely expedient? And can we pursue it without some irreverence? We must ever be careful in what manner we defend the things of God, lest we imitate the rashness of Uzzah, who, having extended his hand to stay

the ark of God when the stumbling oxen shook it, thereby kindled the Lord's anger.

If it be fully acknowledged on both sides that a word is in the canon of God's oracles, why defend it by human arguments as worthy of Him? This, doubtless, may be done to persuade those who are incredulous; but with such as admit the divinity of Scripture, is it not doing injury to the Word? Is it not taking a false position and putting, like Uzzah, a hand to the ark? Does a word present itself to your eyes like a root out of the dry ground, without form or comeliness, or beauty, to make it desirable? You ought still to venerate it and to wait entirely upon Him who gave it. When it asserts its own claim, are we acting judiciously in endeavoring to prove that respect is due to it? Should I not have been ashamed, when shown my Saviour and my God, rising from supper, laying aside His garment, taking a towel and washing the feet of His disciples, should I not have shrunk from attempting to prove that, notwithstanding this, He was indeed the Christ? Oh! I ought rather to bow lower in adoring Him. Just so, the majesty of the Scriptures seeks to descend even unto us! See Him rising from supper, laying aside His garments, taking a towel, and kneeling before sinners to wash their feet! "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me!" Is it not in this very humiliation that inspiration manifests itself to us most attractively, as the voice of the indeed humbled Word? Can we forget all this, and shall we for an instant range ourselves with those who do?

With respect to ourselves, we consider that there is not arrogance comparable to that of the man who, acknowledging the Bible as a book from God, yet pretends to discriminate the pure from the impure, the inspired from the uninspired, God from among what is human! This is to overthrow all the foundations of faith; it is to make it consist not in believing God, but in believing self. That a chapter, or a word, is part of the Scriptures should suffice to prove it is divinely good; for God has pronounced concerning it, as upon creation, "I have seen all that I have made, and behold, all is good." We must never then say, "I find this portion admirable, therefore it is from God;" and still less, "This portion seems useless, therefore it is of man." The Lord preserve us! But we will say, "It is in the Scriptures, therefore it is from God; it is from God, therefore it is profitable, wise, and admirable;" and if yet I do

not see it such, the fault is only in myself. We view the protection which the wisdom of man would extend over that of God as ill-advised; we regard as an outrage the defiled impress with which men pretend to legalize the Holy Scriptures, and the senseless signature with which they dare to endorse its pages.

If, therefore, we proceed further in the attempt to demonstrate the divine wisdom in some passages, which men have daringly held up as human, it is neither to establish their divine character on the judgment of our better-informed wisdom, nor tardily to secure for them respect solely on account of the beauty which they may reveal. Their veneration is established; it rests upon the fact that the passage is written in the oracles of God. Knowing this, without having seen, we have believed. Our only object, therefore, is to refute the objection by some proofs of its rashness. Let us examine then two or three other passages of which the honors of inspiration have been denied, because they have, at first view, been considered destitute of spiritual bearing. We can here only refer to a very limited number. It is easy to denounce a sentence as useless or trivial, but to show that the objection is groundless may require pages....

We are often assailed in connection with the salutations with which Paul concludes his epistles, and which (we are told) are, after all, but as the vain compliments which we habitually use at the close of our letters. There is nothing, it is added, in these unworthy of an apostle, but neither is there anything inspired. The Holy Spirit has therein left the pen of Paul at liberty, that he might give free expression to his personal affection, as a secretary would be left to himself to close, in the usual complimentary style, a letter, the subject matter of which had been dictated to him. Look, for example, at the last chapter of the epistle to the Romans. Is it not evident that the apostle devotes sixteen verses to the remembrance of his own personal friendships? Did the dry catalogue of all those individuals require the Holy Spirit's aid? The apostle mentions eighteen persons by name, without reckoning all those to whom he sent collective salutations in the households of Aquila, Narcissus, and Aristobulus. These verses cannot have required inspiration; at the utmost, they needed only that oversight of the Spirit of the Lord which was still

exercised, even when the sacred writers were left to their own personalities.

We do not shrink from stating that it gives us pleasure to review, in this place, these sixteen verses which have been so repeatedly objected to; for, on the contrary, they are of the number of those passages in which Divine wisdom is conspicuous and if you examine them, you will soon admire, with us, the exceeding richness, the condescension, and dignity of this mode of instruction; you will there find, under the most practical and artless form, the living picture of a primitive church; you will there discover, with lively interest, the relation of its members one with another; and you will see to what high estimation the weakest and most ignorant among them could attain within its bosom.

See, in the first place, with what tender interest the apostle recommends to the love of the church at Rome the humble woman who, from Corinth, it would appear, was journeying into Italy about her temporal affairs. She was a well-beloved sister, who had been devoted to the service of the saints and who did not fear to open her house to the faithful and to Paul himself, notwithstanding the perils of such hospitality. She was the servant of the church at Cenchrea. The brethren at Rome are therefore called upon to receive her in the Lord and to assist her in whatsoever she has need.

See in what follows how forcible an example the apostle gives us. In a few words of that Christian courtesy which ought to characterize the mutual relations of the children of God. Admire how, whilst passing so rapidly in review the brethren and sisters of the church at Rome, he remembers to shed upon this "dry nomenclature," as it has been termed, the refreshing unction of his love! For each one of them, there are a few words of encouragement and tender esteem. He there recalls the generous hospitality of Phebe; the rising of life on his behalf by Aquila and his companions; the honor of Epænetus in being the first fruits of Achaia unto Christ; the "much labor" bestowed on him by Mary; the recollection that his kinsmen, Andronicus and Junia, were in Christ before him; his Christian love for Amplias; the evangelical labors of Urbane; the tried fidelity of Apelles; the multiplied labors of Tryphena and Tryphosa in the Lord; and those of the beloved Persis.

What an appeal, moreover, to the conscience of every serious reader, is this rapid catalogue! Behold, he should say to himself, the character of the faithful in the church at Rome to whom salutations were sent! And if the apostle were to address an epistle to the church in which, for a season, I myself occupy a place, what would he say to me? Would my name have a place in it? Could he add that, like Phoebe, I welcomed the saints to my house? That, like Aquila and Priscilla, I had meetings of Christians under my happy roof? That, like Mary, I bestowed much labor on the ministers of the Lord; that I have suffered for Christ, like Andronicus and Junia; that I am a man approved in Christ, like Apelles; that I am elect in the Lord like Rufus; that I am his fellow helper, like Urbane? That I am in much service for the Lord like Tryphena and Tryphosa; I labour in the Lord, and that I even labor much, like the beloved Persis?

But behold, above all, what a lesson there is for Christian women in these admirable verses! In the familiarity which terminates this letter, what a lofty idea is given us of their vocation! What an important part, then, is assigned to them in the Church, and what a place in heaven! Without having yet seen the city of Rome, Paul mentions there by their own names no fewer than nine or ten women among his fellow laborers. First, we have, besides Phebe, that admirable Priscilla, who had even espoused herself to death for the apostle, and towards whom all the churches of the Gentiles felt so much gratitude. Then we have a lady called Mary, who had, he says, bestowed much labor on the apostles; there was Tryphena; there was Tryphosa, who labored also in the Lord; there was Persis, who was particularly dear to him and who had labored much in the Lord; there was Julia; there was the sister of Nereus; there was Olympas, perhaps; there was, in fine, the venerable mother of Rufus. And observe, in passing, with what respect he has named this lady, and with what delicacy he proceeds to salute her with the tender name of mother. Have we not here the very Christian politeness which he recommends to these same Romans in the 12th chapter of this epistle: "salute Rufus, chosen in the Lord," he writes, "and his mother, who is also mine!" (Rom. 16:13) What an effectual pattern do not these verses propose to husbands and wives, in the persons of Aquila and Priscilla! You see them here in Rome; you may have seen them five years before,

banished from Italy by the Emperor Claudius, arriving at Corinth, and receiving in their house the apostle Paul; then, eighteen months afterwards, setting off with him to Asia and staying at Ephesus, where they already had a church in their house (1 Cor. 16:19) and where they assisted, with so much effect, the young and eloquent Apollos, who, notwithstanding his talents, was glad to avail himself of their Christian fellowship and love. And now that the death of Claudius had allowed the ascension of Nero, you see them scarcely returned to Rome when they consecrate their new abode to the church of God. It was there that the saints assembled; and you here learn, from a passing expression, that both husband and wife had not hesitated to lay down their own necks for the life of Paul. But, besides all these lessons which are presented to our consciences in these sixteen brief verses, you may there further learn how facts of paramount importance in the history of the church. And in the first place, you have the most unintentional and convincing evidence that at this period, there was no question at Rome either of Peter or of his episcopacy, or of his popedom, or of his primacy, or even of his presence. Do we not recognize a prophetic foresight in the care which the Holy Spirit has here taken in this Epistle to the Romans? What is not done in either of the other fourteen of Paul's Epistles, closing it with a long list of the men and women most esteemed at that time throughout the church at Rome? We have here the apostle of the Gentiles, twenty years after the commencement of his ministry, writing to the saints at Rome, saluting as many as twenty-eight of them by name and numerous others by collective designations, yet not sending a word to the Prince of the Apostles, or as he is styled, the Vicar of Jesus Christ, to his superior, the head of the universal church, and founder of the Roman hierarchy! St. Peter was the apostle of the Circumcision, and not of the Gentiles (see Gal. chapter 2); his post was at Jerusalem; it is there he must be sought; and it was there that Paul had always found him.

On his first journey, three years after his conversion, Paul there visited him and remained fifteen days in his house (Gal. 1:28) on his second journey (to be present at the first council) he again met him there. On his third journey thither, in the year 44, at the period of the death of Herod Agrippa, it was still there that Peter was dwelling. (Acts 12:1-3) On his fourth

journey, seventeen years after his conversion (Gal. 2:7), Paul again finds him there, discharging the office (and let this be especially noted) of an apostle, not of the Gentiles, but of the circumcision. And when finally he is on his fifth and last journey, he writes to the Romans and to the Galatians; and then, in order that the whole church might distinctly know that Peter is not at Rome and never had been there, Paul takes care to salute by name all those who were most eminent among the saints in that city, even among the women. Where is the bishop of the Latin sect, in our day, who would venture to write an epistle of sixteen chapters to the church of Rome without saying a single word either of the Pope, or of St. Peter, or of a Vicar of Jesus Christ?

But there is another historical fact yet more interesting, to the knowledge of which these same sixteen verses, which have been termed useless, particularly direct us. We see, in the details of these brief salutations, by what humble instruments, and yet to what an extent, the gospel had been established, in so short a time, in mighty Rome! No apostle had there set foot (Rom. 1:11-15, 15:22); yet behold what had been accomplished by the unaided labours of travelers, artisans, merchants, women, slaves, and freedmen—what progress the word of God had made! Jesus Christ had disciples already in the palaces of the Jewish princes who were attached to the imperial court, and even among the Roman officers who were nearest to the person of Nero. Among those to whom Paul first desires his salutations are “those of Aristobulus’ household;” and secondly, “they of the household of Narcissus which are in the Lord.” Now the first of these was the distinguished brother of Agrippa the Great and of the immodest Herodias; the second as the powerful favorite of the emperor Claudius, who was not poisoned by Agrippina until the close of the year 54.

Oh, that all who are called Christians would forever renounce the rash systems in which the words of Scripture are arraigned, and their fitness questioned; in which men dare to prune God’s Bible of this word and that passage, to make (at least as far as such words and passages are concerned) a Bible of their own; in which they render themselves responsible for any amount of tampering with the word, which daring commentators may ever venture upon.

Why should not others do with an entire book what you have dared to do with a verse or word? What idea do they form of the sacred writers, to suppose them capable of the senseless audacity of blending their own decisions with the oracles of the Almighty! We remember a poor idiot, a pensioner of one of our hospitals, whose handwriting was nevertheless so good that a minister of Geneva employed him to transcribe his sermons. But what was the confusion of the minister when the manuscript was returned, to find that the poor fellow had thought proper to enrich every page by the introduction of his own thoughts. There is, however, far less distance between the idiot and the minister, though the latter should be holy as Daniel and sublime as Isaiah, than from Daniel or Isaiah to the Eternal Wisdom.

John closed the book and looked at his wife.

"Why, John, are you telling me that this whole concept of thought inspiration originated with the higher critics before Ellen White and was originally used by them to justify supposed mistakes in the Bible just like the White Estate is doing today?"

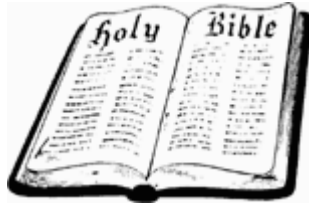
"Yes, it would seem so," said John. "Looking from our vantage point of history, one would wonder if even the concept of thought inspiration, which supposes that the scriptures are inerrant, is really logical and if rather it was a steppingstone to the present teaching of the White Estate that inspiration contains mistakes. After all, the Higher Critics who came up with the original concept of thought inspiration used it to show that there must be mistakes in the Bible. One must remember that verbal inspiration is not necessarily what the critics of it like to say it is. What it really amounts to is God choosing the words. In many cases, He used the words and the personality of the prophet, even letting him participate in the process. But since God knows what words that prophet will choose, He lets him use them only if they are accurate words and will fully accomplish His purpose. If not, then the Holy Spirit gives other words. The words are inspired and therefore inerrant and from God. If it is only the thoughts that are of God, then to be consistent we would have to no longer call the Bible the Word of God but rather the Thought of God. But I read out of this book to you just so you could get an extra bit of information. It is important to not get sidetracked by it. The main question, as I have said before, is not whether it is thought inspiration or verbal inspiration but rather if we believe inspiration is without any errors or mistakes, even down to the smallest details. That is what I will be

studying next. I just found this book and thought I would share it with you."

"Oh, thanks, it was interesting," said Lily. "But now I must go and get the wash done."

"Yes, and I need to get my concordance and start studying what the Bible says regarding inspiration," said John.³¹⁰

³¹⁰ As to how the Bible can be verbally inspired and still be translated, please refer to Gaussen's book *Theopneustia* for an explanation.



The Bible Speaks Out ³¹¹

John sat with his Bible in his hand and a concordance in the other. He had been looking up texts for several days and now had a pretty good idea of what the Bible taught regarding inspiration. He had tried to put aside his preconceived ideas and let the Word speak. Now that his own study was complete and he had come to his own conclusion, he reached for the book by Gaussen on inspiration to see what it said regarding the doctrine. Hours passed as he read. He was so absorbed in what he was reading that he didn't realize how late it was getting until he was jerked back to reality by Lily's sweet voice calling him to supper. John stretched his arms and stood up. "Wow," he said to himself, "that book is in full harmony with what my personal study in the Bible revealed. The only difference being that he explains and describes it much better than I could." During dinner, John talked about what he had found in his search of the Bible and about Gaussen's book.

As the dinner drew to a close, Lily said, "It is interesting; maybe we can talk more after I get the dishes done." That evening they sat next to the fire and opened up the Bible and Gaussen's book.

John began to speak, "Honey, Gaussen's book presents exactly what I found in my research into the Bible with the concordance. But he does a much better and more concise job of explaining it. So, I thought I might use it in explaining what I found.

"That sounds like a good idea, John," Lily said.

John opened the book and began to read:

³¹¹ This chapter is also largely taken from Gaussen's book *Theopneustia* as the previous chapter was.

Let us open the Scriptures—what do they say of their inspiration? We shall commence by reproducing here that often repeated passage, 2 Tim. 3:16, “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God;” that is to say, all parts of it are given by the Spirit or by the breath of God.

This sentence, as we have shown, admits of no exception or restriction: it is all Scripture; it is all that which is written (**πᾶσα γραφή**), that is, the thoughts which have received the imprint of language. No restriction: all these writings are so far a work of God, as to be represented to us as uttered by the Divine breath, in the same manner that the words of a man are uttered by the breath of his mouth. The prophet is the mouth of the Lord.

The import of this declaration of Paul remains the same in the two constructions of which his words are susceptible, whether, as in our versions, the affirmation of the sentence and verb (all Scripture divinely inspired and profitable) be placed upon the word **θεόπνευστος** (divinely inspired) or whether, by connecting this verb with the following words, **θεόπνευστος** (divinely inspired) be taken for a determinate adjective, and the sentence rendered, (all Scripture divinely inspired of God is profitable, etc.). This latter construction would even give the apostle’s declaration more force than the former. For thus his proposition, necessarily connecting itself with holy writings, (**τὰ ἱερὰ γράμματα**), of which he has just spoken, would take for granted as an admitted and incontestable principle that to name the holy writings is assuredly thereby to designate the scriptures inspired by God. It will nevertheless be wise to further set forth this truth by some other declaration from our holy books.

All prophet words are given from God.

Peter, in his Second Epistle at the end of the first chapter, thus speaks: “Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not at any time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.”

Notice that this passage first says that the written revelations of truth are here spoken of (**προφητεία γραφῆς**).

Secondly, that those who have given these to us are called holy men of God. Thirdly, that none of them ever **(οὐ πότε)** acted under the impulse or influence of the will of man. Fourthly, these holy men were moved, or instigated, by the Holy Ghost, to write and speak. Finally, that their writings are termed prophecy.

It will be good, before proceeding further, to define precisely the scriptural sense given to the words prophecy, to prophesy,

(נביא) prophet ; because this knowledge is indispensable to the investigation before us, and throws also much light upon the whole question.

Various and often incorrect meanings have been given to the biblical term prophet; but an attentive examination of the passages in which it is used will soon convince us that in the Scriptures it invariably designates "a man whose mouth utters the words of God."

Among the Greeks, this term was at first given only to the interpreter and organ of the predictions uttered in the

temples **(ἐξηγητὴς ἑνθεων μαντείων)**. This sense of it is fully explained in a passage of Plato's *Timaeus* (Vol. 9 ed. Bipont. P. 392). The most celebrated heathen prophets of antiquity were those of Delphos. They conducted the Pythoness to the sacred tripod, and they were charged with the duty of interpreting or recording the oracles of the God. And it was only by an extension of this first sense that the name of prophet was afterwards given among the Greeks to those poets who, commencing their strains by invoking Apollo and the muses, were considered to speak the language of the Gods under their immediate inspiration.

A prophet, in Scripture language then, is one into whose mouth God puts the words which He wills to make known to men; and it was in this sense God told Moses, *Exod. 7:1*, that "Aaron should be his prophet before Pharaoh," as He had said in the 16th verse of the fourth chapter, "He shall be to thee instead of a mouth, and thou shalt be to him instead of God."

Observe in Scripture how the prophets bear witness of the Spirit which caused them to speak and to the full divine

authority of their words: we always find in their language one unvarying definition of their office and inspiration. They speak; it is truly their voice which is heard, it is their person which is moved, it is also their mind which is affected, but their words are not from themselves only--they are at the same time the words of the Lord. "The Lord hath spoken it" (Micah 4:4; Jer. 9:12; Jer. 13:15; Jer. 30:4; Isa. 8:11; Amos 3:1; Exod. 4:30; Deut. 18:21-22), say they continually; "I will open my mouth in the midst of them," said the Lord to His servant Ezekiel (Eze. 29:21).

"The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and His word was on my tongue," said the royal Psalmist. The prophets announced what they were about to say with "Hear the word of the Lord!" "Thus saith the Lord!" (Isa. 28:14; Jer. 10:1; 17:20; 22:1) "The word of the Lord came to me," say they often. The word of the Lord came unto Shemaiah, unto Nathan, and unto John in the wilderness (1 Kings 12:22; 1 Chron. 17:3; Luke 3:2). "The word which came to Jeremiah by the Lord." "The word which was given to Jeremiah." (Jer. 7:1; 11:1; 18:1; 21:1; 25:1; 26:1; 27:1; 30:1; and numerous elsewhere; Isa. 1:2; Jer. 1:2, 9, 14; Eze. 3:4, 10, 11; Hosea 1:1-2, etc.) "The burden of the word of the Lord by Malachi." (Malachi 1:1) "The word of the Lord which came to Hosea." (Hosea 1:1-2) "In the second year of Darius came the word of the Lord by Haggai the prophet." (Haggai 1:1-2)

This word descended upon these men of God at the good pleasure of His will, and often in the most unexpected manner. It was thus that God, when He sent Moses, said to him, "I will be with thy mouth" (Exod. 4:12-15). And when He caused Balaam to speak, it is written that He "put a word in Balaam's mouth" (Greek Word of LXX Num. 23:5). The apostles also, in praying, quote from the Psalmist these words: "It is thou, Lord, who hast said it, by the mouth of David thy servant" (Acts 4:25). And Peter, in addressing the assembled disciples, says, "Men and brethren, this Scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas" (Acts 1:16). The same apostle, also standing in the Temple at Jerusalem in Solomon's Porch, thus addressed the people: "The God of your fathers hath fulfilled the things which He had showed beforehand by the mouth of all His prophets" (Acts 3:18).

The apostles' testimony, therefore, is that David in the Psalms and all the prophets in their writings, whatever might be the pious emotions of their minds, were only the mouth of the Holy Ghost.

It was David who said; it was the prophets who proclaimed; but also it was God who said by the mouth of David his servant; it was God who had proclaimed by the mouth of all his prophets. (Acts 3:18)

And we would desire that the following expression, which so frequently occurs in the gospels and which is so conclusive, may be carefully examined with the Greek text; viz. - "That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the

prophet (ὑπὸ τοῦ Κυρίου διὰ τοῦ προφήτου,) saying" (Matt. 1:22; 2:5, 15, 23; 4:14; 8:17; 12:17; 13:35; 21:4).

It is in a sense entirely analogical that holy Scripture gives the name of prophets to those impostors among the Gentiles who predicted lies in the temples of the false gods, whether they were vulgar knaves falsely pretending to have received revelations from God, or whether in reality they were the mouth of an occult power, of an evil angel, or of a pythonic spirit. (Acts 16:16; see Sam. 28:7; 1 Chron. 10:13; Lev. 19:26; Isa. 8:19; 29:4)

And it is also in the same sense that Paul, in quoting Epimenides, an epic poet and divining priest among the Cretans, spoke of him as "one of their prophets," because all the Greeks consulted him as an oracle, and Nicias went on the part of the Athenians to escort him to Crete to purify their town; and Aristotle, Strabo (Geogr. Book 10), Suidas, and Diogenes Laertius (Vita Epimen.) tell us that he pretended to foretell future events and to discover unknown things.

From all these authorities, therefore, it is established that in the language of Scripture the prophecies are "words of God put into the mouths of men."³¹²

³¹² Rom 3:2 "Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them [Jews] were committed the oracles of God." The Pagans that are mentioned by Gausson referred to their prophets as having the oracles of their gods. They understood this word to mean that their prophets had the very words of their gods. The Pharisees whom Paul claimed to

It is therefore by an evident abuse that in vulgar language this word seems only to be understood as implying a miraculous prediction. The prophecies may reveal the past as well as the future: they denounce the judgments of God, they interpret His word, they sing His praise, they comfort His people, they exhort believers to holiness, and they testify of Jesus Christ. And as “no prophecy came by the will of man” (2 Peter 1:21), a prophet, as we have already explained, was only a prophet at intervals and according as the Spirit gave him utterance. (Acts 2:4)

A man sometimes prophesied without foreseeing it; sometimes again without knowing it; and sometimes even without being willing to do it.

I have said without foreseeing it, and often even when he could least expect it: such was the old prophet of Bethel (1 Kings 13:20). I have said without knowing it: such was Caiaphas (John 11:51); and finally, I have said without being willing to do it: such was Balaam, when being three times prepared to curse Israel. He could only, three times in succession, give utterance to words of blessing. (Num. 23:24).

We shall give further instances in order to complete the demonstration of what a prophecy is in general, thereby to arrive at a fuller understanding of the action of God in what Peter calls the written prophecy **(προφητεῖαν γραφῆς)**.

have been (Acts 23:6) had the same understanding. Paul here in Romans uses the same term. The 1828 Webster Dictionary says that the Latin root word that this is derived from means: “ORACLE, n. [L. oraculum, from oro, **to utter.**]” In other words, Paul is making it plain that the Old Testament Scriptures were verbally inspired of God and, for all practical purposes, the very words of God. Going on, we see Jesus stating His view of the matter: Matt. 4:4 “But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by **every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.**” Looking at the context, it is obvious that this statement relates to Scripture. Jesus is calling it the very words that **proceedeth out of the mouth of God.** How much clearer could it be said? If Satan could have, we can be sure he would have told Jesus he was wrong. But he could say nothing. For even the devils know that Scripture is the very words of God, and they tremble and are powerless in its presence. Jesus knew how to use it and defeated the enemy. How sad that so many of God’s people, instead of accepting the beautiful gift God has given, spend their time depreciating it with fanciful theories rather than using it to put to flight the enemy of our souls.

We read in the 11th chapter of Numbers (verses 25 to 29) that as soon as the Lord had caused the Spirit to fall upon the seventy elders, "they did not so continue." The Spirit therefore came upon them at an unexpected moment; and after it had thus spoken by them "and after his word had been upon their tongue" (2 Sam. 23:1-2), they ceased to possess this miraculous gift; they were prophets but for one day.

We read in 1 Samuel chapter ten with what unforeseen power the Spirit of the Lord came upon the youthful king Saul at the moment when, seeking the asses of his father, he met a company of prophets coming down from the holy place; who on hearing him prophesy among them, said one to another, "what is this which is come unto the son of Kish? Is Saul also among the prophets?"

We read in chapter 19 of the same book something still more remarkable. Saul sends men to Ramah to seize David; but as soon as they met Samuel and the company of prophets over whom he presided, the Spirit of the Lord comes upon these men of war, and "they also prophesy." Saul sends yet other three, and they too became prophets. Finally, Saul repairs thither himself, and he likewise speaks as a prophet "all that day and all that night, in the presence of Samuel." "The Spirit of God," we are told, "was upon him also."

But it is especially by an attentive study of the twelfth and fourteenth chapters of the First Epistle to the Corinthians that an exact knowledge may be attained of the action of God and the agency of man in prophecy.

The apostle gives to the church at Corinth rules by which they were to be guided in the use of this miraculous gift. His counsel will throw great light on this important subject. The following facts and principles will at once appear:

First, the Holy Spirit at that time conferred upon believers, for their common benefit, very varied gifts (chapters 12:7-10). To one he gave the working of miracles; to another the gifts of healing; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues (who, in speaking them, understood them not himself); to another the interpretation of tongues; and lastly, to another prophecy, that is to say, the ability to pronounce in his own language words dictated by God.

Secondly, the selfsame Spirit distributed these miraculous gifts according to his own will (verse 11. See also Eph. 4:7, 11; Acts 19:1-6).

Thirdly, these gifts were a proper subject of zeal and Christian ambition (ἐζηλοῦτε 1Cor. 14:1, 39) But the especial gift, which was to be regarded as the most desirable was that of prophesying; for a believer might speak in an unknown tongue without edifying anyone, and this miracle was rather useful to unbelievers than to saints, "whilst the gift of prophecy edified, exhorted, and comforted" (1 Cor. 1:3).

Fourthly, this prophecy—that is to say, those words that miraculously descended upon lips which the Holy Spirit had chosen for the office,—this prophecy appeared in various forms. Sometimes the Spirit gave a psalm; at others, it was teaching; at others, a revelation; ...

Fifth, in these prophecies there was plainly an operation of God and a work of man. There were the words of the Holy Ghost, but there were also the words of the prophet. It was God who spake; but in men, by men, and for men; and you might therein discern their utterance, perhaps also the habitual turn of their style, and probably allusions to their own experience, actual position, and individuality.

Sixthly, these miraculous powers are prolonged in the primitive church during the extended career of the apostles. Paul, who wrote his letter to the Corinthians twenty years after the death of Jesus Christ, speaks to them as of a common and order of things which had existed amongst them from a certain period and which was further to continue.

Number Seven, the prophets, although they were the mouth of God to proclaim His words, were nevertheless not absolutely passive whilst they were prophesying.

"The spirits of the prophets (says Paul) are subject to the prophets;" (1 Cor. 14:32) that is to say, whilst these men of God had the prophetic word on their lips, they had nevertheless power in the repressive action of their own will to prevent its going forth; something similar to a man being able to suspend at will the otherwise almost involuntary action of respiration. Thus, for example, if a revelation be given "to one that sitteth by," the one who may be speaking is

required "to be silent, to sit down, and to let him who has just received a revelation speak."

Let us now apply these principles and facts to the prophecy of Scripture, **(τῇ προφητείᾳ γραφῆς)**; and to that passage in Peter's Epistle, for the explanation of which we have set them forth.

"No prophecy of Scripture (he observes) is of any private interpretation, for prophecy came not at any time by a will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." (1 Peter 1:20-21)

Here then we have the full and entire inspiration of the Scriptures clearly established by the apostle; here we have Scripture identified with those prophecies which we have just defined. "It came not by the will of man;" it is entirely **(ἐνθεος and θεόπνευστος)** given by the breath of God.

Who would therefore, after such declarations, dare to maintain that the expressions of Scripture are not inspired? They are the written prophecies **(πᾶσα προφητεία γραφῆς.)** Only one solitary difficulty can then be opposed to our conclusion. The evidence and the reasoning on which it rests are of such a character that there is no escaping, save by this objection. We admit, it will be said, that the written prophecy **(προφητεία γραφῆς)** has, without contradiction, been composed by that power of the Holy Spirit which moved in the prophets; but the rest of the book, the epistles, gospels, Acts, Proverbs, the books of Kings, and as much else as is purely historical, has no claim to be placed in the same rank.

Let us here pause before replying and ascertain how far our argument has brought us. It ought already to be fully acknowledged that at least every part of the Scriptures termed prophecy, of whatever character it may be, has been entirely dictated by God; so that the words, as well as the thoughts, have been given by Him.

But who now will permit us to establish a distinction between any one of the books of the Bible and all the other books? Is not all given by prophecy? Certainly, all has equally God's warrant; this is what we proceed to prove.

All the Scriptures of the Old Testament are Prophetic.

All the Scriptures are without distinction called The Word of God. This title is sufficient of itself to demonstrate to us that if Isaiah began his prophecies by inviting the heavens and the earth to give ear because the Lord had spoken (Isa. 1:2), the same summons ought to come forth for us from all the books of the Bible, for they are all called "The Word of God." "Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth; for the Lord hath spoken!"

Nowhere shall we find a single passage that permits us to detach one single part of it as less divine than all the rest. When we say that this whole book is the Word of God, do we not attest that the very phrases of which it is composed have been given by Him?

But the whole Bible is not only called "The Word of God" (**ὁ λόγος τοῦ Θεοῦ**) it is called, without distinction, The Oracles of God (**τὰ λόγια τοῦ Θεοῦ**) (Rom. 3:2). Who knows not what oracles were held to be in the ideas of men in ancient times? Was there a word that could more absolutely express a verbal and complete inspiration? And as if this Greek term, which Paul employs, were not sufficient, we further hear Stephen, filled with the Holy Ghost, call them the Living Oracles (**λόγια ζῶντα**). "Moses," he says, "received the lively oracles, to give them unto us" (Acts 7:38).

All the Scriptures then, without exception, are a continuous word of God; they are his miraculous voice; they are his written prophecies and his lively oracles. Which of their various parts, then, would you dare to cut off? The apostles often distinguish two parts in them when they call them "Moses and the Prophets." Jesus Christ distinguished them into three parts (Luke 24:44) when he said to his apostles, "That all things must be fulfilled which were written in Moses and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning me." According to this division, then, in which our Lord speaks according to the language of that time, the Old Testament would be made up of these three parts: Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms; as the New Testament is composed of the Gospels, the Acts, the Epistles, and the Book of the Revelation. Which of these three parts of the Old Testament, or which of these four parts of the New, would you dare to withdraw

from the Scripture of the prophets (*προφητείας γραφῆς*)
 or from the inspired Word (*ἐν*
θεοῦ λόγου—γραφῆς θεόπνευστου)?

Would it be Moses? But what is there more holy and more divine throughout the Old Testament than the writings of this man of God? He was such a prophet that his sacred books are set above all others and preeminently called the Law. "The law of the Lord is perfect" (Psalms 19:7). "The words of the Lord are pure words; as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times" (Psalms 12:6). He was such a prophet that he only compares himself with the Son of God: "This is that Moses which said unto the children of Israel, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of our brethren like unto me; hear him" (Acts 7:37). He was such a prophet that he commonly preceded his commands with the words "Thus saith the Lord!" He was such a prophet that God said to him, "Who hath made man's mouth? Have not I the Lord? Now therefore go; and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say" (Exod. 4:11-12).

[Our Note: In speaking of Moses, it is important to remember that his fear was not of getting the wrong thoughts as a prophet but of not getting the right words, especially due to his slowness of speech. God was obviously promising this great prophet the words he needed.]

Finally, he was such a prophet that it is written, "and there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face" (Deut. 34:10).

What other portion of the Old Testament would you then exclude from the prophetic Scriptures or claim they contain error? Would it be the second, that which Jesus Christ calls the Prophets, and which includes all the Old Testament, with the exception of Moses and the Psalms, and sometimes with exception of Moses only? It is well worthy of notice that Jesus Christ and the apostles, and all the people, habitually call all the authors of the Old Testament by the name Prophets to designate the entire Scripture; they usually said, "Moses and the prophets" (Luke 24:25, 27, 44; Matt. 5:17; 7:12; 11:13; Luke 16:16, 29, 31; 20:42; Acts 1:20; 3:21-22; 7:35, 37; 8:28; 26:22, 27; 28:23; Rom. 1:2; 3:21; 10:5; etc.) Jesus Christ calls all their books the Prophets. They were prophets; hence Joshua was a

prophet; the authors of the Chronicles were prophets; they, as Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, and all the others down to Malachi, were the prophets of Jehovah.

They, therefore, all wrote prophetic Scriptures (**προφητείας γραφής**); all words of which Peter tells us that none of them "came by a will of man;" all those (**ἱερὰ γράμματα**) "holy epistles," which the apostle declares to be divinely inspired. (2 Tim. 3:16) The Lord hath said of them all, as of Jeremiah, "Behold! I have put my words into thy mouth;" and as of Ezekiel, "Son of man, all my words that I shall speak unto thee, receive in thine heart, and hear with thine ears; and go get thee to them of the captivity, unto the children of thy people, and speak unto them, and tell them, Thus saith the Lord God, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear." (Ezek. 3:10-11)

And that all the sentences and words were given unto them by God is shown by one fact, which is repeatedly related, and which the study of their writings frequently brings to our notice, namely, they were charged to transmit to the church oracles whose significance was yet to remain concealed from themselves. Daniel, for instance, declares more than once that he could not understand the prophetic import of the words which went forth from his own lips or were traced by his pen. (Dan. 12:4, 8, 9) The typical character impressed by God on all the events of primitive history was not to be understood until many centuries after the existence of those who were charged with their first record; and the Holy Ghost declares to us that the prophets, after having penned their sacred pages, applied themselves to study them with the same reverent attention as they would the other scriptures; "searching to understand what the Spirit of Christ which was in them had foretold concerning the sufferings and future glory of the Messiah." (1 Pet. 1:10-12) Behold these men of God studiously bending over their own writings, pondering therein the words of God and the mind of God: but will this excite our astonishment; since what they have just written for the elect of the earth, for principalities and heavenly powers, (Eph. 3:10-11) is about the advent and the glory of the Son of God; "things which angels desire to look into?"

So much for Moses and the Prophets; but what will you say regarding the Psalms? Would these be less than all the rest the

gift of the Spirit of prophecy? Are not the authors of the Psalms always called prophets? (Matt. 3:35; Psalm for Asaph 78:2) And if they are sometimes, like Moses, distinguished from the other prophets, is it not evidently to assign them a more eminent place? David was a prophet, Peter tells us (Acts 2:30). Hear what he says of himself: "The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was on my tongue." (2 Sam. 23:1-2) What David wrote, even his least words, he wrote speaking by the Holy Ghost, says our Lord. (Mark 12:36) The apostles also, in quoting him (in their prayer), have been careful to say, "This Scripture must needs be fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake," etc. (Acts 1:16) "It is thou, Lord, who by the mouth of thy servant David has said," etc. (Acts 4:25) What shall we more say? These Psalms are so entirely dictated by the Spirit that Jesus Christ himself calls them by the name of Law (John 10:34; see also Ps. 82:6; John 12:34 also Ps. 89:36). All their words formed a law; the least of them was from God. "Is it not written in your law?" said Jesus in quoting them, and (as we shall presently have to show) in quoting them for a single sentence.

All the Old Testament is, therefore, in the scriptural sense of the expression, a written prophecy (**προφeteia γραφη**). It is consequently fully inspired by God; since according to the testimony of Zacharias, "it is God who has spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets, which have been since the beginning of time" (Luke 1:70); and according to Peter, it was moved by the Holy Ghost that they spake (2 Pet. 1:20; see also Matt. 1:22; 22:43; Mark 12:36).

It is true that, thus far, our reasoning and the evidence upon which it is grounded only directly relate to the books of the Old Testament; and it may be objected to us that we have as yet proved nothing in respect to the New.

Previous to meeting this objection, we will ask the question: whether it would be probable that the Lord, intending to give his people successive revelations of His will, would nevertheless have allowed the most recent and most important of these to be inferior to those which preceded? We will ask whether it would be rational to imagine that the first Testament, which only contained "the shadow of things to come," should have its contents dictated by God, whilst the second Testament, which exhibits to us the great object to

which all these shadows have reference, and which records to us the work, character, person, and words of the Son of God, would be less inspired than the first? We will ask whether it can be believed that the epistles and gospels, destined to revoke several of the ordinances of Moses and the prophets, would be less divine than Moses and the prophets; and that the Old Testament should be completely and entirely a word from God, and yet that it should be replaced, or at least modified and consummated, by a book partly the word of man and partly that of God!

But we have no necessity to have recourse to these valid reasons to assist in establishing the prophetic inspiration of the Gospel, and even its superiority to Moses and the prophets.

All the Scriptures of the New Testament are prophetical.

Scripture invariably places the writers of the New Testament in the same rank with the prophets of the Old; and even when it distinguishes between them, it is always to put the latter above the former, as far as one word from God is superior (not in divinity, certainly, neither in dignity, but in authority) to the word which preceded it. We would call attention to the following passage of the apostle Peter. It is important because it shows us that while the apostles were yet living, the book of the New Testament was already almost entirely formed, to make one collective whole with that of the Old. It was twenty or thirty years after Pentecost that Peter, with delight, quotes "all the Epistles of Paul, his beloved brother," and speaks of them as "sacred epistles," which then in his time were a part of the "holy writings" (**ἱερῶν γραμμάτων**); which were to

be classed with "the other Scriptures" (**ὡς καὶ τὰς λοιπὰς γραφάς**) He assigns to them the same rank, and he declares that ignorant men may wrest them to their own destruction. Then following this important passage: "Even as our Beloved brother Paul also, according to the wisdom given unto him, hath written unto you, as he has done in all his epistles, in which he speaks of the things, among which are some hard to be understood, which ignorant and un-established men wrest as they do also the other Scriptures, to their own perdition" (2 Peter 3:15-16).

The apostle in the second verse of the same chapter had already classed himself with the other prophets, in the same rank and invested with the same authority as the sacred writers of the Old Testament, where he says, "Be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the Holy prophets, and of the commandments which you have received from us, who are apostles of the Lord Saviour." The writings of the apostles are therefore what the writings of the Old Testament were; and since these latter are a written prophecy, the former are not less so.

But we have said that Scripture goes beyond this in the rank which it assigns to the writers of the New Covenant. It teaches us to consider them as superior even to those of the Old in regard to the importance of their mission, the glory of the promises which have been made to them, the greatness of the gifts which were conferred upon them, and finally by the eminence of the rank which is assigned to them.

In the first place, let us notice what was their mission, as compared with that of the ancient prophets; and in this it will at once be seen that their inspiration could not be inferior to that of their predecessors.

When Jesus sent the apostles whom he had chosen (it is written) he said to them: "Go ye and teach all nations, instructing them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo! I am with you unto the end of the world. Amen." (Matt. 28:19-20) "Ye will receive the Holy Ghost which shall come upon you, and ye shall be witnesses for me in Jerusalem, in all Judea, in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth." (Acts 1:8) "Peace be with you! As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you." (John 20:21)

Such was their mission. They were the sent (ἀποστόλοι) immediately from the Son of God; they went to all nations; they had the guarantee that their Master would be ever present with the testimony which they were to bear to Him in the Holy Scriptures. Were they then less in need of inspiration to go to the uttermost parts of the earth, than the prophets to go to Israel, to instruct solely the Jewish people? Had they not to promulgate all the doctrines, ordinances, and mysteries of the kingdom of God? Had they not committed to them the

keys of the heavenly kingdom; insomuch that whatever they bound or loosed on earth should be bound or loosed in heaven? (Matt. 28:18, 26) To this end, had not Jesus Christ expressly conferred upon them the Holy Ghost: that those sins which they remitted or retained, should accordingly be remitted or retained? Had he not breathed upon them saying "Receive ye the Holy Ghost?" Had they not to reveal the unheard of character of the "Word made flesh" and of the Creator humbling himself, even to taking the form of a creature, and the death upon a cross? Had they not to record His incomparable words? Had they not to exercise in the earth the incommunicable and miraculous functions of His representatives, His ambassadors, as if it had been Christ speaking by them? (2 Cor. 5:20) Were they not called to a glory such as "in the last and great regeneration, when the Son of Man shall be seated on the throne of his glory, they also will be seated on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel?" (Matt. 19:28) If therefore the prophetic spirit was necessary to the first men of God, to show the Messiah in shadows, was it not far more necessary to these latter, to exhibit him in light, and so to set him forth as crucified among us, (Gal. 3:1) that whosoever rejected them rejected him, and whosoever received them received him? (Matt. 10:40; Luke 10:16) By these features let it be judged what must have been the inspiration of the New Testament as compared with the Old; and say whether whilst the latter was fully and entirely prophetical, the New cannot be inferior to it.

Secondly, this is not all; let us hear the promises which were made to them for the accomplishment of such a work. Human language cannot more powerfully express the most absolute inspiration. These promises were especially addressed to them on three important occasions: in the first place when they were sent for the first time to preach the kingdom of God (Matt. 10:19-20); in the second place when Jesus himself publicly preached the gospel before a great number of people (Mark 13:11; Luke 20:14-15); and in the third place when he pronounced his final denunciations against Jerusalem and the Jewish people. (Luke 12:12)

"When they deliver you up, take not thought how or what thing ye shall speak ($\pi\omega\varsigma \eta \tau\acute{\iota}$); for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak: for it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you."

"When they bring you before councils and magistrates, take no thought how ye shall speak, nor of what ye shall answer in your defense, nor of what ye shall say; for the Holy Ghost will teach you in that very hour what ye ought to say."

"Do not be troubled beforehand what ye shall say, neither premeditate; but all shall be given you in that hour," says Jesus; "for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost."

On these several occasions the Lord gives his disciples assurance that the most entire inspiration shall control their language in the most difficult and important seasons of their ministry. When they should have to speak before princes they were to feel no disturbance; they were not even to premeditate or think thereon; because it would be immediately given to them by God, not only what they should speak, but also the words in which they should express themselves--not only **τί,** but **ὡς λαλήσονται.** [Matt. 10:19-20]. They were to rest entirely upon him; what they ought to say would be entirely given--given by Jesus, given in the very hour--and given in such manner and fullness that they could say it was no longer they, but the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of their Father, which spoke in them (Matt. 10:20; Mark 13:11), and that then it was not only an irresistible energy which was given them--it was a mouth! (Luke 21:14-15)

"Settle it therefore in your hearts, not to meditate beforehand what ye shall answer; for I will give you a mouth and wisdom which none of your adversaries shall be able to resist."

It will then (as with the ancient prophets, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel) be the Holy Spirit speaking by them as "God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began." In one sense, indeed, it will be they who speak, but it will be the Holy Ghost (Luke 12:12) who "shall teach them in the same hour what they ought to say;" so that in another sense, it will be the Spirit himself speaking by their lips.

We ask, whether it is possible in any language to express more absolutely the most entire inspiration, and to declare more unequivocally, that even the very words were then supplied by God and given to the apostles?

It is very true that in these promises it is not directly a question of the aid which the apostles should receive as writers, but rather what they were to expect when they should be brought before priests, governors, and kings. Yet, is it not evident that if the most entire inspiration were assured to them (Luke 12:12) on passing occasions, to close the mouths of some wicked men, to avert the dangers of a day, and to serve the interests of a fleeting hour; if in these cases it was promised them that even the words of their answers should be supplied to them, is it not sufficiently evident that this same aid could not be refused to these very men when, like the ancient prophets, they should carry on the book of God, in order to transmit to future ages the laws of the kingdom of heaven, and to portray the glory of Christ and the scenes of eternity? Could anyone imagine that the same men who before Ananias, Festus, or Nero were so far “the mouth of the Holy Ghost” that then it was no longer “they” who spoke, but the “Holy Ghost,” and thenceforth using only words which

man’s wisdom taught! **(θελήματι ἀνθρώπου, καὶ ἐν διδακτοῖς ἀνθρωπίνης σοφίας λόγοις.)**

(2 Peter 1:21; 1 Cor. 2:13). Such a supposition is inadmissible.

Behold them commencing their apostolic ministry on the day of Pentecost; observe the gifts which they received (Acts 2:11, 4:31); tongues of fire descend upon their heads; they are filled with the Holy Ghost; they leave their upper room; and all the people hear them proclaim in fifteen different languages the wonderful works of God. They spake as the Spirit gave utterance; they spake (it is said) the Word of

God **(ἐλάλουν τὸν λόγον τοῦ Θεοῦ)**. It must certainly be that the words of these foreign languages were given to them, as well as the things they uttered: the expression as well

as the idea; the **τί** as well as the **πῶς** [Matt. 10:19; Luke 10:11]. Can it be believed that the Spirit would be concerned to dictate to them all they ought to say while preaching in the corners of the streets, words which passed away with the sound of their voice and which at most only met the ears of some assembled thousands; and yet when these same men came to write for all the people on the face of the whole earth, and for all ages of the church, the “living oracles of God,” they

would find themselves without this aid? Will it be believed that after having been more than prophets for the object of preaching in public places that they should become less than prophets and merge into mere ordinary men when they took up the pen to complete the Book of Prophecies, write their gospels, epistles, and the Book of their Revelations? How obviously absurd would be such a supposition!

Fourthly, we have something to add that is still more simple and forcible: we refer to the rank which is assigned to them; and we might confine ourselves to this fact alone, after having spoken of the prophets of the Old Testament. It is this, that the apostles were all prophets, and more than prophets. Their writings are written prophecies (*προφητεία γραφῆς*), as much and more than those of the Old Testament; and we are thus brought to the conclusion, that all Scripture in the New Testament as in the Old, is inspired by God, even down to its least parts.

I have said that the apostles were all prophets. They frequently declare it. But, to not multiply quotations needlessly, we will be content to refer to the two following passages of the apostle Paul.

The first is addressed to the Ephesians (3:4-5) "You can" writes he to them, "by reading what I have written before in few words ascertain the understanding which I have in the mystery of Christ; a mystery which in other generations was not made known unto the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit of His holy apostles and prophets."

It is likewise of the same mystery and of the writings of the same prophets, which this apostle speaks in the last chapter of his Epistle to the Romans (Rom. 16:25-27).

"Now to him that is of power to establish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery which was kept secret since the world began, but now is made manifest by the means of prophetic writings (*διὰ τε γραφῶν προφητικῶν*), according to the commandment of the everlasting God made known to all nations for the obedience of faith. To God only wise be glory through Jesus Christ, for ever. Amen!"

Here then we have the authors of the New Testament called prophets, and their writings called prophetic writings (**γραφαὶ προφητικαὶ**), which is the equivalent of the words, **προφητεία γραφῆς**, of Peter. And since we have already seen that “no prophecy came by the will of him who uttered it, but that holy men of God spake as they were moved and instigated by the Holy Ghost;” the prophets of the New Testament have therefore spoken like those of the Old and according to the commandment of the eternal God. They were all prophets. (See further, Luke 11:49; Ephesians, 2:20; 3:5; 4:11; Gal. 1:12; 1 Peter 1:12; 1 Cor. 12:23; 2 Thess. 2:15).

But even this is not enough; for we have said, they were more than prophets. This also has been remarked by the learned Michaelis. (Introduction vol. i. p. 118, Fran. Edit.) In spite of his lax principles respecting the inspiration of a part of the New Testament, he has not failed to observe this. It is clear, according to him, from the context, that in the sentence where Jesus Christ speaks of John the Baptist (Matt. 11:9-11), the words greater and least in the 11th verse, only apply to the name of prophet which precedes them in the 9th. So that the Lord Jesus there declares that if John the Baptist is the greatest of prophets, if he is even more than a prophet, yet the least of the prophets of the New Testament is nevertheless greater than John the Baptist; that is to say greater than the greatest of the Old Testament prophets. (Ibid. and Luke 7:28)

Again- this superiority of the apostles and prophets of the New Testament is more than once attested to us in the apostolic writings. Wherever mention is made of the several offices established in the church, the apostles are set above the prophets. Thus, for instance, in a very remarkable passage of Paul’s first Epistle to the Corinthians, in which the apostle applies himself to make known to us the gradations of excellence and dignity which mark the various miraculous powers conferred by God in the primitive church, he thus speaks: “God has set in the church, first, apostles; secondly, prophets; thirdly, teachers; after these, miracles, gifts of healing, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.” (1 Cor. 12:28)

In the 11th verse of the fourth chapter to the Ephesians, he sets the apostles above the prophets.

In 2 Cor. 5:20, he calls the apostles ambassadors and prophets; and in 1 Cor. 14, he places himself above the prophets which God had raised up in that church. He desires that each one of those who had truly received the Holy Spirit would employ his gifts to recognize in the words of the apostle the commandments of the Most High; and he is so assured that what he writes is given by the inspiration of God, that after having laid down some precepts of the churches and finished with words which inspiration from on high could only authorize, "it is thus that I ordain in all the churches;" he does more - he proceeds to rank himself above the prophets; or rather, as a prophet himself, he calls upon the spirit of prophecy in them to receive the words of Paul as the words of the Lord, and concludes in these remarkable terms: "Came the word of God out from you? If any man think himself to be a prophet, or a man having the Spirit, (1 Cor. 14:37) let him acknowledge that the things which I write to you are the commandments of the Lord."

The writings of the apostles are therefore (like those of the ancient prophets) "the commandments of the everlasting

God;" they are written prophecies **(προφητεία γραφήs)** as much as the Psalms, and Moses, and the prophets (Luke 24:44); and all the writers of the New Testament have been enabled to say with Paul, "Christ speaking in me" (2 Cor. 13:3; 1 Thess. 2:13); my word is the word of God, and the instruction which I give was taught to me by the Holy Ghost (1 Cor. 2:13) as much as David before them had said, "The Spirit of the Lord has spoken by me, and his word was on my tongue" (2 Sam. 23:2).

Hear them also when they speak of themselves. Would it be possible to declare more clearly than they have done that the words as well as the subject have been given to them by God? With respect to ourselves (say they), we have the mind of Christ (1 Cor. 2:16). "For this cause thank we God without ceasing, because when ye received the word which ye heard of us, which is from God, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God" (1 Thess. 2:13). "Thus therefore, he that rejects us, rejects not a man but God, who hath even put his Holy Spirit in us" (1 Thess. 4:8).

Such then, finally, is the book of the New Testament. It is like that of the Old Testament scripture, the word of prophets, and of prophets even greater than all those who had preceded them; so that, as Michaelis (Introduct. Vol. i. p. 118-119, etc. Fran. Edit.) has observed, an epistle which commences thus, "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ," (Rom. 1:1; Gal. 1:1; 1 Cor. 1:1; 1 Peter 1:1; 2 Pet. 1:1) more forcibly attests to us its divine authority and prophetic inspiration than could have done even the writings of the most illustrious prophets of the Old Testament when they open with these words, "Thus saith the Lord;" "the voice of Isaiah:" "The word which Isaiah the son of Amoz saw;" (Isa. 43:1; 56:1) "The words of Jeremiah: to whom the word of the Lord came;" (Isa. 1:1; 2:20; Jer. 1:1-2). "Hear the word of the Lord:" or other similar expressions. And if there be in the New Testament some books in which similar prefatory expressions are not found, their inspiration is not more compromised than that of any book of the Old Testament (the second or ninety-fifth Psalm, for instance) (Acts 4:15; 13:33; Heb. 1:5; 3:7; 4:3-7; 5:5), which, although they bear not at their commencement the name of the prophet who composed them, are nonetheless quoted as divine by the Lord Jesus and his apostles.

It may sometimes have been objected that Luke and Mark were not, properly speaking, apostles and that consequently they had not received the same inspiration as the other sacred writers of the New Testament. They were not apostles, it is true: but they were certainly prophets, and thus even greater than the greatest of the Old Testament (Luke 7:26-28).

Without insisting here upon the ancient traditions (Epiphan Haeres 51 and others--Origen, *de recta in Deum fide*; Doroth. In Synopsi; Procop. Diacon. Apud Bolland. 25 April), which say of both that they were of the number of the seventy disciples whom Jesus had first sent to preach in Judea or at least of the one hundred and twenty who received the outpouring of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost, is it not known that the apostles had received the power of conferring by the imposition of hands miraculous gifts to all who had believed, and that they exercised this power in all the countries and towns through which they journeyed? And since Luke and Mark, among so many other prophets, were fellow helpers chosen by Paul and Peter, is it not manifest that these two apostolic men would necessarily invoke upon such

associates the gifts which they had elsewhere bestowed upon so many others who had believed? Do we not see Peter and John, in the first place, going down to Samaria to confer these gifts upon believers in that city; afterwards Peter coming and bestowing them in Caesarea upon the heathen who had heard the word in the house of the centurion Cornelius? (Acts 8:15-17; 10:45) Do we not see Paul distributing them abundantly among the brethren at Corinth; on all those at Ephesus; and on those at Rome? (Acts 19:6-7; 1 Cor. 12:28; 14; Rom. 1:11; 15:19, 29) Do we not see him, before employing his beloved son Timothy as a fellow laborer, causing spiritual powers to descend upon him? (1 Tim. 4:14; 2 Tim. 1:6) And is it not manifest that Peter would do as much for Mark (1 Peter 5:13) as Paul for his companion Luke? (Acts 13:1; 16:10; 27:1; Rom. 26:21; Col. 4:14; 2 Tim. 4:11; Philem. 24; 2 Cor. 8:18) Silas, whom Paul had taken to accompany him (as he also took Luke and John, whose surname was Mark), Silas was a prophet at Jerusalem (Acts 25:32). Prophets abounded in all the primitive churches. We are told of several who went down from Jerusalem to Antioch (Acts 11:19); a great number were in Corinth: Judas and Silas were prophets at Jerusalem: Apicas in Judea: the four virgin daughters of Philip the evangelist prophesied in Caesarea (1 Cor. 14:31, 39) in the church at Antioch, several of the faithful were prophets and teachers (Acts 11:28; 21:9-10; 13:1, 2) among others, Barnabas (Paul's first companion), Simeon, Manaen, Saul of Tarsus himself, and finally Lucius of Cyrene, whom Paul in the epistle to the Romans calls his relation (Romans 16:21) and whom in the Epistle to the Colossians he styles "*Luke the Physician*" (Colossians 4:14) in a word, the selfsame Luke whom the ancient fathers have indifferently named Luke, Lucius, and Lucanus.

It becomes, therefore, sufficiently evident by these facts that Luke and Mark were at least in the rank of those prophets whom the Lord had so numerously raised up in all the churches of the Jews and Gentiles; and that among others they were chosen by the Holy Ghost to write conjointly with the apostles three of the sacred books of the New Testament.

But furthermore (and let it be especially remarked), this prophetic authority of Mark and Luke is very far from resting merely upon suppositions: it rests upon the testimony of even the apostles of Jesus Christ. It must not be forgotten that it

was under the superintendence of these men of God that the divine canon of the Scriptures of the New Testament was collected and transmitted to all the churches. By a remarkable providence of God, the lives of most of the apostles were prolonged through many years. Peter and Paul edified the church of God during upwards of thirty-four years after the resurrection of their Master. John even continued his ministry in the province of Asia, in the center of the Roman Empire, more than thirty years after the death of those apostles. The book of Acts, which was written by Luke subsequently to his Gospel (Acts 1:1), had already been in the church's possession long (at least ten years) previously to the martyrdom of Paul. Now Paul, long before going to Rome, had spread the gospel from Jerusalem and round about unto Illyricum (Romans 15:19); the apostles were in continual correspondence with the Christians of all countries; they were daily burdened with the care of all the churches (2 Corinthians 11:28). Peter, in his Second Epistle, written to the general congregations of God, had already spoken to them of ALL THE EPISTLES of Paul, as integral with the Old Testament. And during upwards of half a century, all the Christian churches were formed and governed under the supervision of these men of God. It is therefore with the consent, and under the prophetic rule of these apostles, authorized to bind and loose, and to be, after Christ, the twelve foundations of the universal church, that the *canon of the Scriptures* has been formed, and it is from them that the new people of God received "the living oracles," to transmit them to us (Acts 7:38; Romans 3:2). And it is thus that the Gospel of Luke, that of Mark, and the book of Acts have with one accord been received to the same honor and with the same submission, as the apostolic books of Matthew, Paul, Peter, and John. These books have therefore the same authority with us as all others; and we are required to receive them equally, "not as the word of men, but as they are in truth, the word of God, working effectually in all those that believe" (1 Thessalonians 2:13).

These considerations, we venture to believe, will suffice to demonstrate how ill-founded is the distinction which Michaelis (Introduction, vol. 1 pp. 112-129) and some other German scholars have essayed to establish between these two evangelists and the other writers of the New Testament. It even appears to us that to preclude such a supposition, Luke

has been mindful to place at the head of his Gospel the four verses which serve as its preface. In fact, he studies to place the authenticity and divinity of his own treatise in contrast with the incertitude and human character of the narratives

which *many persons* (πολλοί) *had under taken to compose*

(ἐπεχείρησαν ἀνατάξασθαι)

on

evangelical facts; facts (he adds) *rendered perfectly certain among us*; that is, amongst the apostles and prophets of the New

Testament (τῶν πεπληροφορημένων ἐν ἡμῖν πραγμάτων),¹

the original words signifying the utmost degree of certainty, as may be seen in Romans 4:21; 14:5. *And on this* (observes Luke) *it seemed good to ME, who have acquired FROM ON HIGH a perfect knowledge of all,*³¹³ *to write unto thee in order.*

Luke had acquired this knowledge from on high; that is to say, by "the wisdom which comes from above," and "which had been given to him." It is very true that the last expression in the passage is ordinarily understood as if it signified *from*

the beginning, and as if, instead of the word ἄνωθεν (from

on high), there was here the same word ἀρχῆς (from the beginning), which is found in the second verse. But it appears to us that the opinions ἀπ' smus, Gomar, Henry, Lightfoot, and other commentators ought to be preferred as more

natural, and that the word ἄνωθεν must be taken in the same sense in which John and James used it when they said, "Every good gift comes *from above*." (James 1:17) "Thou couldest have no power against me, if it were not given thee *from above*." (John 19:11) "Except a man be born *from above*

¹ Παρακολουθηκότι. Thus Demosthenes, De Coronâ, vol. 53. Παρακολουθηκώς τοῖς πράγμασιν ἀπ' ἀρχῆς. Theophrast. Char. Proem. 4. Σὸν δὲ παρακολουθῆσαι καὶ εἰδῆσαι, εἰ ὀρθῶς λέγω. Josephus, in the first lines of his book against Appion, opposes this very word τὸν παρακολουθηκότα (diligenter assecutum) to τῷ πυνθανομένῳ (sciscitanti ab aliis.)

(John 3:3, marginal reading of the English version), he cannot see the kingdom of God." "The wisdom which comes *from above* is first pure." (James 3:15, 17).

The prophet Luke therefore had "obtained from above a perfect knowledge of all the things which Jesus began both to do and to teach until the day in which he was taken up."

Nevertheless, whatever translation of these words may be preferred, it is by other arguments that we have shown that Luke and Mark were prophets: and that their writings, transmitted to the church by the authority of the apostles, are themselves incorporated with those of the apostles, and with all the other prophetic books of the eternal word of God.

To this point then, our argument has brought us: and we are bound to acknowledge it on the authority of Holy Scripture itself: viz. — In the first place, that the *Theopneustia* [inspiration] of the words of the prophets was entire: that the Holy Spirit spake by them; and that the eternal word was on their tongue. And secondly, that all which has been written in the Bible, having been written by prophecy, all the sacred books are *holy writings*, (ἁγία γράμματα), *written prophecies* (προφητεῖαι γράμματα), and *writings divinely inspired* (γραφαὶ θεόπνευσται). Its entire contents are from God.

We would, nevertheless, here restate what we have more than once had occasion to notice: viz. — That it is not necessary to attribute to the prophets of the Old or New Testament a state of excitement and enthusiasm which prevented due control of their faculties: such a thought, on the contrary, must have no place in the mind.

The ancient church put so great importance upon this principle that, under the reign of the Emperor Commodus, according to Eusebius, Miltiades (the illustrious author of an apologetic Christian treatise) "composed a book (against Montanus and the false prophets of Phrygia) expressly to establish" "*that true prophets ought to be masters of themselves and not to speak in ecstasy.*" (Hist. Eccles. book v. c. 17. See the same principles in Tertullianus (against Marcion, book iv. c. 22); in Epiphanius (adv. Haereses, book ii. Haeres. 48, c. 3); in Jerome (Proemium in Nahum); in Basilus the Great (Commentar. in Esaiam, proem. 5.) The action of God was

exercised upon them without entirely taking them out of their ordinary state. "The spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets," says Paul (1 Corinthians 14:32). Their intellectual faculties at those seasons were directed and not suspended. They knew, they felt, they willed, they remembered, they understood, they approved. They could say, "It seemed good to me" to write; and, like the apostles, "It seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us" to write. (Luke 1:3; Acts 15:28) And then the words were given to them as well as the thoughts; for, after all, the words are in themselves only second thoughts which have relation to language and to the employment of suitable expressions. It is neither easier nor more difficult to explain the gift of the former than that of the latter.

John looked up and said, "I think we better stop here for now; it is time we get to bed. Maybe tomorrow I can share the rest of what I found."

"Yes, that would be good," Lily said. "It may sound a little stilted and old-fashioned, but I find it interesting that in 1841 there was one who showed from the Bible that the Higher Critics of the day were wrong and that they had come up with some of the same ideas that Ellen White came up with so many years later." Slowly they knelt in prayer, asking their kind heavenly Father to not forsake them but to show them the way into His truth.

**A Few Extra Texts Showing That the Bible Specifies that True Inspiration
Gets the Future & Past Right.**

Isa. 41:21 Produce your cause, saith the LORD; bring forth your strong reasons, saith the King of Jacob.

41:22 Let them bring them forth, and show us what shall happen: let them show the former things, what they be, that we may consider them, and know the latter end of them; or declare us things for to come.

41:23 Show the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are gods: yea, do good, or do evil, that we may be dismayed, and behold it together.

41:24 Behold, ye are of nothing, and your work of nought: an abomination is he that chooseth you.

41:25 I have raised up one from the north, and he shall come: from the rising of the sun shall he call upon my name: and he shall come upon princes as upon mortar, and as the potter treadeth clay.

41:26 Who hath declared from the beginning, that we may know? and beforetime, that we may say, He is righteous? yea, there is none that sheweth, yea, there is none that declareth, yea, there is none that heareth your words.

42:9 Behold, the former things are come to pass, and new things do I declare: before they spring forth I tell you of them.

43:9 Let all the nations be gathered together, and let the people be assembled: who among them can declare this, and show us former things? let them bring forth their witnesses, that they may be justified: or let them hear, and say, It is truth.

45:21 Tell ye, and bring them near; yea, let them take counsel together: who hath declared this from ancient time? who hath told it from that time? have not I the LORD? and there is no God else beside me; a just God and a Saviour; there is none beside me

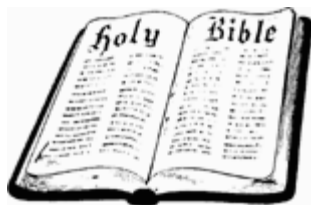
45:23 I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, that unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear.

46:9 Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me,

46:10 Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure:

48:3 I have declared the former things from the beginning; and they went forth out of my mouth, and I showed them; I did them suddenly, and they came to pass.

Note: In the context of the above texts from Isaiah, one can see God challenging the false gods who represent false spirits of devils (see also 1 Cor. 10:20) to declare the past and the future. But they can't. False spirits also inspire false prophets and the same principles would apply. Declaring the past accurately is a test of where the spirit originates.



The Bible Speaks Again ^{314 315 316}

Once again it was the end of another day and John, Lily, and their little children sat once again in the living room as John opened Gaussen's book *Theopneustia* to continue the reading of the night before. Slowly he began to read:

There is however in Holy Scripture, as respects *Theopneustia* (*inspiration*), something which strikes us if it be possible still more forcibly than all the *declarations* of the apostles, and of Jesus Christ himself, and this is--their example.

The Example of the Apostles and Christ

In the first place, let us consider what use the apostles themselves make of the Word of God, and observe in what terms they quote it. Not only do they say, God saith (Eph. 4:8, Heb. 1:8), The Holy Ghost has said (Acts 23:25, Heb. 10:15, and elsewhere), God said in such a prophet (Rom. 9:25), but observe further, when they quote what they feel are the least parts with what reverence they speak of it, with what attention they consider each expression, with what godly confidence they insist often upon a single word, for the purpose of deducing thence the most important consequences and fundamental doctrines.

For ourselves we feel bound to avow, that nothing impresses us so strongly as this consideration; nothing has produced in our mind such firm and abiding confidence in the entire *Theopneustia* [inspiration] of the Scriptures.

³¹⁴ This chapter, as the previous one, is taken from L. Gaussen's book *Theopneustia*.

³¹⁵ See Appendix E for more Bible texts.

³¹⁶ There are many problems of Ellen's that, due to space, we have had to leave out of this book.

The preceding arguments and testimonies appear to us sufficient to have already carried conviction to every attentive mind; for ourselves we feel that if we experienced a personal want of confirmation of faith in this truth, we would not range so far for our reasons. We should be satisfied with inquiring what was holy Scripture in the estimation of the apostles of God? How far is language in their judgment inspired? What Paul, for instance, thought of it? For we have no pretension to be more enlightened theologians than were these twelve men. We abide by the teaching of Peter, and the exposition of Paul; and of all the existing systems which treat of the inspiration of the Scriptures, it is theirs which we prefer.

Observe the apostle Paul when he quotes and comments upon the Scriptures. Mark how he discusses the least expressions! And often, to deduce the most important conclusions, he makes use of arguments that would be treated as puerile or absurd if we ourselves were to employ them against the doctors of the Socinian school. Such respect for the words of the text on our part would insure our banishment back to the sixteenth century, with its "coarse orthodoxy and antiquated theology." Remark with what reverence the apostle dwells upon the least expressions; with what sanguine confidence in the submission of the church, he there points to the use of such a word rather than of such another word; and with what earnest affection he clings to each until he has developed all its power.

Among the many examples which we might produce, let us, in order to be brief, confine our illustration of this exclusively to the Epistle to the Hebrews. In the first place, turn to Hebrews 2:8 and observe how, after having quoted the sacred writer, reasons upon the force of the word "all."

In the eleventh verse of the same chapter, in quoting from the twenty-second Psalm, he dwells upon the expression, "my brethren," to exhibit from it the human nature which the Son of God assumed.

Observe in chap. 12:27, how in quoting the prophet Haggai, he reasons upon the use of the word "once:" "Yet once more." From ver. 5 to 9 of the same chapter, notice how he enlarges upon the expression "my son," from chap. 3 of Proverbs: "My son, disregard not the chastening of the Lord." In chap. 10,

quoting Psalm 40, he dwells upon the expression "Lo! I come," as meeting, "thou wouldest not."

In chap. 8, from verse 8 to 13, quoting Jer. 31:31, he reasons upon the word "new."

In chap. 3, from verse 7 to 19, and in chap. 4, from verse 1 to 11, with what earnestness, quoting Psalm 95, does he rest upon the word "today;" the expression "I have sworn;" and especially upon "my rest," introducing as a commentary the words from Genesis--"and God did rest the seventh day."

From verse 2 to 6 of chap. 3, observe how he dwells upon the words "servant" and "house," taken from the book of Numbers: "My servant Moses, who is faithful in all my house."

But especially notice, in chapters 6 and 7, the use which he consecutively makes of all the words of the 110th Psalm--"The Lord sware"; "He sware by himself"; "thou art a priest"; "A priest for ever"; "of Melchizedec, king of Zedec;" and of "Melchizedec, king of Salem." The exposition of the doctrines contained in these expressions occupies three chapters; that is, 5, 6, and 7.

But here I pause. Is it possible to avoid the conclusion, from such examples, that in the estimation of the apostle Paul, the Scriptures were inspired by God and infallible, even in their least expressions? Let each one of us, therefore, put ourselves under the authority of that man "to whom the understanding of the mystery of Christ had been given by the Spirit of God, as to the holy apostles and prophets" (Eph. 3:4-5). It is imperative upon us either to do this, or to regard him as an enthusiast; to reject in his person the testimonies of the holy Bible; or to receive with him the precious and fruitful doctrine of the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures.

And you who may read these lines, which side will you decide to place yourselves? Under the apostles, or the theologians of our generation? "If any one take aught from the words of this book," says John, "God shall take away his part out of the book of life, out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book;" and "if any man preach any other gospel," affirms Paul, "let him be accursed, though it were I or an angel from heaven."

But now let us leave the apostles; prophets indeed as they are, sent by God to establish his kingdom, pillars of the church, mouths by which the Holy Ghost has spoken, and ambassadors of Jesus Christ: let us leave them for the present, as if they were yet too much entrenched in their Jewish traditions and rustic prejudices, and go to The Master. Inquire of him in what estimation he held the Scriptures! This is the great question. The testimonies which we have been examining on inspiration are, doubtless, conclusive; and the doctrine of a full and entire inspiration is as clearly taught in the Scripture as that of the resurrection of the dead. This ought to suffice for us; but we will nevertheless say that the argument upon which we are about to enter makes all others superfluous: how has Jesus Christ himself quoted the Holy Bible! What was His mind as to the letter of the Scriptures! What use has He made of it--He, who was the object of the Inspirer, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last! He whose Holy Spirit, says Peter (1 Pet. 2:11), animated all the prophets of the Old Testament; He who was in heaven, in the bosom of the Father, at the same time that He was seen below holding converse with humankind and preaching the gospel to the poor. Were I to be asked, What do you think of the holy Scriptures? I should answer, what has my Master thought of them? How has He quoted them? What use has he made of them? What, in his estimation, were even its least parts?

Speak thyself, O Eternal Wisdom! - Uncreated Word! - Judge of Judges! And whilst we proceed to review the declarations of Thy mouth, do Thou display to us that majesty in which the Scriptures appeared before thee; that perfection which Thou didst acknowledge in them; and especially that unchangeableness which Thou hast assigned to their smallest detail, and in virtue of which they will survive the universe, when heaven and earth shall have passed away!

We do not hesitate to say, that when we hear the Son of God quoting the Scriptures, the question of their *Theopneustia* (inspiration) is, in our judgment, settled. We want no further evidence. All the declarations of the Bible unquestionably are divine; but this example of the Saviour of the world at once tells us all. This proof does not require either long or learned researches; the hand of a child can grasp it as powerfully as that of a theologian. If any doubts assail your soul, turn to the Lord of Lords, and behold Him kneeling before the Scriptures!

Follow Jesus in the days of His flesh. See with what serious and tender respect He holds continually the "volume of the book," to quote from its every part, and to show the import of its least details. Observe how each expression, even a word, a psalm, or a historical book, has the authority of a law; mark with what confiding submission He receives all the Scriptures, without ever contesting the sacred canon or even the slightest word of it; because He knows that "salvation comes of the Jews" and that under God's infallible providence the "oracles of God." Did I say, He receives them?

From His childhood to the grave, and from His rising again from the grave to His disappearance in the clouds, what does He bear always about with Him, in the desert, in the temple, in the synagogue? What does He continue to quote with His risen voice, just as the heavens are about to exclaim, "Lift up your heads, ye everlasting doors, and the King of Glory shall come in?" It is the Bible, ever the Bible; it is Moses, the Psalms, and the prophets: He quotes them, He explains them, but how? Why, verse by verse, and word by word. In what alarming and melancholy contrast, after beholding all this, do we see those misguided men present themselves in our days, who dare to judge, contradict, cut out, and mutilate the Scriptures? Who does not tremble, after following with his eyes the Son of Man as He commands the elements, stills the storms, and opens the graves, while, filled with so profound a respect for the sacred volume, He declares that He is one day to judge by that book the quick and the dead? Who does not shudder, whose heart does not bleed, when, after observing this, we venture to step into a college and see the professor's chair occupied by a poor mortal, learned, miserable, a sinner, responsible, yet handling God's Word irreverently; when we follow him as he goes through this deplorable task before a body of youths, destined to be the guides of a whole people — youths capable of doing so much good if guided to the heights of the faith and of so much evil if trained to question those Scriptures which they must one day preach! With what arrogance and self-complacence do these deluded men parade their vain notions of their hypotheses! They retrench, they add, they praise, they blame, and they pity the simplicity of those who, reading the Bible as Jesus Christ himself read it, become like him attached to it and see no error in the Word of God. Where Jesus Christ had no doubts, they decide what

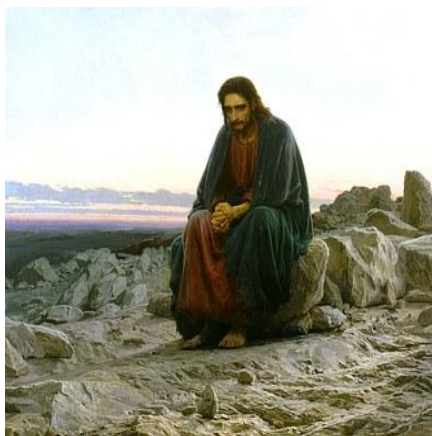
interlineations or retrenchments Holy Scripture shall undergo; they lop off words or even whole chapters which they understand not; and they denounce it as containing mistakes, ill-grounded or inconclusive arguments, prejudices, rash assertions, and ignorant vulgar conceits!

The Lord pardon the necessity of recording the fearful dilemma; but the alternative is inevitable. Either Jesus Christ exaggerated and raved when He thus quoted the Scriptures, or these daring and unhappy men unwittingly blaspheme the Divine Majesty. Deeply painful it is to us to pen such a sentence. God is our witness that our first desire was to forbear the expression of it and afterwards to boot it out; but we can venture to affirm under a deep sense of what becomes us that it is in obedience and in love we have retained it. Alas! After the lapse of a few years, the teachers and their pupils will be consigned to a common tomb; they will wither like the green herb; but not one particle of a letter of this divine book will then have passed away; and as certain as the Bible is truth and has changed the face of the world, as certainly shall we see the Son come in the clouds of heaven and judge by His eternal Word the secret thoughts of all men! "All flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: but the word of the Lord endureth forever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you;" this is the word which will judge us.

Now, then, we proceed to close our proofs by reviewing, under this aspect, the ministry of Jesus Christ. Let us follow Him from the age of twelve to His descent into the grave, or rather, to His passing into the cloud in which He went out of sight; and throughout the whole course of that incomparable career, let us see what the Scriptures were in the eye of Him who "upholds all things by the word of His power." Heb. 1:3; John 12:48; Matt. 25:31; 1 Pet. 1:24, 25. First of all, let us contemplate Him at the age of twelve years. He grew, like one of the children of men, in wisdom and in stature; He is in the midst of the doctors in the temple of Jerusalem; He astonishes with His answers those who hear Him; for, said they, "He knows the Scriptures without having studied them." Behold Him from the time He commenced His ministry. See Him filled with the Holy Ghost; He is led into the wilderness, there to sustain, as the first Adam did in Eden, a mysterious contest

with the powers of darkness. The impure spirit dares to approach Him, bent on His overthrow; does the Son of God, He who was come to destroy the works of the devil, resist him? With the Bible only. The sole weapon in His divine hands during this threefold assault was the sword of the Spirit, the Bible. Three times successively He quotes the book of Deuteronomy: 8:3; 6:16; 6:13; and 10:20; Matt. 4:1-11. At each new temptation, He, the Word made flesh, defends Himself by a sentence from the oracles of God, and even by a sentence whose whole force lies in the employment of one or

two words: in the first place, of these words (ἄρτω μόνῳ) bread alone; afterwards, of these, thou shalt not tempt the Lord (οὐκ ἐκπειράσεις Κύριον) and finally, of these two words (Θεὸν προσκυνήσεις) thou shalt worship God.



What an example for us! His only answer, His only defense, is "it is written." "Get thee hence, Satan, for it is written," and as soon as this terrible and mysterious conflict ended, angels came and ministered unto Him.

But let us further and particularly remark that of such authority is each word in the Scriptures in the estimation of the Son of Man that the unclean

spirit himself, (a being so mighty of evil, who knew the Saviour's estimate of the words of the Bible,) could not devise a more secure way of operating upon His will than by citing (partially, however) a verse of the ninety-first Psalm, and immediately Jesus, to confound him, contents Himself with once more replying, "it is written."

Thus commenced His priestly ministry--by the use of the Scriptures. And thus it was that, soon afterwards, He entered upon His prophetic ministry by the use of the Scriptures.

Let us further follow Him when, engaged in His word, He goes from place to place doing good; exercising in poverty, His creative power always for the relief of others, and never

for Himself. He speaks, and things have being; He casts out devils, stills the tempest, and raises the dead. In the midst of all these marvels, observe how great is His regard for the Scriptures. The Word is always with Him. He bears it about, not in His hands (He knows it entirely), but in His memory and matchless heart. Observe Him when He speaks of it: when He unfolds the sacred volume, it is as if a door in heaven were opened to enable us to hear the voice of Jehovah. With what reverence, with what subjection, does He set forth its contents, commenting upon and quoting them word by word! This was now all His business to heal and to preach the Scriptures; as it was afterwards to die and accomplish them!

Observe Him, "as His custom was," entering a synagogue on the Sabbath day; for (we are told) "He taught in their assemblies" (Luke 4:15-16). He, "the eternal Wisdom, ... from everlasting when there were no depths, before the mountains were settled, or the hills brought forth" (Prov. 8:22-25) He rises from His seat, takes the Bible, opens at Isaiah, and reads a few sentences, then closes the book, sits down, and whilst the eyes of all assembled were fixed on Him, He says, "This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears" (Luke 4:21).

Observe Him traversing Galilee. What does He there? Still occupied with "the volume of the book," explaining it line after line, and word by word, and claiming our respect for its least expressions as much as He would for the law of "ten commandments" uttered upon Mount Sinai.

Observe Him again in Jerusalem at the pool of Bethesda. What does He call upon the people to do? "Search the Scriptures" (John 5:39).

Observe Him in the holy place, in the midst of which He does not shrink from declaring, "that in this place there is One greater than the temple" (Matt. 12:6). Follow Him before the Pharisees and Sadducees whilst He alternately rebukes both as He had done Satan, in these words, "It is written."

Hear Him answering the Sadducees, who denied the resurrection of the body. How does He refute them? By one single word from an historical passage in the Bible; by a single verb in the present tense, instead of that same verb in the past. "Ye do greatly err," said He to them, "because ye know not the Scriptures." "Have ye not read what God has declared unto you, in saying, I am the God of Abraham?" It is thus that

He proves to them the doctrine of the resurrection. God, on Mount Sinai, 400 years after the death of Abraham, said to Moses, not "I was" but "I am the God of Abraham" (Matt.

22:31-32). I am so now, **אֲנִי אֱלֹהֵי אַבְרָהָם**, which the

Holy Ghost translates **Ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ Θεὸς Ἀβραάμ** there is therefore a resurrection; for God is not the God of the few handfuls of dust, of the dead, of annihilated humanity: He is the God of the living. Those you speak of there lie before Him.

Observe Him afterwards among the Pharisees. It is still by the letter of the word that He confounds them.

Some few who had already followed Him to the borders of Judea beyond Jordan came and inquired His doctrines respecting marriage and divorce. What did the Lord Jesus do? He might certainly have answered with authority and given His own laws. Is He not Himself King of kings and Lord of lords? But not so; it is to the Bible He appeals in order to show the foundation of the doctrine, and this He does in a few simple words taken from a purely historical passage in the book of Genesis (Gen. 1:27; 2:24). "Have you not read, that He who made them at the beginning made a man and a woman; so that they are no longer two, but one single flesh? What therefore God has joined let not man separate" (Matt. 19:4-6).

But hear Him especially when in the temple He desires to prove to other Pharisees, from the Scriptures, the divinity of the expected Messiah. Here again, in order to demonstrate it, He lays stress upon the use of a single word, selected from the book of Psalms. "If Messiah be the Son of David," he observes, "how then doth David by the Spirit call him lord, when (in Psalm 110) he said, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand? If David call him Lord, how is he his son?" (Matt. 22:43)

How was it that among the Pharisees there were none to answer Him? What! Would you insist upon a single and this too in a sentence taken from an eminently lyric composition, in which the royal poet might, without risk, indulge a fervid style and use exaggerated expressions and words which doubtless he had not duly weighed in his mind before he put them into his psalmody? Would you pursue the method, at once fanatical and servile, of minutely interpreting each

expression? Would you revere even to the letter of the Scriptures? Would you ground a doctrine upon a word?

Yes, answers the Saviour, I would. Yes, I would rest on a word because that word is from God, and with one word He created light. To cut short all your objections, I declare to you that it was by the Spirit that David wrote all the words of his Psalms; and I ask you, how, if the Messiah is his Son, could David by the Spirit call him Lord when he said, "The Lord said unto my Lord"?

Students of the word of God, and you especially who are designed to be its ministers, and who, as your preparation for preaching it, would desire first of all to have received it into a good and honest heart, behold what every saying, every single word of the Book of God, was in the regard of your Master. Go and do likewise! But more than this. Again let us listen to him, even on the cross. There He poured out His soul as an offering for sin; all His bones were out of joint; He was poured out as water; His heart was like wax, melted in the midst of His bowels; His tongue cleaved to His jaws; He was about to give up His spirit to His Father. But, previous to this, what do we find Him do? He desires to collect His remaining strength in order to recite a psalm which the Church of Israel had sung on her religious festivals for a thousand years, and which told over, one after another, all His sorrows and all His prayers: "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani (my God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me)?" He does even more than this: listen to Him. There remained in the Scriptures one word which had not yet been fulfilled. Vinegar had still to be given Him on that cross (this the Holy Ghost had declared a thousand years before in the 69th Psalm). "After this," it is written, "Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst. When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, He said, It is finished: and having bowed His head, He gave up the ghost." When David sang the 69th Psalm on Shoshannim and the 22nd Psalm on Aijeleth, did He know the prophetic meaning of all these words, of those hands and feet (John 19:28-30) of the hands and feet pierced, of the gall and vinegar administered, of a vesture appropriated by lot, of people shaking the head and putting the lip in derision? It matters little to us whether He understood it--the Holy Ghost did; and David, says Jesus Christ, spake by the Spirit. The heavens and the earth are to

pass away; but there is not in this book the particle of a letter which will pass away without being fulfilled. (John 10:35)

Nevertheless, we are called to observe something yet more striking, if it be possible. Jesus Christ rises from the tomb; He has conquered death; He is about to return to the Father, to reassume that glory which He had with Him before the world was. Follow Him in His remaining rapid movements upon the earth. What words will flow from that mouth to which utterance has been restored by resurrection from the dead?-- words of Holy Scripture. Again He quotes, explains, and preaches it. In the first place, we find Him on the way to Emmaus, accompanying Cleopas and his friend; next in the upper room; and afterwards on the borders of the lake. What does He do? He expounds the Scriptures; beginning at Moses, and continuing through the Prophets and Psalms, He shows them the things concerning Himself, He opens their minds to understand them, and causes their hearts to burn whilst talking with them. (Luke 24:27, 44)

But we have not yet done. All these quotations demonstrate in what estimation the Bible was held by Him "in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Col. 2:3) and "by whom all things subsist" (Col. 1:17). But we must further produce two declarations and one example of our Lord, touching the letter of Scripture: "It is easier," He has said, "for heaven and earth to pass, than for one particle of a letter

(κεραία) of the Law to fail" (Luke 16:17); and by the term law, Jesus Christ understood the whole of the Scriptures, and even more particularly the book of Psalms. (John 10:34; 12:34)

What words could be conceived which would express with more force and precision the principle we are maintaining than do the foregoing? I mean the principle of the entire Theopneustia (inspiration) and everlasting character of all the parts, and even of the very letter of the Scripture. Students of the word of God, behold then the theology of your Master! Be such theologians as He was; have the same Bible as the Son of God!

But let us hear another declaration, pronounced by our Lord in His sermon on the mount: "Until heaven and earth pass away, there shall not pass from the law a single iota, nor the tittle of a letter" (Matt. 5:18). All the words of the Scriptures,

even to the least letter and particle of a letter, are equal to the words of Jesus Christ Himself; for He has also said, "Heaven and earth shall one day pass away, but my words shall not pass away" (Luke 21:33).

The men who oppose these doctrines ask us if we go so far as to pretend that holy Scripture is a law from God even in its words, as hyssop or an oak is the work of God even in its leaves? We answer, with the fathers of the church, Yes we do; -or rather, Jesus Christ our Saviour and Master lifts His hand to heaven and replies, Yes, even in its words-- even to

(ἰῶτα ἓν, ἢ μία κεφαλαί) a single iota or particle of a letter!

Having recorded these two declarations, let us finally consider one of the last examples of our Lord, to which we have not yet referred.

It is still Jesus Christ who is about to quote the Scriptures; but this He does in claiming for their least words such an authority as compels us to range ourselves among the most ardent disciples of a verbal inspiration; nor do we think that, if all the writings of our theologians, even the most decided in orthodoxy, were produced, there could be found among them the example of so profound a reverence for the letter of the Scriptures and the plenitude of their Theopneustia (inspiration).

It was on a winter day. Jesus was walking in the colonnade of the Eastern Porch of the Temple; the Jews come round about Him; and He then (John 10:27) says to them, "I give eternal life to my sheep; they shall never perish, neither shall any one pluck them out of my hand. I and my Father are one. They were amazed at his language; but he continued to rebuke them unmoved until at length the Jews accused Him of blasphemy and took up stones to stone Him, saying, "We stone thee, because, being a man, thou makest thyself God." (John 10:27 and following)

We would now invite special attention to the several features of the Lord's reply to this. He proceeds to quote an expression from one of the Psalms, and on this single expression to found the whole of His doctrine: "for," says John (John 5:18), "He made Himself equal with God." To defend the most sublime and mysterious of His doctrines, and to commend to our

belief the most marvelous of His claims, He rests upon an expression of the Seventy-Second Psalm. But, mark! Previously to uttering this expression, He deliberately pauses for a moment and then in a solemn parenthesis adds with impressive authority, “and the Scripture cannot be destroyed.”(*καὶ οὐ δύναται λυθῆναι ἡ γραφή.*)

Have we sufficiently felt the force of this? Not only is our Lord’s argument founded entirely upon the use which the Psalmist has made of a single expression; and not only does He proceed to build upon it the most amazing of His doctrines; but further, in thus quoting the book of Psalms, and in order to enable us to comprehend that in His estimation the book is wholly and throughout a writing of the Holy Ghost, in which each word ought to be to us a law, Jesus calls it by the name of Law and says to the Jews, “Is it not written in your law, I said ye are gods?” These words occur in the middle of a psalm; they might appear to have been the result of inconsiderate fervor on the part of the prophet Asaph or a fanciful creation of his poetic genius. And if the plenary inspiration of all that is written were not admitted, we might be tempted to view them as indiscreet and to think that their imprudent use by the psalmist might have led the people into customs elsewhere rebuked by the word of God and into idolatrous notions. And here we would once more inquire, how did it happen, that some rationalist scribe of the Israelitish universities was not found under Solomon’s porch to say to Him, “Lord, You cannot take that expression as Your authority. The use which Asaph has made of it may have been neither considerate nor becoming. Although inspired in the thoughts of his piety, he doubtless did not weigh his least words with jealous apprehension as to the use which might be made of them a thousand years after he should cease to exist. It would therefore be rash to pretend to lay stress upon them?”

But now mark how the Saviour anticipates the profane boldness of such an evasion. He solemnly calls to mind that He had just uttered words which would be blasphemy in the mouth of an archangel, “I and my Father are one,” but he interrupts Himself and immediately remarks, “Is it not

written in your law, I said ye are gods?" He then pauses, and fixing His eyes with authority upon the Doctors who surrounded Him adds, "The scripture cannot be destroyed." As if He had said, beware! There is not in the sacred books either an expression which can be questioned or a word which can be neglected. That which I quote to you from the eighty-second Psalm is traced by the hand of Him who made the heavens.

If therefore He has been pleased to give the name of gods to men, in so far as they were the anointed and types of the true Christ--of the supreme anointed one--being at the same time fully aware that they "would die like men;" how much more will it become Me to take to Myself the titles of the Everlasting Father (Isa. 9:7; John 6:27), Emmanuel---the God man, doing the works of My Father as Him whom God the Father hath sealed?

We will here ask every serious reader, (and we wish it to be remarked that our argument is entirely independent of the orthodox or Socinian interpretations of these words of Jesus Christ)--we will here ask: is it possible to admit that the Being who made such a use of the Scriptures did not believe in their plenary inerrant and verbal inspiration? And had He imagined that the words of the Bible were left to the free choice and pious fantasies of the sacred writers, would He ever have resorted to the thought of grounding such arguments on such an expression? The Lord Jesus, our Saviour and our Judge, believed therefore in the most complete inspiration of the Scriptures; and for Him, the first rule of all interpretation, and the commencement of every exposition, was this simple maxim applied to the least expressions of the written word: "and the Scripture cannot be destroyed."

May the Prince of life, the Light of the world, make us subject to His authority! What He believed, let us receive. What He revered, let us revere. Let that word, too, which His heart of redeeming love and all the thoughts of His holy humanity were subject to, let that word, we say, be bound upon our defiled hearts and gain the mastery over every emotion of our fallen nature. Let us seek God's Word in its least expressions; nourish with it daily all the roots of our being; that we may be like a tree planted by running waters, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaves never wither. Let us, in a word, be

like the just One in the Psalms, who so delighted in the law of the Lord that He meditated therein day and night. Then will the Holy Ghost, who wrote it word by word, also trace it with his almighty finger upon the tables of our heart; and cause us wonderfully to hear these words of God our Saviour: “be thou healed, and saved: son, thy sins are forgiven thee; thy faith hath saved thee, go in peace! To him that believeth, all things are possible.”

Lily stepped over to John’s side and put her arm around him. “Honey,” she said, “it sounds like the Bible is pretty clear, doesn’t it?”

“Yes,” John said, “it sure does.”

“I just keep remembering Christ’s temptation in the wilderness,” said Lily. “And the thought that runs through my mind is this:

“When the devil tempted Christ in the wilderness, when Jesus quoted ‘man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that proceeded out of the mouth of God,’ Satan didn’t say—some of those words in Scripture you know are not really God’s words but are man’s words. If Jesus had not been able to rely on the validity of every word being from God, could he have withstood the devil like he did? Would not the devil have tried to tempt or unsettle him on this point? It seems strange that this did not happen. Could it be that it is because the devils believe and tremble and they knew Jesus was so settled on this point that they would have no chance of unsettling Him?”

“That’s a good thought,” John exclaimed!

Lily continued, “I can’t help but think of 2 Kings 17:36 where God says:

“‘But the LORD, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt with great power and a stretched-out arm, Him shall ye fear, and Him shall ye worship, and to Him shall ye do sacrifice. And the statutes, and the ordinances, and the law, and the commandment, which He wrote for you, ye shall observe to do for evermore; and ye shall not fear other gods.’”³¹⁷

“It says that He, that is God, wrote not just the commandments but the whole law, even the part that Moses wrote under inspiration. It is laying out a principle that all inspired writings, even if not written

³¹⁷ 2 Kings 17:36-37

with God's own finger, are written by Him. Then, if we put that with Titus 1:2 where it says:

“‘In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began;’³¹⁸

“We see that the Holy Spirit, through the Bible, affirms that God, who is all-knowing, cannot lie and that He wrote the whole Bible. This would leave no room for mistakes in inspiration. One remembers that God is given a special descriptive name in the Scripture, and it is said of His works, ‘He is the Rock, His work is perfect: for all His ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is He.’” Deut. 32:4, John 17:17.

Then John said, “I think of the prophets of old. I can’t help but remember what the Lord told Jeremiah at the time God called him to be a prophet. If you remember, Honey, God told him: ‘Before I formed thee ... I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.’ Jeremiah 1:5. This was encouraging and no doubt nice to hear, but also petrifying to Jeremiah. He had a real problem. He was terrified that he would get something wrong, mess it up, and use a word that was not quite right. So ‘Then he said, Ah, Lord God! behold, I cannot speak: for I am a child.’ Verse 6. But the Lord had the solution for it; for every prophet He had ever called was but dust and a weak mortal. He told Jeremiah, ‘Say not, I am a child: ... whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak.... Then the Lord put forth His hand, and touched my mouth. And the Lord said unto me, Behold, I have put My words in thy mouth’ verses 7-9. Later in Jeremiah’s ministry, God once again reassures him that, ‘Thou shalt be as My mouth.’ Jeremiah 15:19. The prophecy/promise of Deuteronomy 18:18 also comes to my mind, where it says that He would put His words into the prophet’s mouth. Then just think of 1 Corinthians 2:13. It says: ‘Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.’

“How could the Bible not be of divine composition, and how could a true prophet ever get inspired writings wrong under such circumstances as these?” John asked.

Lily spoke softly, “You know I can’t forget Balaam’s donkey. If God could inspire a donkey with the prophetic gift and give the exact human words to that donkey so he could get the exact accurate

³¹⁸ Titus 1:2

message he wanted to get through to Balaam, wouldn't God also inspire the words of human prophets enough to get things accurate in inspired writings?"

"That's a really good point, Honey, but do I smell something burning?" John said.

"Oh no," cried Lily, "that's the bread! I forgot all about it." Quickly, she ran out of the room. Reverently, John laid down his Bible. He now had an even greater respect for that great gift from heaven. The powerful, perfectly inerrant Word of God!!

"In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began;" Titus 1:2 see also Heb. 6:18

"...It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Math. 4:4

"God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar..." Rom. 3:4

"I have not written unto you because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it, and that no lie is of the truth." 1 John 2:21

"For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth." Eph 5:9

"Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth." John 16:13

"For the word of the LORD is right; and all his works are done in truth." Psalms 33:4

"If the Bible is not inerrant...then how can anyone possibly assert it is infallible in its revelation of God's

will? At the best this could only be guesswork if it is conceded the Bible is not inerrant, for we would possess absolutely no guarantee that it was not mistaken in its claims concerning the way of salvation. Manifestly, the sources of error in the so- called ‘incidental’ ‘minor’ errors would also operate on the minds of the prophets as they wrote the details of the plan of salvation. But we have absolute certainty that the Bible is infallible, inerrant, in all that the writers wrote.” (Adventist Authors, Dr. Russel R. Standish & Dr. Colin D. Standish, *The Greatest of all the Prophets* p. 86)

“Those who do not hold the inerrancy of scripture... are at the mercy of the fallen changing culture. And Scripture is thus bent to conform to the changing world spirit of the day.” (Dr. Francis Schaeffer, *The Complete Works of Francis Schaeffer, Vol. 4, p. 341*)

**“If, as a matter of fact, the revelation of God is not free of error, the message of Christianity must ever remain in doubt.”
(Dr. EDWARD J. YOUNG)**



Ellen White & the Bible

Lily closed her notebook she had been taking notes in. She certainly had found some good quotes in Mrs. White's writings on inspiration and the Bible. It was always hard for her to find time to help John with their research, but she always liked to try. In between her housework, she would snatch little bits here and there. She knew John would be interested in what she had found. She also knew that he would want to see a certain letter that had come in the mail that very day. They had sent out letters a long time before to four Seventh-day Adventist ministers in charge of prominent conservative ministries in Adventism, begging for help. Many months had passed with no response. Finally, they had given up hope that anyone would ever give an answer, but now here it was! They had gotten one response. (None of the other ministers ever did respond.) Lily was excited! Maybe this would hold the solution to all these problems and would rectify everything! Then they could get back to normal!!! She could hardly wait to tell John. But she decided to wait until their customary get-together after supper to give the letter to him.

After supper, they gathered in the living room. Lily pulled out the letter and handed it to John. His eyes got wide as he took it and tore open the envelope. "So, we got an answer," he said. Quickly, his eyes scanned the two pages and then, with obvious disappointment showing in his voice, he said, "Well, Dear, I fear this is not much. He just says that as a student in our Adventist seminary in the 1960s, he had to face these same questions and was forced to come to the conclusion that the Bible and Ellen White's writings have mistakes and are not inerrant.³¹⁹ He states that I have found some of the mistakes in Ellen White, and that we are right that there are mistakes. He writes that he is a great defender of the Spirit of Prophecy (Ellen White) and that he hopes we will not lose faith in inspiration. But he

³¹⁹ His theological position on inspiration would be termed Limited Inerrancy.

does not answer any of the questions I posed in my letter as to why this theory of inspiration of the White Estate is not right. He just ignores it. Nor does he give even one Bible verse to support his position. Well, I feel an affection for the poor man. At least he answered. The others didn't even try."

"I would guess that is because they had no answer," said Lily.

"Yes, I would imagine so. One of those who did not answer was a minister who teaches a class in one of our conservative colleges on the Spirit of Prophecy as well as having his own ministry. He also had a secretary.³²⁰ All of them were older, well-experienced ministers and some of the best-informed conservative ministers we could find. This one who wrote to us is well-known in Adventism and has written books as well as being famous for defending our historic beliefs."

"I know," said Lily, "I am shocked that he believes the Bible has mistakes and is not the inerrant word of God. I would never have believed it!"

"I know," said John. "It was rumored in the past that he was even offered the presidency of one of our most prominent and conservative independent colleges. But I feel sorry for him. He says that 'we might wish that inspiration was more than it is but it is not.' And why has he come to this conclusion? Well, it is obvious that it is primarily in order to justify the mistakes in Ellen White. He has been cheated out of his Bible and doesn't even realize it. That is why this whole doctrine pushed by the White Estate is so dangerous. It is a sad fruit of Ellen White's ministry. But he has risked writing to us because, to his way of thinking, he wants to help. He has risked exposing himself in order to try to help us. And I don't wish to hurt him by exposing him to the public on this matter unless it was really necessary to uphold truth. I just don't think it would be Christ-like,"³²¹ said John.

"He is a victim of this deception just like the rest of us," exclaimed Lily, as she reached for her notes and opened them. "John, I have some of Ellen White's quotes on the Bible that I found and would like to share. Listen to this:

"I saw that God had especially guarded the Bible; yet when copies of it were few, learned men had in some instances changed the words,

³²⁰ To our knowledge, all the ministers we wrote had secretaries. We also sent traditional "snail mail" letters.

³²¹ There are also copyright laws in regards to private letters.

thinking that they were making it more plain, when in reality they were mystifying that which was plain, by causing it to lean to their established views, which were governed by tradition. But I saw that the Word of God, as a whole, is a perfect chain, one portion linking into and explaining another. True seekers for truth need not err; for not only is the Word of God plain and simple in declaring the way of life, but the Holy Spirit is given as a guide in understanding the way to life therein revealed.’³²²

“Some look to us gravely and say, “Don’t you think there might have been some mistake in the copyist or in the translators?” This is all probable, and the mind that is so narrow that it will hesitate and stumble over this possibility or probability would be just as ready to stumble over the mysteries of the Inspired Word, because their feeble minds cannot see through the purposes of God. Yes, they would just as easily stumble over plain facts that the common mind will accept, and discern the Divine, and to which God’s utterance is plain and beautiful, full of marrow and fatness. All the mistakes will not cause trouble to one soul, or cause any feet to stumble, that would not manufacture difficulties from the plainest revealed truth.’³²³

“It is interesting how these quotes, while not attacking the inspiration of the Bible directly, do attack it indirectly and very subtly by attacking the doctrine of the preservation of Scripture. Notice these words from the first statement: ‘men had in some instances changed the words, ... But I saw that the Word of God, as a whole, is a perfect chain, one portion linking into and explaining another. True seekers for truth need not err...’ It is obvious that she is speaking of the Bible that the common person is using, which in her day was, for the most part, the Received Text as given in the King James Bible. It is interesting to note that one of Westcott and Hort’s theories is that the Received Text that the King James Version was based on differed so much from one or two of their favorite manuscripts because the early church leaders changed it to try to improve the Bible;³²⁴ which dovetails nicely with Mrs. White’s accusation in the above statement. But this theory of Westcott and Hort that was prevalent in her day and even endorsed by some today has thoroughly been debunked by Dean Burgon, Dr. Edward F. Hills, Dr. Waite, and others work on the subject. However, the true Christian of faith is not left to depend on

³²² *Early Writings*, p. 220-221

³²³ 146, Ms 16, 1888; (ISM 15-18).

³²⁴ See, *Why We Hold to the KJV Bible*, by David Cloud, p. 47-48

the ever-changing opinions of scholars but has the God-given light of the testimony of scripture as a sure foundation for his feet to rest upon (Heb. 11:6; John 17:17; Deut. 32:4; etc.). When supposed “science” seems to conflict with the Scriptures, we can know that a mistake has been made by the scientist or scholar. This is not blind faith, for this has been demonstrated in the field of Evolution, which over the years has had to slowly backtrack on one thing after another. In the field of modern biblical criticism, this has even been demonstrated to a higher degree.³²⁵ Time and time again, these men’s guesses, which they have maintained were certain facts, which have conflicted with the testimony of scripture, have been eventually proven wrong.³²⁶ God does not leave His people at the mercy of such men. The Bible is a firm foundation, and its testimony we can fully stand on. This testimony, as we will soon see, is clear on the preservation of scripture.

“But the above concept of Mrs. White’s, that God did not preserve the Scripture, goes against God’s declaration in His Word. God has promised and commanded that: ‘The words of the LORD are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. Thou shalt keep them, O LORD, thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever.’³²⁷ One must remember that the term law was

³²⁵ It is beyond the scope of this book to go deeper into this subject here. However, we refer the reader to *Why We Hold to the KJV Bible*, by David Cloud, 2006; Also, *The King James Defended*, Dr. Edward F. Hills; *The Revision Revised*, John Burgon, Dean of Chichester. We also refer you to the *Trinitarian Bible Society’s* web site for more info. on manuscripts and Bible versions <https://www.tbsbibles.org/page/articles>.

Then, the articles at Dr. Waite’s web site:

http://www.biblefortoday.org/idx_Pages/idx_articles.htm

Also, you can get Dr. B.G. Wilkinson’s book *Our Authorized Version Vindicated* at: www.amazon.com/s?k=our+authorized+version+vindicated&ref=nb_sb_noss). In addition, Pastor David Cloud has done extensive research into primary sources for almost forty years on the subject and has written books on it. Some of them are for free download on his website at <https://www.wayoflife.org/>

³²⁶ For some examples demonstrating this, we refer the reader to the book, *An Unshakable Faith*, David Cloud, 2015.

³²⁷ Psalms 12:6-7. Many modern Bible translators do not believe in the preservation of Scripture. This is reflected in the way they often translate this Psalm in newer versions so that it does away with the preservation of the words and instead applies it only to God’s people. They follow the Greek and Latin translations instead of the Hebrew. Their excuse for doing so is that in the Hebrew, the gender between two of the words does not match according to normal grammatical rules like they should. So they say that it can only apply to God’s people. However, they fail to take into account that in the Psalms there are a number of gender disagreements between words in other places that we know go together (accepted rule of gender discordance in the Psalms). Furthermore, the rule of proximity requires that it refer to God’s words being preserved as the King James has it. Among others, this was pointed out by Dr. Thomas Strouse of Emmanuel Baptist Theological Seminary of Newington, Connecticut, in 2001 (currently with Bible

the name for not just the commandments but for a significant part of the Old Testament in Christ's day. 'Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.' ³²⁸ 'If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken.' ³²⁹ 'But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.' ³³⁰ 'The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand forever.' ³³¹ 'Thy word is true from the beginning: and every one of *thy righteous judgments endureth for ever*.' ³³² Give ear, O my people, to my law: incline your ears to the words of my mouth. I will open my mouth in a parable: I will utter dark sayings of old: which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us. We will not hide them from their children, showing to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, and his strength, and his wonderful works that he hath done. For he established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers, that they should *make them known to their children*: that the generation to come might know them, even the

Baptist Seminary). Speaking of this Psalm, he said, "...the rule of proximity requires 'words' to be the natural, contextual antecedent for 'them'. Second, it is not uncommon, especially in the Psalter, for feminine plural noun synonyms for the 'words' of the Lord to be the antecedent for masculine plural pronouns/pronominal suffixes, which seem to 'masculinize' the verbal extension of the patriarchal God of the Old Testament. ...[B]oth the context and the grammar (proximity rule and accepted gender discordance) of Ps. 12:6-7 demand the teaching of the preservation of the Lord's pure words for every generation." (Quoted in: *Way of Life Encyclopedia of the Bible*, 7th Edition, p. 509). The way the Hebrew has it, it is a possibility that it could also include God's people as well as God's words. Indeed, the KJV leaves this open as a possibility, and the Geneva Bible translated it to include both God's words and His people. Martin Luther even wrote a hymn that had two stanzas based on this text that interpreted it as the preservation of God's words and His people. It is really sad that some translators have allowed their biases to affect their translations of God's Word. For more information on this verse or on the Bible version issue, we refer you to *Faith vs. The Modern Bible Versions: A Course on Bible Texts and Versions*, by David Cloud 2005; also, *Way of Life Encyclopedia of the Bible & Christianity* 7th Edition, 2020, articles on "Preservation" and "Bible Versions," and last of all, *The Burning Bush*, the theological journal of the Far Eastern Bible College (Presbyterian), takes a scholarly look at this text and the way it has been translated and interpreted over the years. It looks at it in light of the Hebrew, context, and other texts of scripture. This article proves the validity of the traditional translation found in the King James Bible and also corroborates the testimony of Dr. Thomas Strouse quoted above. The article is over thirty pages. It can be found online for free download and is entitled: *God's Promise to Preserve His Word (PS 12:5-7) By: Shin Yen Gil. (The Burning Bush, Vol. 6, Number 2 (July 2000), p. 150)*

³²⁸ Mathew 24:35

³²⁹ John 10:35

³³⁰ 1 Peter 1:25

³³¹ Isa. 40:8

³³² Psalm 119:160

children which should be born; who should arise and *declare them to their children*: that they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments.’³³³ and ‘for verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, **one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law**, till all be fulfilled.’³³⁴ ‘Concerning *thy testimonies*, I have known of old that thou hast *founded them for ever*.’³³⁵ ‘Sanctify them through thy truth: **thy word is truth**.’³³⁶ ‘Being born again, **not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible**, by the **word of God**, which liveth and abideth for ever.’³³⁷ ‘**For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven**.’³³⁸

“While today the Biblical doctrine of preservation is being thrown away like so many other truths of the Bible, it is worth remembering that the Reformers believed in the full preservation of scripture in the original languages. This is demonstrated by the statements of faith given around that era. For instance, the *Westminster Confession of Faith* states in connection with the scriptures that: ‘**singular care and providence, kept pure in all ages, are therefore authentical**’ (1:8). The same wording was used in the London Baptist Confession of 1677 as well as their Philadelphia Confession of 1742. Also, the Helvetic Consensus Formula (1675) states:

“‘God, the supreme Judge, not only took care to have His Word, which is the “power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth” (Rom 1:16), committed to writing by Moses, the prophets, and the apostles, but **has also watched and cherished it with paternal care ever since it was written up to the present time, so that it could not be corrupted by craft of Satan or fraud of man. Therefore, the church justly ascribes it to His singular grace and goodness that she has, and will have to the end of the world, a “sure word of prophecy”** (2 Pet. 1:19) and “holy Scriptures” (2 Tim. 3:15), from which, though heaven and earth perish, “one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass” (Matt. 5:18).’³³⁹

³³³ Psalm 78:1–7

³³⁴ Matthew 5:18

³³⁵ Psalm 119:152

³³⁶ John 17:17

³³⁷ 1 Pet. 1:23

³³⁸ Psalm 119:89

³³⁹ As quoted in *Theology for Every Christian*, by: Dr. Timothy Tow & Dr. Jeffree Khoo p.

“Thus, we see that the statements made by Ellen White tearing down the preservation of the Bible are not taught in scripture and also were not the belief of the men of God of past ages. Rather, once again, we have a new doctrine promoted by Ellen White that tears down the Bible and was first promoted by the higher critics before her. Again, one can’t help but marvel at the good fortune of these critics and Bible destroyers to be able to uncover truths that must have been hidden to the Christian world for almost two thousand years before them. How sad that Mrs. White would endorse this view and once again tear down the Bible. Let’s look at another one of her quotes:

“‘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. ³⁴⁰ 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 and thoughts 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.’ ³⁴¹

“Here again we see her lowering the Bible. She says: God ‘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.’ Oh, really? Is His logic not represented by the Bible? What happens then to the challenge of God Himself when He says:

“‘Come now, and let us reason together,...’ ³⁴²

“If God’s not capable of having His reason displayed enough to have it on trial in scripture, then surely it would not be there enough to truly reason with Him. We also see her promoting thought inspiration

³⁴⁰ This statement of Ellen White’s, as well as the other statement quoted in this chapter where Ellen White asserts that God is not the composer of scripture other than the Ten Commandments, shows that when Ellen White refers in other places to God as the author of scripture, she is using the word in a different sense than is normally used. She is giving it a completely foreign meaning than that which is normally understood by Bible-believing Christians of the past and present.

³⁴¹ Manuscript 24-1886

³⁴² Isa. 1:18

that the higher critics before her came up with. Our next note of explanation (see below) also sheds light on this quote as well. However, let's first look at another statement of hers:

“The truths revealed are all "given by inspiration of God" (2 Tim. 3:16); yet they are expressed in the words of men. The Infinite One, by His Holy Spirit, has shed light into the minds and hearts of His servants. He has given dreams and visions, symbols and figures; and those to whom the truth was thus revealed have themselves embodied the thought in human language. The Ten Commandments were spoken by God Himself, and were written by His own hand. **They are of divine, and not of human composition**. But the Bible, with its God-given truths expressed in the language of men, presents a union of the divine and the human. Such a union existed in the nature of Christ, who was the Son of God and the Son of man. Thus, it is true of the Bible, as it was of Christ, that “the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us” (John 1:14).’³⁴³

“Once again one notices her speaking of thought inspiration and comparing it with the incarnation of Christ. One wonders if these teachings of hers led to the statement being added to the first revision of *Bible Readings for the Home Circle*, which we noticed in a previous chapter, where it says:

“When "the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us," the thought of God was revealed in human flesh. When holy men of God "spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost," the thought of God was revealed in human language. The union of the divine and the human in the manifestation of God's thought in the flesh is declared to be "the mystery of godliness;" and there is the same mystery in the union of the divine thought and human language.’³⁴⁴

“Can anyone not be shocked at this degrading of Christ from God down to merely His thought? But if inspiration is only the thought and not the words, how can one call Jesus the Word? Rather, to be logical, one would have to call Jesus merely the thought of God. The same would logically apply to the Bible. It would have to be called the thought of God rather than the Word of God. It would seem that this teaching of thought inspiration can certainly lead to some dreadful ideas. As we saw in a former chapter, Paul in Rom. 3:2 laid to rest any hope of this theory of Ellen White's being a truth from God. It says:

³⁴³ *The Great Controversy*, Introduction, vi-vii

³⁴⁴ *Bible Readings for the Home*, 1917, p. 23

'Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them [Jews] were committed the oracles of God.' The 1828 Webster Dictionary says that the Latin root word that 'oracles' is derived from means: 'ORACLE, n. [L. oraculum, from oro, **to utter**.]' In other words, Paul is making it plain that the Old Testament Scriptures were inspired down to God controlling the choice of the very words, and therefore they are of God and, for all practical purposes, the very words of God. To leave no possibility of being misunderstood, the Holy Spirit inspired Paul to further elaborate on this in 1 Corinthians 2:13:

"Which things also we speak, **not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth;** comparing spiritual things with spiritual."³⁴⁵

"This states that the words do not come from men but are given by the Holy Ghost. This was also the historic understanding of this text held by the great Christian minds of the past and by God's true church generally through the ages. In Ellen White's quote that we are looking at in this chapter, she claimed the words in the Bible were not from God. But the Holy Spirit in the Bible seems to be saying the opposite. Going on, we see Jesus stating His view of the matter:

"But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by **every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God**."³⁴⁶

"Looking at the context, it is obvious that this statement relates to Scripture. Jesus is calling it the very words that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. How much clearer could it be stated?"³⁴⁷

³⁴⁵ 1 Cor. 2:13

³⁴⁶ Matt. 4:4

³⁴⁷ After composing this chapter and as it was about to go to press, yet another shocking example of what Ellen White's teaching of thought inspiration can lead to was brought to the author's attention. Kasper Ozolin, an Adventist pastor's son who was forced to leave Adventism in order to follow truth and is presently a Baptist theological professor, in an article he authored examines another article printed in *Adventist Today*. The title of the article is: "The Bible is a Dirty Book." In it, the Adventist author attempts, by using old worn-out arguments of Bible destroyers of past years, to prove that the Old Testament often does not represent God but only the men who wrote it. That it is not the word of God but only the words of men that contain the message of God to us. As a result, at times, there are things that are not inspired and even that are theologically wrong because they were merely the expressions and feelings of the men who wrote the Bible but not truly representing God as an author. Therefore, the Adventist editor comes to the conclusion that:

“It reminds one of what Dr. Harold Lindsell, biblical scholar, defender of inerrancy, and former editor of *Christianity Today* magazine, had to say on thought inspiration:

“The Bible contains the words of eternal life, *but not every word in the Bible is a word of eternal life*. Much of it is terribly hard to understand – but even when understood, there’s a surfeit of really bad theology, a horrible lack of respect for human life, and much that is utterly irrelevant to spiritual growth. In its pages, some great ‘holy men of God’ did convey to us the astonishing love of God and God’s desire to save us. But it appears some of the words in the Old Testament and Revelation were written by angry, vengeful men – or, in Ezekiel’s case, possibly even mentally ill men.” (*Adventist Today*, 2023, as quoted in *Proclamation Magazine*, June 29, 2023.)

The Adventist editor of this magazine, who is also the author of this article, goes on to say that it is not just the *Old Testament* that has this problem but also the *New Testament*:

“The *New Testament*, which introduces us to the wonderful figure of Jesus, is not entirely free of taint in this regard either.” (*Ibid.*)

While many Adventists would disagree with this Adventist editor, for they would not dream of taking thought inspiration to its logical and final conclusion, it would seem that Ellen White’s quotes on inspiration, that we have been discussing in this chapter, and her overall teaching on thought inspiration have planted some of the seed that, in this editor’s mind, has borne its nasty fruit. It is also undeniable that those Adventists who would disagree with this progressive Adventist’s viewpoint are seriously crippled in their ability to defend the Bible due to Ellen White’s quotes on inspiration mentioned in this chapter. As Kasper Ozolin so aptly points out in his refutation of this Adventist’s article:

“The rejection of the trustworthiness of Scripture is not peculiar to progressive Adventism, but lies at the very heart of the entire movement, as its prophetess acknowledges:

“‘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.’ (*Ye Shall Receive Power*, p. 225)

“Adventists can (and do) make adamant claims about Ellen G. White’s high view of Scripture, as did GC President Arthur Daniells at her funeral in 1915: ‘No Christian teacher in this generation, no religious reformer in any preceding age, has placed a higher value upon the Bible.’ But White’s teaching of “thought inspiration” is not an isolated phenomenon... As Calvin famously stated: ‘When the Bible speaks, God speaks.’ “To reject the words of the Bible is not merely to claim to have a different hermeneutic; it is to reject the God of the Bible Himself.” (*Proclamation Magazine*, June 29, 2023, Kasper Ozolin).

It is interesting that Kasper Ozolin and I, independently of each other, have recognized the fundamental problem of Ellen White’s downgrade of the Bible.

“‘Inspiration is taken by some to mean that the thoughts of the writers but not the words were inspired. The idea that inspiration extends to the words (verbal inspiration) as well as to the thoughts appears obnoxious to their viewpoint. But thoughts, when committed to writing, must be put into words. And if the words are congruent with the ideas, the words no less than the thoughts take on great importance. Words have specific meanings. To suppose that thoughts are inspired but the words that express them are not to do violence even to the thoughts. This is apparent particularly in those areas of Scripture in which the writers profess to be speaking the very words of God. One cannot limit inspiration to thoughts, for if the words are not inspired, they will not properly convey the thoughts, and if they properly convey the thoughts, then they must be no less inspired than the thoughts.’”³⁴⁸

“Now let’s go on and notice that in the next to last quote we read from her, she casts a shadow on the majority of the Bible by stating that only the Ten Commandments are of divine composition, which of course means that the rest of the Bible is not of divine composition. One wonders where she received this idea. She can’t be saying this just because the Bible writers wrote in human language, for even God himself spoke and wrote the Ten Commandments in human language, for He was communicating to humans and not angels. Another question: Who invented this human language? Was it not invented by God himself for Adam? Just why was it given to Adam? Was it not given presumably so that Adam could communicate with not only Eve but also for Adam to communicate with God and learn spiritual truths? After Adam sinned, did God, when He came to the garden, call Adam in some telepathic communication, or did He not call, ‘Where art thou?’ in the language that he had created for Adam?

“Remember right after creation was finished and presumably this included the creation of language in Adam, God said that it was all very good. Would God say that if there was a flaw in what he created? This language was what Adam used when he left the Garden of Eden after sin. People lived long periods of time, and language would have changed little until the Tower of Babel. At the Tower of Babel, God descended and gave some people different languages. These were not developed in an evolutionary manner but rather given by God, programming it into their minds in an instant. Again, God created language for man. Would this language have been inferior in some

³⁴⁸ *Battle For The Bible*, p. 33

way? Does God do things in an imperfect manner? Even at this late date, people lived quite a long time. So, language would change very slowly. So, between the Tower of Babel and Moses, language could have changed some but probably not significantly. And Moses wrote the first books of the Bible that supposedly, according to Ellen White, were not of divine composition.

“What about the New Testament? God himself came to this earth and spoke to man. If the language then in use was not fit to convey the divine truths to mankind, can one possibly think that God could not have changed man’s language as he did at the Tower of Babel? After all, this would have been no harder than the other miracles God performed in the incarnation of God on this Earth. Just think of the Virgin Birth, for instance. But no, God deemed the common Greek language to be capable of conveying His thoughts to mankind and also His words. In light of these facts, the above quote of Mrs. White’s appears very strange and a subtle lowering of God’s Word to mankind. In thinking of this, as well as her statement in her above quote that God is only the author ³⁴⁹ of the Ten Commandments and not of the rest of the Bible, the words of an old-fashioned conservative Protestant theological professor who has stood against modern apostasy and higher criticism come to mind:

“Every Scripture is God-breathed. This can be said of no other book. It is not the Word of God and the word of man. It is not the Word of God in or through the word of man. It is not the Word of God in spite of its being also the word of man. It is God-breathed... when the men whom God used to write the Scriptures wrote what they did, they were inspired by the Spirit in such a way that the Spirit was the Author of what they wrote. Paul tells us in II Timothy 3:16 that ‘every Scripture,’ i.e., every *writing* of the Bible, ‘is God-breathed.’ God told the men who wrote the Scriptures what to write. And He did so through the Spirit in such a way that God the Holy Spirit is always the Author.... Scripture is a miracle performed by God in the age of

³⁴⁹ Ellen White does refer to God as the “author” of the Bible, but she goes on to say He did not compose it. She has to be using the word “author” in the sense that He was merely the originator of the ideas given and authorized it to be written. This is a big difference from the way the word “author” is usually understood. In this chapter, we and the authorities we quote, other than Ellen White, use the word in the traditional sense of being the composer of the Bible. That is—God inspired the words of Scripture; thus, even though from a purely human perspective men composed the Bible, in reality, God was the real composer and Author. This highlights the difference between the biblical view of the Bible’s inspiration and Ellen White’s. (See also Footnote 340 in this book.)

miracles. It is organically connected with the whole of the miracle of the revelation of God in Christ and is a part of that miracle. It is no more possible to explain, in terms of human thought, the wonder of the Scriptures than it is to explain the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead....

“‘The doctrine of the inspiration of Scripture means that Scripture is *verbally* inspired. In brief, this means that the words of Scripture are precisely the words which the Spirit wanted to be included in Scripture and by which He chose to record the revelation of God. Every word is the Spirit's Word. Not one word is of man's choice... [W]hen men are considered the authors, when human authorship is introduced into the doctrine of inspiration, and when a human element is found in the Bible, the **truth of Scripture is soon lost...** [T]he Scriptures, as the infallibly inspired Word of God, contain no human element.... The languages in which the Scriptures were written were not simply men's inventions, nor part of the evolutionary development of the human race. They were languages which were specially prepared by God to serve as the vehicles of divine revelation. They were uniquely adapted for that purpose. They were given to men that they might serve as the verbal means to convey God's revelation in written form... Some have objected to verbal inspiration on the grounds that the infinite God cannot be made known through finite forms or finite languages. The infinite (God) cannot, they say, be contained in that which is finite (human language). **This is a flat denial of revelation.** After all, the whole creation, formed by the Word of God, reveals God. So also the Scriptures. In human languages, God spoke so that these human, finite words convey the true and full knowledge of God Himself and the work of salvation which He performs in Christ.

“‘No one who believes in infallible inspiration would deny that this is also miraculous. But it is no less miraculous than that God should make the waters of the Red Sea open before Israel, the iron axe head swim, the leper be cleansed, the dead rise, and the sun and moon stand still at the prayer of Joshua. If God can make the walls of Jericho fall and bring water out of the rock, God can give His own Word in Christ in the form of human language.’^{350 351}

³⁵⁰ This quote was taken from a series of four articles that appeared in the *Protestant Reformed Theological Journals* of April and November 1990, and April and November 1991. The author, Prof. Herman C. Hanko, is a professor at the Protestant Reformed Seminary in Grandville, Michigan. Emphasis mine.

“And yet another godly expert in this area adds:

God foreknew the languages of Scripture and “worked providentially to develop the Hebrew and Greek tongues into fit vehicles for the conveyance of His saving message.” Hence, “in the writing of the Scriptures, the Holy Spirit did not have to struggle, as **modernists insist**, with the limitations of human language.”³⁵²

“It is also interesting to note what the *New Hampshire Confession of Faith* of 1833 states in regard to this:

I. Of the Scriptures

We believe that the Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired, and is a perfect treasure of heavenly instruction; that it has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth without any mixture of error for its matter; that it reveals the principles by which God will judge us; and therefore is, and shall remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and opinions should be tried. II Tim. 3:16-17; II Tim. 3:15; Proverbs 30:5-6; Romans 2:12; Phil. 3:16; I John 4:1³⁵³

“But did the Christians of even earlier years believe differently regarding the authorship of Scripture? Let’s see what those in the 1600s believed. The *Westminster Confession of Faith* says:

4. The authority of the Holy Scripture, for which it ought to be believed, and obeyed, dependeth not upon the testimony of any man, or church; but wholly upon God (who is truth

³⁵¹ Professor Hanko is not necessarily saying that the inspired men were merely producing inspired writings that were the product of mechanical dictation. Rather, he is emphasizing the fact that no matter if the words were given directly from God to the apostles’ minds or if God allowed them to use, at times, a certain word that would seem to the one inspired as if it came from themselves, all the words were chosen by God. For God, knowing the end from the beginning, would know what word the inspired prophet would choose and would overrule it with a different word if it was not a word that God wished to accurately represent God or the truth. Therefore, all the words would be truly God’s words representing Him as a composer and author; thus, they would be verbally inspired.

³⁵² Dr. Edward Hills, *The King James Version Defended*, p. 90

³⁵³ *New Hampshire Confession of Faith* of 1833, p. 1

itself), **the author thereof**: and therefore it is to be received, because it is the Word of God.³⁵⁴

“Going back even further, ‘Irenaeus [the early church father who died in 202 A.D.] stated that the apostles taught that God is the author of both Testaments...’³⁵⁵

“Most importantly, Ellen White’s viewpoint is against Scripture. For the Bible declares that the parts that were not written with the very finger of God were still written by God:

But the LORD, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt with great power and a stretched-out arm, Him shall ye fear, and Him shall ye worship, and to Him shall ye do sacrifice. And the statutes, and the ordinances, and the law, and the commandment, which He wrote for you, ye shall observe to do for evermore; and ye shall not fear other gods.³⁵⁶

“One notices that it says that God wrote the statutes, ordinances, law, and commandment; in other words, God wrote the whole law of Moses. This was mostly written by God inspiring Moses. Yet the Holy Spirit considers it as written or composed by God. This is in accord with how Christians have traditionally believed. It is interesting that Webster’s 1828 English Dictionary defines the word ‘composer’ to mean:

COMPOSER, n. 1. One who composes; one who writes an original work, as distinguished from a compiler; **an author**; also, one who forms tunes, whether he adapts them to particular words or not.³⁵⁷

“The same dictionary gives the definition for ‘Writer’ as:

WRITER, n. 1. One who writes or has written. 2. **An author**. 3. A clerk or amanuensis. Writer of the tallies, an officer of the exchequer of England; a clerk to the auditor of the receipt, who writes upon the tallies the whole of the tellers’ bills.”³⁵⁸

“One can see that given the context of these two words in Ellen White’s statement above and in 2 Kings 17, both words essentially

³⁵⁴ *Westminster Confession of Faith*, Article 4, p.4

³⁵⁵ *Against Heretics*, IV, 32.2, as cited in, *An Unshakable Faith*, by David Cloud, 2015, p. 22

³⁵⁶ 2 Kings 17:36-37

³⁵⁷ *Webster’s 1828 English Dictionary*, entry, “Composer.”

³⁵⁸ *Webster’s 1828 English Dictionary*, entry, “Writer.”

mean the same thing. Therefore, Ellen White is once again in conflict with the Bible.

“These statements also show how far Ellen White was veering from the Bible and the truth held by those faithful Christians who had gone before her. Indeed, she seems to be even contradicting herself in what she has written at other times.

“Another noteworthy item in the quote by Ellen White that we are discussing, as well as in other quotes by her in this chapter, is her promotion of the theory of thought inspiration that was first promoted by the Bible deniers and destroyers of God’s Word. As we have seen, this, along with the other items we have discussed, is not what the Bible has to say about itself. Which is the standard by which we are to test everything? Are we going to hold to the Protestant principle of the Bible and the Bible alone? We have to choose. Are we going to believe what Ellen White says about the Bible or are we going to believe what the Bible says about itself?

“It should be noted that Mrs. White made some beautiful statements regarding the Bible. Some seem to contradict some of these statements. Many, however, on careful examination, can be made to harmonize with this more liberal theology. So, what is happening? In my investigations, (not all of which I have been able to include here) I have come across instances where it would appear that Ellen White had changing positions on some subjects during her life. Could this be the solution? Is it possible that with all the unanswerable problems and questions regarding her inspiration arising, she began to find certain aspects of the theories of the higher critics attractive because they provided answers she desperately needed? Or is this a manifestation of a mistake in her inspired writings in the form of a contradiction? ³⁵⁹

³⁵⁹ One former lover of Ellen White did vast amounts of research in her writings. He had even compiled a commentary of her statements on Daniel and Revelation that was published. Upon eventually finding problems in her writings that forced him to renounce his faith in Ellen White as a prophetess, he made the statement that Ellen White was “a wax nose that one can bend in any direction.” In other words, she often says things that are contradictory so she can have a statement that at least on the surface sounds good to use when it is convenient. Such statements she used as a smoke screen in order to help conceal the true undercurrent of her teachings. If this is the answer, it would matter little as to the practical outcome if she did this intentionally or if it was solely done by the spirit that inspired her. An example of this is her statement that the apostles’ writings were: “... **dictated by the Holy Ghost**.” (*1 Spiritual Gifts*, p. 176, written in 1858) and also “**The apostles... wrote at the dictation of the Holy**

“All I can say is that these statements are here, and putting them with Willie’s secret letter, which says, among other things, that there are mistakes in the Bible, which she endorses as her understanding of the matter, causes her to agree with and join forces in a subtle way with those who were lowering the Bible and destroying the faith in the Word of God in her day.

“One can’t help thinking of the recent words of a frustrated young Christian leader (who, though not an Adventist, was troubled with the same doubts that Mrs. White endorses above, that God’s Word can have mistakes) who cried out in despair:

Once I found that I didn’t believe the Bible was the perfect Word of God, it didn’t take long to realize that I was no longer sure he was there at all.... I have had private conversations with trusted friends about my doubts and discovered to my absolute shock that they are shared by nearly every close friend my age who also grew up in the church. I am stunned by the number of people in visible positions within Christian circles that feel the same way as I do. (Jon Steingard) ³⁶⁰

“Indeed, poor Jon went through a year of depression and at its end announced publicly that he is no longer a Christian. Such are the sad fruit of such teachings. Indeed, can anything be so damning to the soul than to destroy our faith in the perfect foundation and guide that God has given us--the Holy completely inerrant Word of God?

“A few more observations from Adventist publications regarding Ellen White and the Bible are worth considering. First, we notice in the following quotes how Ellen White says that Adventist doctrine was established. Notice that at least some of them were established solely on the authority of her visions:

The leading points of our faith as we hold them today were firmly established... Our experience was wonderfully established by the revelation of the Holy Spirit. ³⁶¹

Spirit....”(*Great Controversy*, 1911 edition, p.556-557). These are strong statements of verbal inspiration, which she contradicts in her statements discussed in this chapter. As we have shown in this book, truth and error are never found mixed in those writings that are truly inspired by God. For more of her statements on inspiration, see the chapter *Ellen White and the Church Speak Out*.

³⁶⁰ *Battle Cry*, July/August, 2020, “Why Young Christian Leaders are Losing Their Faith.”

³⁶¹ Manuscript 135, 1903

“And Again:

...the foundation of our faith has been laid. My husband, Elder Joseph Bates, Father Pierce, ...Elder [Hiram] Edson, and others who were keen, noble, and true, were among those who, after the passing of the time in 1844, searched for the truth as for hidden treasure. I met with them, and we studied and prayed earnestly.... When they came to the point in their study where they said, "We can do nothing more," the Spirit of the Lord would come upon me, I would be taken off in vision, and a clear explanation of the passages we had been studying would be given me... Thus, light was given that helped us to understand the scriptures in regard to Christ, His mission, and His priesthood. A line of truth extending from that time to the time when we shall enter the city of God, was made plain to me, and I gave to others the instruction that the Lord had given me. During this whole time I could not understand the reasoning of the brethren.... 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.... the foundation that was laid at the beginning of our work by prayerful study of the Word and by revelation.”³⁶²

“Here is presented a situation where a group of people having their Bibles open to find truth were influenced to develop certain doctrines based not on the Bible but on visions that interpreted the Bible. Keep this in mind as we read the following quotes:

In ancient times God spoke through the mouths of prophets and apostles. In these days he speaks to them by the Testimonies of his Spirit [her visions].³⁶³

God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds.³⁶⁴

³⁶² 1 *Selected Messages*, p. 206-207.

³⁶³ *Testimonies for The Church*, vol. 4, p. 148; vol. 5, p. 661

³⁶⁴ Hebrews 1:1-2

“As you compare the two above quotes, notice the first by Ellen White subtly lowers the Bible and Jesus, substituting the Testimonies (Ellen White’s writings) for Jesus. This contradicts the second quote from Hebrews 1:1-2, where God tells us how He speaks in the last days. Is this not strange language for a true prophet? Lets now notice how Ellen White in this next quote equates “demonstration of the Holy Spirit” and similar expressions to describe her visions that established doctrines.

“The truths given us after the passing of the time in 1844 are just as certain and unchangeable as when the Lord gave them to us in answer to our urgent prayers. The visions that the Lord has given me are so remarkable that we know that what we have accepted is the truth. This was demonstrated by the Holy Spirit.....The power of God would come upon me, and I was enabled clearly to define what is truth and what is error. As the points of our faith were thus established, our feet were placed upon a solid foundation. We accepted the truth point by point, under the demonstration of the Holy Spirit. I would be taken off in vision, and explanations would be given me. I was given illustrations of heavenly things and of the sanctuary, so that we were placed where light was shining on us in clear, distinct rays. All these truths are immortalized in my writings.”³⁶⁵

Next, let’s take a look at a letter written to a minister whom she rebukes for having questions because his study of the Bible has led him to question an Adventist doctrine. We will see that Ellen White does not give the Bible as a defense for the fundamental doctrines that are peculiar to Adventism but rather her visions:

When the **power of God** testifies as to what is truth, that truth is to stand forever as the truth. No after suppositions contrary to the light God has given are to be entertained.... He Himself has taught us what is truth. One will arise, and still another, with new light, which contradicts the light that God has given under the **demonstration of His Holy Spirit.** A few are still alive who passed through the experience gained in the establishment of this truth. God has graciously spared their lives to repeat, and repeat till the close of their lives, the experience through which they passed.... They are to bear their testimony as to what constitutes the truth for this time.

³⁶⁵ Letter 50, 1906, Ellen G. White

We are not to receive the words of those who come with a message that contradicts the special points of our faith. They gather together a **mass of Scripture** and pile it as proof around their asserted theories. This has been done over and over again during the past fifty years. And while the Scriptures are God's word and are to be respected, the application [interpretation] of them, if such application moves one pillar from the foundation that God has sustained these fifty years, is a great mistake. He who makes such an application knows not the wonderful demonstration of the Holy Spirit that gave power and force to the past messages that have come to the people of God....

They do not prove that the past experience of God's people was a fallacy. We had the truth; we were directed by the angels of God. It was under the guidance of the Holy Spirit that the presentation of the sanctuary question was given. It is eloquence for everyone to keep silent in regard to the features of our faith in which they acted no part. God never contradicts Himself.... But if these theories are received, they will lead to a denial of the truth that for the past fifty years God has been giving to His people, substantiating it by the demonstration of the Holy Spirit.³⁶⁶

“Let’s take careful notice of the above quote, taking note of what she said in her statement we quoted earlier regarding the role her visions played in the formation of Adventist doctrine. First, she says that: ‘When the power of God testifies as to what is truth, that truth is to stand forever as the truth. No after suppositions contrary to the light God has given are to be entertained.’ The context leaves little doubt that her statement, ‘by the power of God testifies,’ she is speaking of her visions. She says that whatever the ‘power of God testifies’ (her visions) to be truth is to stand forever as the truth. So, whatever her visions establish as truth is to last forever. Notice she also says that: ‘No after suppositions contrary to the light God has given are to be entertained.’ In other words, if one is studying their Bible and a question begins to enter their mind that the Bible is teaching something different than her visions, these thoughts must not even be entertained. They must be instantaneously dismissed. How can one go by the Bible and the Bible only when they refuse to even entertain a supposition contrary to the visions? For that matter, how can one even

³⁶⁶ Letter 329, 1905 (*Selected Messages* vol. 1, pp. 161-162)

test the prophet or the visions if one does not even allow themselves to ever entertain a doubt? Next, she says: 'He [God] Himself has taught us what is truth... the light that God has given under the **demonstration of His Holy Spirit.**' Again, looking at the context shows us that in this statement, she is referring to God teaching us through the visions in contradistinction to only learning from the Bible like other Christians. Once again, we see that they are not learning or substantiating these things from the Bible, that the Bible is not the authority. Rather, it is God Himself teaching them through the demonstrations of His Holy Spirit (the visions). She continues: 'A few are still alive who passed through the experience gained in the establishment of this truth. God has graciously spared their lives to repeat, and repeat till the close of their lives, the experience through which they passed.... They are to bear their testimony as to what constitutes the truth for this time.' She asserts that those who passed through the time that these doctrines were established in the church are better qualified than the rest of us to decide what truth is because they have been through this experience with the 'demonstrations of His Holy Spirit' (visions). They must testify what truth is to those who did not have this experience because the Bible is not enough to tell us what truth is. We have to have something else--the experience with her and her visions. Experience is how we tell what truth is. This is mysticism. It goes by experience rather than the Word of God. Farther down, she will bring this out even more clearly.

"Next, she says: 'We are not to receive the words of those who come with a message that contradicts the special points of our faith. They gather together a mass of Scripture and pile it as proof around their asserted theories. This has been done over and over again during the past fifty years. And while the Scriptures are God's word and are to be respected, the application [interpretation] of them, if such application moves one pillar from the foundation that God has sustained these fifty years, is a great mistake.' Once again, we see her asserting that we are not to receive or entertain thoughts that contradict the special (peculiar) doctrines of Adventism. She has already told us why: because they contradict the visions. Now she tells us that over the past fifty years, or since the beginning of the Adventist church, there have been those who have objected to some of the doctrines as not being biblical and had piles of texts to prove their assertions, but that while the Bible is to be "respected," if it contradicts Adventist doctrine, it is a misinterpretation of scripture and is a mistake. We must remember that she has already said the doctrine was established by God teaching them Himself through the visions. Now she says that no matter how

many Bible texts one has, it matters not if it goes against the doctrines established by her visions. They are misinterpreted. In other words, the Bible texts must be interpreted by her visions, or it is not valid. In addition, while she says that only those who passed through the establishment of Adventist doctrine and saw the power of her visions at that time are qualified to determine truth, it is obvious that those who had piles of texts to show the errors of Adventist doctrine over the entire period of the church's existence must have included some who were contemporary with the period that Ellen White says one must have passed through in order to be qualified to know what truth is. Yet, they still felt that not all Adventist doctrine was truth.

"She further comments regarding those who have given piles of texts from the Bible to show the error of doctrine that's peculiar to Adventism: 'He who makes such an application knows not the wonderful demonstration of the Holy Spirit that gave power and force to the past messages that have come to the people of God.' She says that they did not know the power of the visions, or as she puts it, the 'wonderful demonstration of the Holy Spirit.' She also states that this is what gives power and force to the message. Notice she does not say it is the Bible that does this, but rather the experience of her visions.

"Going on, she says: 'They do not prove that the past experience of God's people was a fallacy. We had the truth; we were directed by the angels of God.' She says that 'they' (that is, those who had piles of Bible texts to back their position) do not prove that the past experience was a fallacy, or in other words, that Adventist doctrine is wrong. Why? Is it because there are other Bible texts that clarify things? No, because we can know that we have the truth, even though those piles of texts seem to say otherwise, because we had angels of God who taught us the truth in her visions. They were confronted by those who said, 'This is not in accord with the Bible, and here are the texts that prove it.' And the response was, 'We don't care how many texts you have because we have been taught by angels. So we know we are right. Our interpretation of scripture is right.' Does this sound like doctrine that was formulated on and from the Bible alone? Does this sound like doctrine that comes only from the Bible and can be defended from an unbiased view of the Bible? Does this sound like the Protestant and Bible-believing principle of the Bible and the Bible alone for a rule of faith, doctrine, and practice? Ellen White seems to say beautiful things in certain places about basing one's doctrines on the Bible and the Bible alone, but in actual practice, when the smoke blows away and the rubber hits the road, it is something far different.

This statement alone would seem to indicate that Ellen White is a false prophet. Here she indicates that if one comes with piles of Bible text to prove their doctrine and an angel teaches you something different, that the angel's authority trumps the Bible's. But listen to that very Bible which she says we are to 'respect,' but whose authority (according to her) does not match that of an angel's:

And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.' 'But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.' ³⁶⁷

"Thus, Ellen White is contradicting the Bible when she infers that we must put explicit confidence in what angels taught and that therefore we do not need to be careful that it matches scripture. This brings to mind an experience that happened at an Adventist Church in a rural community where my grandparents lived when I was a boy. There was an Adventist family who began having angels appear to them. They thought they were so blessed. No doubt they thought of Ellen White and how the gifts are supposed to be in the church, and they thought they were indeed a privileged family. In due time, these angels began to tell them things, and after they had gained their confidence and trust, they told them to commit murder. Sad to say, they obeyed these angels.

"I can still remember seeing at church one of their victims – a poor boy they had shot who was forever confined to a wheelchair because of their actions. ³⁶⁸ Can we be confident, like Ellen White, that just because she or we are taught by angels that we have the truth and can ignore piles of texts from the Bible? Once again, we see that the source she gives for Adventist doctrines, which are peculiar to Adventism, is not the Bible but angels. She next says: 'It was under the **guidance of the Holy Spirit that the presentation of the sanctuary question was given. It is eloquence for everyone to keep silent in regard to the features of our faith in which they acted no part.** God never contradicts Himself.' She says that it was under the direction of the Holy Spirit that Adventist doctrine was given. You notice she still has not said one thing about it coming from the Bible. Most Bible-believing churches or pastors, if asked to substantiate a belief, would mention the Bible right off as the reason. Remember too that this letter

³⁶⁷ 2 Cor. 11:14; Gal. 1:8

³⁶⁸ You can read about this incident in a book by Roger Morneau (an Adventist), entitled: *Always Beware of Angels*.

was written to an Adventist minister who was questioning a distinctive doctrine of Adventism, and she is attempting to defend it, but still, no Bible. She goes on to say, like we saw before, that for those who were not alive to have seen the manifestations of the Spirit with her in her visions and angels teaching her, are not qualified to decide doctrines that are the features of Adventism but must keep silence. Only she and the other pioneers of Adventism are qualified to take a Bible and really know truth. Last of all, she says: ‘But if these theories are received, they will lead to a denial of the truth that for the past fifty years God has been giving to His people, **substantiating it by the demonstration of the Holy Spirit.**’ Here again, she does not say that the peculiar truths of Adventism are substantiated by the Bible, but rather by the demonstration of the Holy Spirit, in other words, her visions.

“As we read other quotes by Adventist leaders regarding Ellen White, we shall see that in reality she is the final decider of Adventist doctrine, for an orthodox Adventist, and not the Bible:

“A minister who was a graduate student at the Adventist seminary in the 1950s described how the Martin and Barnhouse meetings in the 1950s (in which SDA leaders deceived Evangelical leaders regarding Adventist beliefs) brought changes to what was taught to the students. He testified:

Then there was the issue of how the Spirit of Prophecy was involved in the formation of our doctrinal beliefs. ...we began to be summarily told that Ellen White had nothing to do in any way with the formation or development of Seventh-day Adventist doctrines. We were told that all of our doctrinal positions, without exception were given to us by men in the Church who developed them independently of Ellen White and her writings. No doctrinal belief of Seventh-day Adventists comes to us from or through the Spirit of Prophecy. Do you believe that? I do not, and with some others, and more than most, I vigorously protested at this innovation. Exchanging the Spirit of Prophecy for fellowship with the Evangelicals seemed a poor trade.³⁶⁹

³⁶⁹ *The Beginning of the End: DH:101 The Martin-Barnhouse “Evangelical Conferences” and their Aftermath*, p. 5, by Vance Ferrell, who became a founding leader in Historic Adventism, 1980.)

“The above quote demonstrates how as the Adventist leadership attempted to gloss over their beliefs and rid themselves of the label of a cult that they attempted to change the historical accepted fact that Ellen White’s authority was involved in the formation of Adventist doctrine in order to deceive the new generation of Adventists as well as the general public. The above minister who received two advanced degrees during this time from the seminary went on years later to become one of the founders of the Historic Adventist movement.

“‘God will pour out His Spirit on all who humble themselves and **conform their lives** to His will as expressed in His Holy Word **and His instructions in the Spirit of Prophecy [Ellen White’s writings]**.... *The Spirit of Prophecy*, [Ellen White’s writings] which I believe was inspired **just as God inspired all prophets.**’ ³⁷⁰

“‘How advantaged the Seventh-day Adventist Church is to have a modern inspired **interpreter** of both the Old and New Testaments! Surely there is every logical reason to give the inspired interpretation top priority in arriving at our understanding of the world today.’ ³⁷¹

“‘It is from the standpoint of the light that has come through the Spirit of Prophecy [Mrs. White’s writings] that the question will be considered, believing as we do that the Spirit of Prophecy is the only infallible interpreter of Bible principles, since it is Christ, through this agency, giving real meaning of his own words.’ ³⁷²

“Ron Graybill, the Assistant Secretary of the White Estate, at the time, had this to say:

“‘[Ellen White] seems to argue at points that ... the visions constituted the final court of hermeneutical appeal.... The implications of this...are serious indeed. If the certainty of our doctrines rests on the visions given to Ellen White, if it is she who defines for us what is truth and what is error, if it is her books which establish present truth

³⁷⁰ Ted Wilson, as President of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, in a sermon at the 2022 General Conference Session in which, acting in official capacity, he called on all Adventists to hold to the standards of the denomination.

³⁷¹ *Sabbath School Quarterly*, April-June 1976, p. 92. Lesson Author: Gordon M. Hyde, Editor: W. Richard Leshner.

³⁷² G. A. Irwin, General Conference President, from the tract *The Mark of the Beast*, p. 1

for this time, then there can be no doubt that Seventh-day Adventists are not Protestants.' ³⁷³

"Seventh-day Adventists recognize in Ellen G. White an authority in doctrine and life that is second only to that of the Scriptures.... The Seventh-day Adventist Church holds the writings of Ellen G. White in the **highest regard as a source of doctrinal understanding**.... Some Adventists have inferred that in Dr. [Desmond] Ford's view Ellen White's authority does not extend to doctrinal issues. On this point, the Seventh-day Adventist position is that a prophet's authority cannot justifiably be limited in that way." ³⁷⁴

"McAdams, who was president of what was at the time called South Western Union College (an Adventist college), adds:

"Do we use Ellen White in such a way as to give her control over the interpretation of Scripture in much the same way that the Catholics of Luther's day gave church tradition the right to interpret Scripture? The answer for most Adventists is yes, we do...." ³⁷⁵

"We understand that this gift [of prophecy] has been, in a special sense, manifested through the writings of Ellen White, whose work functions not as another Bible or a supplement to the Bible, but as an inspired commentary designed to lead us to a clear understanding of Scripture." ³⁷⁶

"In actual practice, who is the higher authority, the Bible or an infallible interpreter of the Bible? One only has to look at the Mormons or the Roman Catholic Church to see how far one can stray from truth with an 'infallible' interpreter of the Bible. Both churches would be happy for you to join them if you hold the Bible as supreme but also acknowledge their prophet or Pope respectively as the only 'inspired commentary designed to lead us to a clear understanding of Scripture.' For all of your other theological beliefs will eventually fall into their belief system with such a foundation.

³⁷³ Ron Graybill, Ellen G. White Estate, in *Ellen White's Role in...Adventist History*, p. 13-14

³⁷⁴ *Doctrine of the Sanctuary*, Biblical Research Committee, 1989, 223-224, as quoted in *Proclamation Magazine*, October 24, 2024, Russell Earl Kelly.

³⁷⁵ Donald McAdams, at the time President of South Western Union College, in *Response to ...Ellen White's Role...*, p 3, 5

³⁷⁶ October-December the official Seventh-Day Adventist Adult Sabbath School Lessons Teacher's Edition, *Three Angels' Messages-Last Call for Heaven*, 1994, p. 133

“Indeed, the principle of having an inspired infallible interpreter of the Bible (their popes & councils) is the very foundation of Roman Catholicism and is the root from which all of her other errors originate, as one historian has pointed out:

“‘The rejection of the principle of “Scripture alone” is the foundational error of the Roman Catholic Church. It is the error that allows Rome to interpret Scripture by its popes and councils and thus render the literal meaning of Scripture void.’³⁷⁷

“Even *Ministry Magazine* (an Adventist magazine for clergy) has felt constrained, at times, to allude to some of the negative fruit that is manifested because of this situation:

“‘The vast scope of subjects on which she [Ellen White] wrote and the fact that she employs or comments on so large a portion of the verses in Scripture make it extremely difficult in practical life to avoid giving her a more important role than any Biblical author in the formation of doctrine. She simply had much more to say on all doctrinal topics than any other inspired writer. Thus, if her writings are used to end all doctrinal disputes, it is almost impossible to maintain the Bible as the normative authority for doctrine... It is tempting in Ellen White’s case to grant her more practical authority than any single Bible writer.’³⁷⁸

“Reading the above causes one to think of the title of a book published in 2004 defending Ellen White, titled *The Greatest of All the Prophets*.³⁷⁹ The Adventist authors tell why they chose that title for their book. They, and another Adventist minister, upon reflection, came to the conclusion that Ellen White was greater than all the prophets in the Bible. Is this not logical? For if one believes God had her write so many more inspired writings than any other prophet, is it hard to see how one would come to this conclusion? This exemplifies some of the problems in this area that are some of the fruits of Mrs. White’s ministry.

“Looking again at the above quote from *Ministry Magazine*, one should note it reveals the fact that, for all practical purposes, for those who take Mrs. White’s writings seriously and follow them in every way, ‘...it is almost impossible to maintain the Bible as the normative authority for doctrine....’ Furthermore, from what we have read

³⁷⁷ *History of the Churches from a Baptist Perspective*, vol. 1, p. 35, David W. Cloud, 2021.

³⁷⁸ *Ministry*, Oct. 1981, p. 8

³⁷⁹ *The Greatest of all the Prophets*, by Russell Standish and Collin Standish, 2004

above, Mrs. White claimed, for all practical purposes, to be as inspired as the Bible and denounced those who did not follow everything she outlined in her writings as disregarding God himself. The church has made statements many times that say her writings are authoritative. Therefore, the question arises: if an Adventist finds a solid statement by Ellen White regarding doctrine, how can they not logically accept it at face value and proceed to interpret the Bible by what they have found? One naturally tends to look through the interpretive lenses of Ellen White when reading and interpreting the Bible. If she is a false prophet, would this not be what the Devil would love to do—to get one to read the Bible but only see it through the eyes of his false prophetess? ³⁸⁰

“Another consideration is the sheer magnitude of her writings. At first blush, it would seem a blessing if she is a true prophet. But if a false prophet, could it not be rather a subtle deception and curse to have to not only read but know the vast number of documents that would take much diligent study to even get read once in a lifetime, let alone master? Then of course, if you have time, there is the Bible to read. As an Adventist who takes Mrs. White seriously, what is one most likely going to spend most of their time reading, the Bible or Ellen White? What a good way to get God’s people not to spend as much time in

³⁸⁰ While I have focused on Adventism’s use of Ellen White as an interpreter of scripture, which they tend to somewhat more readily acknowledge, it is also true that in reality they treat her, for all practical purposes, as another Bible or an addition to the Bible, despite their denials. This at times slips out in bold relief, such as in the following quote taken from a text sent out by an Adventist ministry to its supporters in 2024:

“The Word of God is our greatest blessing and infallible guide to victory and success. Here are some admonitions that speak to my heart, and I trust will bless you today. May God guide and bless you as you train your dear children for Him...

‘Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.’ 2 Timothy 2:15. ‘Precious instruction has been given to our people in the books I have been charged to write. How many read and study these books? The light that God has given may be regarded with indifference and unbelief, but this light will condemn all who have not chosen to accept and obey it.’ ([Ellen White] Letter 258, 1907) “We [Ellen White and her husband] receive many letters from our brethren and sisters, asking for advice on a great variety of subjects. If they would study the published Testimonies [her writings] for themselves, they would find the enlightenment they need. Let us urge our people to study these books and circulate them. Let their teachings strengthen our faith.” ([Ellen White] 3 SM 359) (Text dated June 17, 2024, from CRC Ministries). As one can see in the above text, Ellen White’s writings are being called the “Word of God” and are, for all practical purposes, treated as the Bible.

the Bible, and when they do read it, to only interpret it by a false prophet.

“In the past, some Christian apologists have pointed out that one proof of the Bible’s inspiration is that it is short; that the Holy Spirit packed so much into such a small space, while if an uninspired person wrote on such things, he would write volumes that the ordinary laboring man would have no time to master.”³⁸¹ Anyone who has composed a sermon or written a book knows that it takes much more skill to make it small and still get it all in. One can’t help thinking in regard to this of Proverbs 10:19: ‘In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin.’

“Much of what Mrs. White says is true. But it is common knowledge that the best deception is all truth with just a drop of poison. Yes, Ellen White had lots to say on recommending the Bible that sounds beautiful. But that is not the question. The question is what is the practical fruit of her ministry? Does it cause one to spend more time in the Bible or less? Does it allow one to use their God-given reason, comparing scripture with scripture as the Reformers did and as the Bible tells us to do, or is one obligated in the final analysis to have to find out how Mrs. White interprets that verse and then be bound by it? Is it the Bible and the Bible alone, or is it something else? Are we, are you, a true Protestant or something else? These are the questions. And are they not questions that are well worth considering in prayer?”

Lily finished reading her notes and slapped the book shut as she said, “What do you think, John?”

“Well, after what we have found so far, I am not surprised,” John said. “It seems she is very careful in what she says in a public way and coats it with pretty complimentary and flowery language. She is, at the same time, however, degrading it. While recommending it, she tears it down as to what it is; very subtle.”

“Yes, it seems that way,” said Lily.

“Well, maybe we had better get to bed,” said John, “it looks like it is past ten already.”

“Yes, we should,” said Lily. Slowly the two knelt to pray and ask God to continue to lead them as they sought to follow Him.

³⁸¹ See, L. Gaussen’s book *Theopneustia*, 1841

“For in the multitude of dreams and many words there are also divers vanities: but fear thou God.” Ecclesiastes 5:7

“Truth mixed with error is equivalent to all error, except that it is more innocent looking and therefore more dangerous.” H. A. IRNSIDE

“Wherefore let us learn that this is a special point of the devil’s cunning, that if he cannot hurt by persecuting and destroying, he doth it under a color of correcting and building up... they say... that the true mysteries of the Scriptures are revealed unto them from above, by God himself; and that they are called for this purpose, that they should open them to the world. After this manner doth the devil hinder the course of the Gospel.” (Martin Luther, *Commentary on ST. Paul’s Epistle to the Galatians*, p. 69)

The Bible Alone

“‘The Bible and the Bible only, as a Rule of Faith and Practice,’ is the Protestant watchword for which saints have fought and martyrs died. The Catholic Church has the Bible and-and-something else-an infallible Pope to interpret it. The Swedenborg church has the Bible and---and---something else--- Swedenborg’s revelation to interpret it. The Shakers have the Bible and---and---something else---Mother Ann Lee’s revelation to interpret it. The Mormons have the Bible and---and---something else---Jo Smith’s revelations to interpret it. Christian Scientists have the Bible and---and---something else---Mrs. Eddy’s Science and Health to tell what it means. Seventh Day Adventists have the Bible and---and---something else---Mrs. White’s revelations to interpret it. Each of the above churches has done exactly the same thing, namely, has put right along with the good old Bible another interpreter to tell what that old Bible really

means.” (An Observation of an Old Time Baptist Minister)

"I want to know one thing—the way to heaven, how to land on that happy shore. God Himself has condescended to teach the way; for this very end He came from heaven. He hath written it down in a book! O give me that book! At any price give me that book of God! I have it; HERE IS KNOWLEDGE ENOUGH FOR ME. LET ME BE A MAN OF ONE BOOK." JOHN WESLEY



The Testimony of Jesus

John and Lily sat once again after supper in the living room. "John," Lily began, "I have been worried about one thing: if Ellen White was not a true prophet, what does it mean in Revelation about the last-day church having the testimony of Jesus? It has disturbed me, and so I have done some study the last few days into this to try to ascertain what the Bible says without my own preconceived ideas getting in the way. I would like to share with you what I have found."

"Sounds good! I have been wondering the same thing. Tell me all about it," said John.

"Well, let me read to you what I have in my notes:

"The first question is: Does a group of Christians have to have the gift of prophecy (Ellen White) in their midst in order to be God's last-day people? In other words, what is this testimony of Jesus that is mentioned in Revelation 12:17? A key is found in Revelation 19:10 where it says:

"'And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.'

"In the above quote, one notices that the angel includes himself and John's brethren as having the testimony of Jesus. Now do we see angels anywhere in the Bible prophesying, or having visions, or writing holy writings? Has there ever been an angel that has been given the gift of the spirit of prophecy? Is this the work of angels? Or is this not rather the work God gives men? Yet, the angels have the Holy Scriptures, and we know that not only does the devil study them, as revealed in how he used them in tempting Christ, but that Peter says: 'which things the angels desire to look into.' So, the holy angels desire to look into the Bible. Also, remember the above quote

includes John's brethren as having this testimony of Jesus. Now, were all of John's brethren prophets? Did they all have this gift? Paul makes it clear that this is not the case. 'Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Are all workers of miracles?' 1 Cor. 12:29. So whatever this testimony of Jesus that is mentioned here is, it is something that the angel has and all of John's brethren have. Next, it says: 'the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.' So this testimony of Jesus, whatever it is, is the spirit of prophecy. However, a definition works both ways. In other words, if the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy, it is also true that the spirit of prophecy is the testimony of Jesus. Since they are one and the same thing, if we find out what either of these words mean, we will know what the other word means.

"Now, before we proceed to discover the meaning of one of these words, I can hear someone say, well, its meaning is obvious because it says right there that it is the spirit of prophecy, and we all know that the spirit of prophecy is Ellen White. But the problem is that Ellen White was not around in these bygone days when John, the angel, and John's brethren all had this testimony of Jesus. I would like to call attention to a quote by the old-time evangelist R. A. Torrey, who was a friend and fellow evangelist with D. L. Moody:

"'A fourth mark of a false prophet is a false application of Scripture either to himself or to places with which he is connected. Thus, for example, the Mormons take passages which apply to Israel and apply them to their own Zion. When any place under the false prophet's control is named for some Bible place, and Scriptural promises referring to the literal Bible place are applied to the place under the prophet's control....' ³⁸²

"R. A. Torrey brings up an interesting fact regarding false prophets in the above quote. They often like to misapply Scripture to themselves or to things that will cause them to appear to be endorsed by the Bible by giving things certain names that tie in with biblical passages so that the passage appears to support them. Could this be what is happening in regard to Rev. 12:17 and Rev. 19:10? This is what we are trying to find out, and that's why we must not be too hasty and come to a conclusion that is just based on our preconceived ideas. We want conclusions that are warranted and grounded in the Bible.

³⁸² In the chapter "How to Deal With the Deluded" in the book, *How to Work For Christ* - Volumes 1, 2, and 3 - Complete series, Kindle Edition by R. A. Torrey

“So, getting back to Rev. 19:10, we must proceed to find the meaning of one of the two phrases. If we do that, we will have the meaning of the other. Since it is admitted that angels are not given the office of a prophet, nor are the brethren of John all prophets, it should be obvious that what is referred to here is something different from our traditional understanding as Adventists. Since, as we established above, the spirit of prophecy and the testimony of Jesus are one and the same thing, and whatever one is, the other is, then couldn’t the spirit of prophecy be defined as the testimony of Jesus?

“Even if Ellen White was a true prophet, all we have are her writings. We say we have the Spirit of Prophecy because we have books written by a prophet of God. But if we have the Bible, it too is inspired and is the spirit of prophecy (for it was also given by the spirit of prophecy), for it is common knowledge that even Ellen White refers to it as the Greater Light and she as the lesser light. So, if one has the Bible, they have the greater Spirit of Prophecy, for it is the Greater Light. We must remember that Jesus Himself was the ultimate prophet, as it says in Deut. 18:15, ‘The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken.’ This, all acknowledge, refers to Christ. He was a prophet as well as God, and His testimony most certainly is the true Testimony of Jesus and the true Spirit of Prophecy. All the Gospels are a record of His testimony and teachings. But it goes further, for in John 1:1 we read: ‘In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.’ In other words, Jesus and the Bible have a special connection. They are, in a certain sense, one and the same. For the Psalm says: ‘...thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name.’

³⁸³ Therefore, the whole Bible is indeed the Testimony of Jesus and the true Spirit of Prophecy. Let’s take a look at a few more Bible passages. In John 5:39 we read: ‘Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.’ Notice it says, ‘testify of me.’ The scriptures are the testimony of Jesus. Now, if you look at Luke 24:27-44, you will find Jesus explaining to two of his disciples on the road to Emmaus the prophecies of the Bible testifying of him. Now look at Rev. 11:3; it says: ‘And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth.’ Now, as Adventists, our understanding of the witnesses is that they refer to the Old and New Testaments. Notice it calls them witnesses. Witnesses of what? Why,

³⁸³ Psalm 138:2

witnesses of Jesus, of course. In other words, they testify of Jesus and are the testimony of Jesus. Now let's look at Ps. 19:7: 'The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple.'³⁸⁴ Now turn to Isa. 8:20: 'To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.'³⁸⁵ Here again we see the scriptures referred to as the Testimony. Let's read Psalm 119:152: 'Concerning thy testimonies, I have known of old that thou hast *founded them for ever*.' Now turn to Psalm 119:129: 'Thy testimonies are wonderful: therefore, doth my soul keep them.' And again, look at Ps. 119:24: 'Thy testimonies also are my delight and my counselors.' Could we not call them the true Testimonies? Now let's look at Revelation again; it says: '...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.' Rev. 1:1-2. Now, this same book of Revelation that says that God's last-day people will have the testimony of Jesus says here that this book of Revelation is the Testimony of Jesus.

"Now let's turn to the end of this same book, Rev. 22:16: 'I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.' Here again we have this book referred to as a testimony. Testimony of what? Who appeared to John in the beginning of this book? Why, Jesus, of course. Revelation, along with the whole Bible, is his testimony. Now lastly, let's look at Rev. 22:18: 'For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book.' If you look at the context, you will find that the I in 'For I testify' is Jesus Himself. This is Him testifying and therefore the Testimony of Jesus. Now let's look at verse 20 of this same chapter: 'He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.' John, under inspiration, is testifying of Jesus, and what is that but the testimony of Jesus? So, we see that those who have the Bible have the true Testimony of Jesus, or in other words, the true Spirit of Prophecy.³⁸⁶

³⁸⁴ Psalm 19:7

³⁸⁵ Isa. 8:20

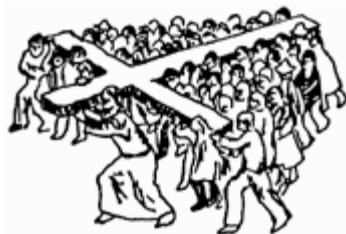
³⁸⁶ It is noteworthy that most Protestant commentators of the 1800s and before viewed Rev. 12:17 as representing God's people who were persecuted under paganism and the Roman Catholic Church extending through the Dark Ages. Even Uriah Smith admitted this, even though he attempted to extend it to include those at the very end of time. This would mean that if the "testimony of Jesus" mentioned in this verse were merely

Lily slowly closed her notes.

“It really does make sense,” said John. “I really had just never thought about it like that before, but I can see your point. It seems to be biblical and certainly would explain things.”

“Yes, it does. I think it is much more consistent with history and what we know about the way God has led His church through past ages,” said Lily. “Well, why don’t we thank God right now for showing this to us,” said John? So, the couple knelt and thanked their heavenly Father for once again showing them the truth in His Word.

“having a prophet in their midst,” it would apply to all of God’s true church from the beginning of the persecution under paganism through the Dark Ages. Therefore, all these groups of true Christians through the Dark Ages would have had to have prophets in their midst to qualify as God’s true church if the Adventist traditional interpretation/application of these texts were true. Yet, when we look, for instance, at the Waldenses, we do not see among them anyone fulfilling the duties of a prophet like in the Old Testament and like Ellen White claimed to be. Nor do we see it in all the other branches of the true church in the wilderness. It is interesting to note that during the Dark Ages, one of the prominent differences between the counterfeit church and the true church in the wilderness was that one had the testimony of Jesus (that is, the Bible) and the other did not. Catholic laymen were forbidden the Bible, and even many priests did not have the Bible available to them. Perhaps no greater distinguishing mark contrasting the two churches could have been stated. Would it not seem almost strange if God, in describing these two groups, should not mention this fact?



God's Calling

Lily had put their children to bed, and once again they sat on the love seat as the darkening shadows crept into the room. John reached over and turned on the 12-volt lights in their living room. The studies into Ellen White had taken much longer than he had anticipated. Spring had turned into summer, and summer had turned into fall. Once again, it was time to prepare for the coming winter. Many necessities had interrupted John's studies in the spring and especially summer months. After his realization that he no longer felt in a position to minister to Adventists and teach Ellen White, he had shut down the ministry that he and his wife had recently started and began window washing to make ends meet. It had been hard, and money was scarce, but he and Lily felt happy in the knowledge that they were following their convictions and felt sure that the One who was leading them would take them through into the brightness of His truth.

Lily suddenly looked up into his eyes and asked, "John, how long are we going to keep researching into Ellen White? It seems like we could go on indefinitely."

"Yes, I know," said John. "I have been wondering the same thing. We have to have a stopping place."

"Well, I don't know about you," Lily continued, "but I feel that we have more than enough evidence to come to a decision. Remember, Christ has not required us, when testing a prophet, to explain everything about them or their manifestations. Once we have ascertained that they do not pass a requirement of a true prophet, we can come to our conclusion and go on and forget about it."

"Yes," John said. "I think you are right, but what is our decision to be?"

"Well, has it not been obvious to us for a while what it would probably be?" asked Lily.

"Yes, I guess so," said John. "I just can't explain how horrible I feel. To know that all of us and our ancestors were hoodwinked into something like this. I am not angry exactly, just shocked!" said John.

"I feel the same way," Lily said. "You know how many tears I have shed over this! I feel like we have been violated."

"Well, I guess we may as well admit that she does not pass the requirements of Scripture for a prophetess," John sadly said.

Lily's eyes filled with tears as she looked up at him and said, "Oh John, if Ellen is wrong and all those books I have read all these years for my devotions are not inspired, how do I know that I am even a Christian? Was my entire Christian experience a hoax? Oh John!!"

John's own eyes filled with tears. "We have been deceived and dreadfully so. We have lost out on the blessing of many hours of studying the Bible because we were spending it reading the books of a false prophetess. We may have many things wrong. For it is common knowledge, stated by Ellen White herself, that when the pioneers were deadlocked on a doctrine, Mrs. White would be taken off into a vision and be shown which way they should go, and then they would adopt the doctrine her visions indicated. But we also know that God is a merciful God. He works through anything He can to lead those who are trying sincerely to follow Him into the truth.³⁸⁷ While we may feel that all is swept away, we must remember that what is swept away is the dross. The Bible, our real anchor, is still there, stronger than ever!! And we must hold onto it, knowing it will hold forevermore!!!!"

³⁸⁷ Since initially writing the manuscript for this book, the author has come to realize just how much the gospel presented in Ellen White's books, and believed by most Seventh-day Adventists, falls far short of the full gospel presented in the Bible. Upon later coming to this realization, it caused the author and his wife to re-examine themselves, making sure of their salvation. God sends His Holy Spirit to work on anyone as they sincerely read their Bible. Even if they have never opened their Bible and never heard of Christ, they can still have a genuine experience of the Holy Spirit trying to reach and draw them to Him. This is true even if they don't understand most things. Ellen White used much material that she gathered from deeply spiritual Christian non-Adventist authors and many times did not give them credit. It is not hard to understand how one who is sincere might receive a blessing from it that the Holy Spirit could use to genuinely try and reach into their hearts. It should be noted that if one has experienced this, it would be in spite of Ellen White rather than because of her. However, once we know the truth, God wishes us to draw our spiritual food from clear and pure sources. If we did not, we would no longer be sincere. We should also keep in mind the power false prophets can have to create false spiritual experiences. Thus, we must not go by past experience but base our judgment on the naked Word of God (the Bible) and what it reveals to us.

Lily softly asked, “Do you think we could just not believe in Ellen White and still be Adventists and keep going to church?”

John could hear the distress in her voice as he shook his head. “I don’t think so. It would be as silly as being a Mormon and not believing in Joseph Smith or being a Roman Catholic and not believing in the Pope. Mrs. White claimed to be a prophetess. She is one of the three founders (Ellen White, James White, and Joseph Bates) that founded the Adventist church. By saying one does not believe her to be a prophetess, one is saying she is a liar and that her husband (James White), who endorsed her, was a liar. Would you really want to be a member of a church when you believed the two most influential founders of the three were liars? Just who does the Bible say the father of liars is?

“‘When he [the devil] speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.’³⁸⁸

“Also, do we really want to have the yoke of a false prophetess with all her non-scriptural requirements? Do we want to constantly be bombarded with her writings or concepts from her writings that are often presented in such a way that you don’t even know it is coming from Ellen White because no reference is made to her, but the information was taken from her books? Do we want to constantly have to be on guard for such things? Do we not wish to stand in the liberty of the Bible, worshiping with those who are likeminded? Do we want to directly or indirectly support and promote a church that has a false prophetess and is endeavoring to get the world to believe in her? As you know, some liberal Adventists don’t believe in Mrs. White, and they think they can just ignore her. But in reality, they never really are accepted by most of the members as real Adventists, for indeed they are not, as they do not believe in the baptismal vows that they took. Do you want to never be really a member of the church but rather, in many people’s minds, somewhat of an outcast? Also, it must never be forgotten that the denomination does support Ellen White, and it is fundamental to the church.

“While conservative ministers that stand for the teachings of Ellen White to the letter, as outlined in her books, often don’t last in the ministry, it is also true, as many a former Adventist minister has testified, that if one really consistently rejects Ellen White as a prophetess and refuses to allow anyone to ever quote her from the

³⁸⁸ John 8:44

pulpit of his church, he usually does not last long either. One gets the impression that the conference is not as concerned about having ministers with convictions as in having men who can ride the fence on issues and promote the company agenda.

“Something else worth thinking about is that when we were baptized into Adventism, we vowed to believe Adventist doctrine, which includes accepting Ellen White as a prophetess and her writings as authoritative. Now that we no longer believe this central doctrine, shouldn’t we be honest and stand in the light of the truth God has shown us and remove our names from membership? Do we want to be hypocrites? Wouldn’t one rather want to meet with others that truly believe in the Bible and the Bible only? I know I would. Wouldn’t you, Lily?” John asked.

“Yes, I guess you are right. I certainly don’t want to be a hypocrite!”
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“Well, I don’t either,” said John. “God has shown us that Ellen White is a false prophetess, and mustn’t we separate from that prophetess and those who follow and support her? The Bible says:

“‘Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you,’ 390

“Don’t you think we need to find a church that truly teaches and follows the Bible so we will not be unequally yoked in our Christian life and service for Christ?” asked John. “Oh, John, I can’t believe we are saying all this, but it really makes sense, and we can’t close our eyes to the truth.” Lily spoke with a sense of determination in her voice. “We promised the Lord we would have a love of the truth no matter where it led us,” said John. He continued, “God has given a special promise to those who will practice the truth that is revealed to them and have a love for it. In John 7:17 it says: ‘If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.’ We know His will by the Bible. Yes, when one has been raised a certain way and God seems to be leading in another direction, it can be easy to wonder if God could be behind so many changes. But the Bible is our guidebook. It is to the Christian what the navigation instruments are to a pilot on a plane.

390 2 Cor. 6:17

"Sometimes when a pilot is lost in the clouds or in a storm, he can't see at all. He may feel like the plane is going in the right direction and everything is fine, but all of a sudden, he looks at the instrument panel and sees that they are telling him that the plane is heading downward. He has two choices. He can go by his feelings and keep going the direction he is going, and if the instruments are right, he will die, or he can trust the instruments, even though it does not feel right, pull up on the controls, and change direction, trusting those instruments with his life. I feel that is the situation we are in. Are we going to trust our instrument, the Bible, with our life? Or are we going to go the way that seems right to us based on our upbringing and feelings? The Bible speaks about this. It says in Proverbs 14:12, 'There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.' God is calling us, Honey, and we must follow the Master."

"I know, John, as hard as it is, we must trust God's Word on this, we must."

"You know," Lily said, "I remember a story about a man who was lost in the woods. He happened to have a compass with him and thought how lucky he was to have it. So, he pulled it out and took a reading. But lo and behold, the reading read all wrong. He was certain it just could not be correct. It was totally different from what he knew it should be. So, he sat down to fix the compass. Slowly, he started to take it apart to find what could possibly be wrong with it. The next morning, the searchers found him frozen to death with his compass in pieces. There was nothing wrong with his compass, and if he had followed it, he would have been saved. Oh, John, we can't be like that! We must trust the compass God has given! It is the only one He has given, and we must trust that He would not give us a faulty one. We must follow God even if He leads us out of our comfort zone."

"Yes, Sweetheart, we must lift the cross and follow in the path of Christ. Our friends may not understand. They may, and probably will, leave us. Our family may desert us, but God is still with us! He will never leave us, for He is not dead, nor is He silent! We must remember, Sweetheart, Jesus said in Matthew 10:37-39: 'He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me. He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.' We must love Jesus more than we love our family or friends. We must take up that cross. We must be willing to lose even our very life for the truth that Christ tells us to follow, and in so doing, the promise is that we shall find the very life we had thought we would

lose. He has led us through the storm into the light of the truth, and He will continue to lead us into the future.”

“How beautiful, John.” Lily’s tear-filled eyes glistened with determination.

“Lily,” he said, “we know this will be tough, but we know in our hearts that this is the right way, the truth, and God will help us stand where no one can stand alone.”

“Yes, oh yes, John.” John couldn’t help wondering about their friends and fellow Adventists as he looked at his precious wife. What would they think? He could only imagine. Would he and Lily one day have a chance to share with them the truths that they had found? Would they honestly look it over with prayer and, putting preconceived ideas behind them, search for the truth? Would they have a love of the truth? Or would they be like the man who doubted his compass and lost his life? Would they trust Jesus and His Word, or would they doubt their compass and tear it apart to bring it down to the level of Ellen White and thus lose their Bible in order to save their propheticess? Would they follow God’s call?

If you have been blessed by this work, we ask that you forward and share this book with as many as you can so they too can learn the truth.

The author has freely shared this book, which has taken much time, in order to promote God’s cause.

Please pray for us and feel free to visit our website listed in Appendix B.

Appendix A

est spiritual teaching was communicated to His people.

At the head of one of the groups into which the apostles are divided, stands the name of Philip. He was the first disciple to whom Jesus addressed the distinct command, "Follow Me." Philip was of Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. He had listened to the teaching of John the Baptist, and had heard his announcement of Christ as the Lamb of God. Philip was a sincere seeker for truth, but he was slow of heart to believe. Although he had joined himself to Christ, yet his announcement of Him to Nathaniel shows that he was not fully convinced of the divinity of Jesus. Though Christ had been proclaimed by the voice from heaven as the Son of God, to Philip He was "Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph."² Again, when the five thousand were fed, Philip's lack of faith was shown. It was to test him that Jesus questioned, "Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat?" Philip's answer was on the side of unbelief: "Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little."³ Jesus was grieved. Although Philip had seen His works and felt His power, yet he had not faith. When the Greeks inquired of Philip concerning Jesus, he did not seize upon the opportunity of introducing them to the Saviour as an honor and joy, but he went to tell Andrew. Again, in those last precious hours before the crucifixion, the words of Philip were such as to discourage faith: "Lord, we know not whither Thou goest; and how can we know the way?" Jesus answered, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life. . . . If ye had known Me, ye should have known My Father also." Again the response of unbelief: "Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us."⁴ So

² John 1:45.

³ John 6:5, 7.

⁴ John 14:5-8.

slow of heart, so weak in faith, was that disciple who for three years had been with Jesus.

In happy contrast to Philip's unbelief was the child-like trust of Nathanael. He was a man of intensely earnest nature, one whose faith took hold upon unseen realities. Yet Philip was a student in the school of Christ, and the divine Teacher bore patiently with his unbelief and dullness. When the Holy Spirit was poured out upon the disciples, Philip became a teacher after the divine order. He knew whereof he spoke, and he taught with an assurance that carried conviction to the hearers.

While Jesus was preparing the disciples for their ordination, one who had not been summoned, urged his presence among them. It was Judas Iscariot, a man who professed to be a follower of Christ. He now came forward, soliciting a place in this inner circle of disciples. With great earnestness and apparent sincerity he declared, "Master, I will follow Thee whithersoever Thou goest." Jesus neither repulsed nor welcomed him, but uttered only the mournful words: "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay His head."⁵ Judas believed Jesus to be the Messiah; and by joining the apostles, he hoped to secure a high position in the new kingdom. This hope Jesus designed to cut off by the statement of His poverty.

The disciples were anxious that Judas should become one of their number. He was of commanding appearance, a man of keen discernment and executive ability, and they commended him to Jesus as one who would greatly assist Him in His work. They were surprised that Jesus received him so coolly.

The disciples had been much disappointed that Jesus had not tried to secure the co-operation of the

⁵ Matt. 8:19, 20.

Above are the two crucial pages from the 1st edition of *Desire of Ages* that are quoted earlier in this book. To see a PDF of the whole book, use the link below:

<https://archive.org/details/desireofages00whit/page/n19/mode/2up>

Below is a link to L. Gaussen's book *Theopneustia* 1841 edition. If the link has gone dead, it can be found for free at Internet Archives. Just put the name in the search engine and look for the 1841 edition. It seems to us to be less stilted in the choice of the English words that were used in translating the French than the later editions. We highly encourage you to read this book!

<https://ia802605.us.archive.org/1/items/theopneustiaple00gausgoog/theopneustiaple00gausgoog.pdf>

For those wishing a more modern study of the nature of inspiration/inerrancy, we would, while not necessarily endorsing every detail, recommend the book *Thy Word is Truth*, by Dr. Edward J. Young.

The following free PDF booklets we recommend for further research into the nature of inspiration, preservation, and also the history of the Biblical Text. All of them are put out by the Trinitarian Bible Society and are available for free download. They set forth not only their stance on the subject but, more importantly, the Bible's. Use the links below or go to their website and look for the titles under the "Article" section on their website.

The Divine Inspiration of the Holy Scriptures

<https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.tbsbibles.org/resource/collection/ED450308-63E2-4613-8FBC-0C55E9A47C77/The-Divine-Inspiration-of-the-Holy-Scriptures.pdf>

The Lord Gave the Word: A History of the Biblical Text

<https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.tbsbibles.org/resource/collection/9D62A49E-9FF0-410B-B3CB-23A3C5EAE1CF/The-Lord-Gave-the-Word.pdf>

The Lord Has Preserved His Word: The doctrine of Holy Scripture, its providential preservation and its faithful translation.

<https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.tbsbibles.org/resource/collection/ED450308-63E2-4613-8FBC-0C55E9A47C77/The-Lord-has-Preserved-His-Word.pdf>

Interesting Facts Regarding Non-Adventist Sabbath Keeping Organizations

Adventists often forget that they are not the only ones who believe in keeping the fourth commandment. It is a fact that there are over three hundred different independent Christian organizations and five denominations in America alone that observe the Sabbath. Two of these are the *Seventh-day Baptists*, from whom Adventists got the Sabbath, and the other is the *Independent Seventh Day Bible Baptist Association*. While this should not be construed by the reader as a recommendation of any of these organizations, some of this information I found encouraging when first stepping out of Adventism.

A Further Thought on the Herod Mistake Discussed in Chapter Two

One of Ellen White's more candid apologists admits that the Herod mistake, which we discuss in chapter two of this book, is definitely one of her mistakes. This was stated in a private letter to the author from a prominent minister and defender of Ellen White.

Appendix B



As the main author of this book, it is with a heart full of concern and love towards my Adventist family and friends that I have written the preceding work! Having been convinced by Scripture that we and our ancestors had been ensnared by a false prophetess and having separated ourselves from that error, can anyone doubt our obligation to explain to family, friends, and our former brethren why we have changed our beliefs? We felt that the only reasonable way to do so and truly have a chance to explain ourselves without being cut off by anger, was to write a book explaining our new convictions.

Since we were among the strictest and most orthodox of Adventists, ones who would hardly listen to anything that might seem to even slightly savor of possible departure from traditional, orthodox Adventist doctrine, we can well imagine that there are some readers who are confused, hurt, or even angry, and we can understand. May we encourage you to pray, consider carefully what you have read in this book, what follows in the appendices, and do further research of your own using the resources found at the end of this book. We all loved Ellen White. However, we all love God more and should be thankful to Him that in His mercy He has shown us truth before it is forever too late. Remember, God and the Bible are still here, and they are the anchors for our souls. The deception of a false prophet that ensnared us and/or our ancestors happened because of not truly heeding the Bible's warning regarding false prophets in the last days. It was no fault or change in the Bible that let us down and deceived us. Rather, it was our lack of attention to the pointed warnings and tests given in the Bible regarding prophets and also putting faith in the very thing God warned us to beware of.

Keep in mind that while we should realize that it is only logical and probable that a false prophet's teaching will be inaccurate and contain

error; we must ever remember that we should never give up a belief until we, through study of the Bible, have established that it is false. However, by the same token, we should never hold a belief that separates us from other true Bible-believing Christians unless it is clearly taught in Scripture. Adventism has many good things. One example is its view of the scarlet woman of Revelation representing the Papacy, which was inherited from the Protestant Reformation. We should be ever careful to never throw out the baby with the bathwater. Leaving Adventism does not mean giving up standards if they are biblical. For example, Historic Adventists, like we were, often have high music standards. We feel that they are based on the Bible, and we still have them today. In fact, if anything, our music standards are stricter than before leaving Adventism.

One must remember that God has indicated in Revelation that one of the last stages of the church is the Laodicean state. If Adventism is not God's last-day church, it means that we can expect to find the Laodicean condition rampant even among God's end-time Bible-believing churches, wherever they may be found. We can expect to find things in a bad way. There are also many supposed Christian churches that have united with Rome by signing documents of cooperation, working officially or unofficially with them, or who simply state that Roman Catholicism is truly a Christian church whose doctrines, while not perfect, still point the way to salvation. These, the author feels, match the description of the harlot daughters of Babylon.

We felt overwhelmed at first, as we are certain you do now. How true the words of Jesus: "...strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." (Matt. 7:14) But let me assure you that there are a remnant of churches, usually independent, who are sincere, serious, truly Bible-believing, separate unto God, and that have music you can worship in good conscience with. You may not agree on every point, but is that not true even in Adventism? This often stimulates a study, and since we do not have a supposed infallible interpreter of scripture, we actually can have the possibility that we might learn something from our brother in the faith or we might teach him something if we present it in love. If, after investigation, you find there are no true Bible-believing churches in your area, perhaps God is calling you to start one. One once said, "Where an opportunity and a need intersect, there is God's will." Spend much time on your knees with your Bible open, and the Holy Spirit will lead you. You will have the thrilling experience of digging the ore out of God's Word for yourself, with the aid of the Holy Spirit,

rather than just having it interpreted and spoon-fed to you by a supposed prophethess.

If anyone has been helped by this document and wishes to write, we would be most happy to hear from you. However, do keep in mind that as much as we would like to respond to your letter, we may not be able to do so. We have no secretarial help, and the many responsibilities and time constraints that we find ourselves in take much of our time. Just know that even if you don't get a response, it is not because we do not care or have not read your letter; it is because we are only human and can only do so much.

The author wishes to state that he is greatly indebted to those who have come before him. While he would have come to the same general conclusion without them, he could not have seen so clearly and fully or have come to a knowledge of many of the facts in this book without their aid. Nor could he have stepped so far into the truth. He owes a great debt of gratitude to those brave and sacrificial men!³⁹¹ I wish to also thank Sarah Johnson and Deanna Miller for reading the manuscript for this book and giving helpful suggestions. It was certainly a labor of love and deeply appreciated! We cannot express enough thanks to Cathy Ross/Timmons for giving us feedback and her opinion regarding our book, and especially for her fellowship and encouragement during the last stage of releasing it. Last but not least, I wish to express the debt I owe to my wife for not only her emotional support but also for her mental companionship on this journey, without which I would not have come to the full truth presented in this book.

The foregoing humble work has been executed under immense difficulties due to poor health and during a medical emergency that almost cost the author his life. Many times, as he worked on this document, he felt certain that he was working from his deathbed and soon would face eternity.³⁹² It was with the most sincere desire to answer the conviction of duty and love that he prepared this volume to show others some of the truths that he and his family have found.

³⁹¹ Some but not all of these men are: Dale Ratzlaff, Ed Sanders, A.F. Ballenger, A.T. Jones, W.W. Fletcher, and Dirk Anderson. The author wishes to point out that while extremely grateful to these men, it does not necessarily follow that he agrees with all that they may have taught or believed.

³⁹² It is worth considering that if this medical emergency had not taken place, it is probable that the author would never have found the time to write this book. Also, if God had not kept him alive until now, sparing him, this book would never have come into being.

We have spent much time and effort preparing this book and tried to prevent any factual imperfection. Yet due to the circumstances under which it was written, it is possible that imperfections exist.³⁹³ However, I am certain that no imperfection will be found that will destroy the main thesis of this book and would encourage the reader to look beyond any imperfection, if found, and at the whole picture. The author is also aware from his research of Adventist apologists and historians that they are constantly endeavoring to come up with creative answers and questionable “facts”, in conflict at times even with each other, and that they state them as solid truth, claiming everything else to be inaccurate and false. This must be taken into consideration when ascertaining any accusation that future critics of this work may bring up.

It is also easy for one who has no real answers to pick at and dwell on imperfections in a work or even make up imperfections rather than answer the real central question. The same also applies to the age-old technique of attacking and destroying the messenger’s character when one has no real answer to the real central question under discussion and is up against a wall. This was done to Christ and has been used on those throughout history who have dared to point out error. I would be extremely naïve if I thought that I would escape from it any better. But the question one should ask is, has the thesis of this book been answered and proved wrong? If not, what practical effect does shooting the messenger really have?

I am aware of some who have gone before me who have been accused of writing such works for filthy lucre’s sake or popularity. I cannot answer for them. But I can say that we have not, nor do we foresee a chance in the future of making money off of this book. The fact that we are promoting it as a free book online should make this obvious.

³⁹³While I have tried to give credit where necessary to sources, etc. Due to the extremely poor health I was in when this book was originally written, this book may have room for improving the proper listing of credits. Also, the same holds true with other minor mistakes that one may notice in this work. Now that my health has improved somewhat, I have tried to go back and correct these in the original manuscript. In fact, that is one reason it has taken so long to release this work. However, now my memory is not as fresh as to details. I have also been constrained by other pressing needs and have not been able to put the time into this final editing as I would have liked. Yet, there are people who have already waited several years for this work and others whose salvation may even depend on getting it soon! There comes a time when one must conclude that with the help, time, and circumstantial restraints that they are under, they have done the best they can and plead for clemency on the part of the reader. If anyone finds a place where there is room for improving credit to another or some other similar item, please notify the author so he can make proper corrections.

Neither have we received financial support or any other kind of support or inducement from others in this endeavor. In fact, so far we have lost money and much time on this book. As for popularity, it should be obvious that no one would choose to write a book on this topic to become popular among Adventists. As for the non-Adventist world, perhaps thirty-five years ago that might have been somewhat feasible. But today it is no longer politically correct to criticize Catholics or Adventists in the Christian world.

Just as an example, most, if not all, of the main Christian book publishers won't even consider publishing a book against Catholics or Adventists as a matter of policy. On the other hand, there is still some uncertainty among churches and ministries regarding ministers who come out of Adventism. As former Adventist Pastor Greg Taylor testified: "Most Christians are welcoming of those leaving the SDA system and rejoice with them on their discovery of the truth of the New Covenant. At the same time, they are reluctant to hire one of them to be senior pastor in their church." (Pastor Greg Taylor, *Proclamation Magazine* "You Must Count the Cost," October 17, 2024.) In other words, those pastors who leave Adventism don't find it easier to succeed but harder.

In addition, those who write books, such as ours, often get criticized and condemned by both sides and are caught in the middle. It is hardly a place that one seeking popularity would choose to place themselves. Most who leave Adventism find it much easier to just melt into the mist and leave quietly. We were seriously tempted to do likewise. However, we could not, due to the love for our former brethren and the conviction that if we did so, we would not be doing our duty to God. This book is our gift of love to our friends, family, and former brethren.

Some non-Adventist reviewers of our book expressed the opinion that if the chapters on the Bible and inspiration were shortened to a few pages, it would produce a much more streamlined and flowing book. The author was in full agreement with that viewpoint and had thought so when originally organizing the book. However, he purposely added the extra material and has left it in, even at the risk of being tedious, because of his personal knowledge of the horrible struggle that those who are devoutly devoted to Ellen White will have going through this book. A non-Adventist and even an "Adventist" who is not really a fan of Mrs. White can hardly imagine the temptation that will be present in a "Historic Adventist" to give up the inerrancy of inspiration and thus throw out their Bible in order to save their prophetess. I am convinced that not only is the subject

matter important enough for the space given to it, but that it is vital to my Historic Adventist friends and family that this book was written for. While more modern defenses of inerrancy could have been presented, the author feels that the fact that it was written in the 1840s in itself is a valuable historical evidence and testimony in relation to Ellen White.

There may be some who attend an Adventist church that is liberal or were brought into the church by a pastor who did not truly inform them of all the aspects of Adventism, who think that Ellen White is not that important a figure to the Adventist church or who feel in some other way that we have presented a flavor of Adventism that they have not personally seen. It is important to keep several things in mind. First, that this book is especially describing Orthodox conservative Adventists and especially Historic Adventists. This term came into use in the late 1980s and early 1990s to represent those who stand by the traditional teachings of the church, especially those of Ellen White. A Historic Adventist is essentially what almost all Adventists were clear into the late nineteen seventies. Since that time, a variety of unofficial flavors of Adventism have sprouted up. Most of these flavors put window dressing on Adventism and make its fundamental issues harder to detect and thus more deceptive.

The author can remember an instance from his childhood of a couple who attended a conservative Conference Church and had been Adventist for a number of years who one day asked the author's mother, "Who is this Ellen White we keep hearing people speak of?" They held an office in the church. They thought they were Adventists and knew what it was all about, but they did not. Most of these people eventually become at least nominal believers in Ellen White as a prophet and come to accept her as an authoritative source of truth. Those who do, are sincere, and take their faith seriously, eventually will decide to read her writings and will gradually find themselves Historic Adventists. It is important to remember that while some individual Adventists, including pastors, may have their own individual ideas and beliefs that they may present as if it is Adventism, that does not make it Adventism. We see the same thing in the Roman Catholic Church. Many different Catholics have their own ideas on what it is to be a Catholic, but that does not make it the belief of the Roman Catholic Church. If we want to know what that denomination teaches, we must look at the authoritative writings of that church. In the case of the Catholic Church, it would be Church councils, statements of Popes, and the Catechism of the Church. In Adventism, it would be, among other things, the 28 Fundamental

Beliefs, their prophet Ellen White's writings (including everything their prophet says has authority), and what is generally being taught to the laity through Sabbath school lessons, television broadcasts, and books. Looking at these, we find that much of it is pure Historic Adventism, with others having window dressing added. However, at the core, it is still mostly unchanged. Historic Adventism is, in reality, the roots of the denomination and the foundation. It is what all forms of Adventism are, to one degree or another, built on and is true Adventism unvarnished. To a great extent, it is what is still promoted by the church as a whole, although at times with a generous dose of window dressing to make it sound fuzzier and more acceptable. As long as Ellen White is promoted as a true prophetess of God, Adventism will be built on her and will never change in any meaningful way.³⁹⁴ As a fourth-generation Adventist and my wife a sixth, after having discussed theology with my grandparents and their friends--many of whom had been Adventists their whole lives and were old enough to remember attending Adventist churches in the nineteen twenties, having received pastoral training by a minister who graduated from his ministerial training in the late 1940s, as well as from a minister who graduated in the late seventies, having attended Adventist Bible College, and in addition having been an independent Adventist minister myself--we cannot be tricked by those who would varnish Adventism and try to present it as something that is changed or something that it really isn't. We know what it is.

As one woman (who for several years attended a liberal Adventist church and at first had difficulty recognizing certain negative aspects in Adventism) testified, she finally came to realize that, "behind these kind pastors and congregants...if you scratch the surface, the signature bears EGW [Ellen G. White]." ("Into Adventism, Out of Adventism," *Proclamation Magazine*, April 18, 2024.)

Our story that we have related only takes the reader up to what God had shown us upon our realization that Ellen White was a false prophetess. The Christian life should not be stagnant, and one who is truly connected with Christ should be ever learning from their Master.

³⁹⁴ That does not mean that there are not some on the very fringe of Adventism who have held quite different theological positions than the authoritatively stated theological positions of Adventism. There have been. But in almost every denomination, there are those who are not intellectually honest with themselves or others and for some strange reason choose to be part of a group whose official statements of belief and official writings they disagree with. But usually, even with these individuals, their theological framework is still built somewhat on Adventism and tends only to muddy the waters.

God has continued to lead us and show us truth. This book would be way too large were we to relate all that God has taught us up to the present.³⁹⁵ The author has finished further theological training and is an associate pastor of a local church. He is also currently pursuing his Master's degree.

We changed the names in the story from our own, thinking to release our book anonymously. However, upon completion, we felt the Lord wished otherwise, so we have done so but left the substituted names in the story. Also, we have taken at times certain liberties in telling our story in order to clarify, simplify, and round things out. However, we have ever sought to remain close to the details of our experience and to illuminate more brightly the truth.

It is our desire to share this book as a one-time warning to those we love. We do not wish to make a ministry of merely reaching out to Adventists. With my health still poor and strength limited, I wish to spend most of the time the Lord may give seeking to lead those who are genuinely open to God's call to come to Christ, rather than spending endless time in fruitless debate with those who are not genuinely seeking after truth but merely seeking, come what may, to defend their prophetess. Due to these facts, we do not plan on answering critics of our work or those who wish to attempt to smear our character. There will always be those who will pick at a controversial work and at those who have written it. But like Nehemiah of old, we have not time nor strength to come down from the work God has given us to do. May God give you a love for truth and help you to follow it to the end, is our prayer.

In His Service,

Pastor Ian Whitlock

Our Web Address is: www.cbbci.us

³⁹⁵ After leaving Adventism, we spent six more years in private study to make doubly sure of our position before releasing this book.

Appendix C

Thoughts on “Progressive Revelation” or “Unfolding Truth”

Some have, in an act of desperation, attempted to defend the contradictions and errors in Ellen White’s writings by twisting and distorting the principle of “progressive truth” or, as Ellen White at times called it, “unfolding truth.” They try to use it to explain away her teaching error in the past and then contradicting herself later.

While it is true that in her personal life it would be possible for Mrs. White to have grown over the years spiritually and even to have moved from error to truth on certain personal beliefs, one must remember that she claimed her writings were not just the writings of a fallible ordinary worker for God. To use her words: “In my books, the truth is stated, barricaded by a 'Thus saith the Lord.' The Holy Spirit traced these truths upon my heart and mind as indelibly as the law was traced by the finger of God upon the tables of stone.” (Letter 90, 1906) “**The Holy Ghost is the Author... of the Spirit of Prophecy.**” (3 *Selected Messages*, p. 30).³⁹⁶ In other words, if she is who she claimed to be and not an imposter, her writings, by her own claim, are not hers but God’s. Thus, her own personal failings or ignorance as a fallible human should not enter the equation if we accept the Bible’s definition and teaching on inspiration, as presented earlier in this book and held traditionally by the Jews and Christians until the advent of higher criticism’s tearing down of scripture. But what about “unfolding truth” in inspiration/revelation?

The problem is that those who try to use the principle of “unfolding truth” to justify mistakes in inspiration are twisting what “unfolding truth” actually is. Unfolding truth does not consist of an error that over time is changed into truth, like we see happening many times in the writings of Ellen White. Rather, unfolding truth is truth when it is stated that may not present all of the details and is a rough sketch that over time is filled in with further revelation that gives more details. For example, Jesus, when teaching, said: “I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth...” (John 16:12-

³⁹⁶ The term Spirit of Prophecy is a term used by Ellen White and orthodox Adventists almost exclusively to denote Ellen White’s writings.

13). Jesus did not reveal everything right then. The Holy Spirit, through inspiration, was to unfold more details of truth, but that did not make what Jesus told them right then an error or wrong in any way. Another example of unfolding truth is when a truth that is presented in inspiration is time sensitive. For instance, before the flood, the pressing message was that the world would soon end in a flood, so one must accept God's mercy and show they had faith in God by getting into the Ark. Is this still the pressing message for today? Is there still a flood that is coming that will destroy the world? Are we still required to get into the Ark? Of course not! That is just common sense. It was a time-sensitive message. But take careful notice of one important fact: it was true then; it is still true now, since it happened then, and was required at that time by God. **It never was an error when stated** that later was completely turned around into truth. It would be only natural to assume that those who attempt to use mental gymnastics like this to support Ellen White believe her to be authoritative in her writings. So what does Ellen White say regarding "unfolding truth"?

"The Word of God covers a period of history reaching from the Creation to the coming of the Son of man in the clouds of heaven. Yea, more, it carries the mind forward to the future life and opens before it the glories of Paradise restored. Through all these centuries, the truth of God has remained the same. That which was truth in the beginning is truth now. Although new and important truths appropriate for succeeding generations have been opened to the understanding, the **present revealings do not contradict those of the past.** Every new truth understood only makes more significant the old." (*That I May Know Him*, p. 197)

"The Bible gives us an account of the dealings of God with man from the creation to the coming of the Son of man in the clouds of heaven; it carries us even farther into the future and opens before us the glories of the city of God and the beauty and perfection of the earth made new, the saints' secure abode. But although the long line of events extends through so many centuries, and new and important truths are from time to time developed, **that which was truth in the beginning is the truth still.** The increased light of the present day does **not contradict or make of none effect the dimmer light of the past.**" (*Signs of the Times*, June 3, 1886)

One notices that she clearly states that truth is always truth. It must have been truth then, and it is truth now. She leaves no room for fanciful theories that excuse error and change it into truth over time.

Those who twist the principle of “unfolding truth” or “progressive revelation” to defend Mrs. White’s teaching of error under “inspiration” should know that they are not the first to try to do this to justify what they have perceived as problems in inspiration, thus changing it to what they considered truth. Based on the same perversion of what “progressive revelation” is, the liberals of Christendom found they could support all kinds of strange ideas, as the next quote clearly shows:

“Therefore, liberals sought to adjust the inherited faith to the bewildering modern world whose outlook had been defined by the achievements of science....

“Specifically, this meant reinterpreting the Bible in terms of the concept of evolution, a scientific hypothesis which originally was applied in the field of biology, but which soon was transferred to other fields of investigation until it became the dominant philosophical point of view on the American scene. This outlook found theological expression in the toning down or outright rejection of supernaturalism in favor of the idea of divine immanence, that is, God’s indwelling in man and nature. For instance, creation by supernatural fiat was reinterpreted to mean God’s continuing creation, his immanence in the long evolutionary upthrust...Applied to religious knowledge, the evolutionary interpretation found expression in the idea of “progressive revelation.” That is to say, God works immanently within the historical process, revealing his timeless truths up to man’s ability to understand; on man’s side, this progressive illumination yields increasing “discovery” or expanding “insight.” ...The religion of Moses is said to be comparatively primitive. But under the influence of the prophetic “genius,” crude and barbarous elements were gradually removed, until Jesus finally came as the great discoverer of God and the teacher of the loftiest ethical principles. Since all humanity is involved in the evolutionary process, it is no more surprising that religions outside the biblical tradition should arrive at the same insights than it is that both Russia and America, working independently, should unlock the secret of the atom. According to this view, the greatness of Jesus is that he saw what many others had seen, or could have seen, but by his forceful teaching and sacrificial death, he helped men to take truth seriously.” (Bernhard W. Anderson, *Rediscovering the Bible* (New York: Association Press, 1951), pp. 11-14. Quoted in the *Adventist Bible Commentary Source Book*)

Indeed, those who twist “progressive revelation” to allow for error in the inspiration of Ellen White have no logical basis to reject others

doing the same with other ideas and areas of inspiration, as exemplified in the above statement. In reality, this twisting of the concept of “unfolding truth” leads in the end to the same place as the new views on inspiration that we discussed earlier in our book, which allow for errors in inspired writings. Therefore, all biblical reasons, discussed earlier in this book, for not accepting that view would also apply to this perversion of the principle of “unfolding truth.”

As we look at the whole picture, we can see that it makes no logical sense to try to twist the principle of “unfolding truth” to defend error. Error is error no matter how one might try to paint it, and it never changes.

The Use of Sound Logic

As one reasons through the problems with Ellen White’s writings not being inerrant as well as containing contradictions, one might be tempted to ask themselves, “Is my reasoning correct? Do I just have twisted logic?” In other words, a person may be tempted to self-doubt. It is a tendency and fear that is often present in those trying to work through the mazes reared up by a cultish type of religion to keep them from finding their way to the truth. When we begin to have these questions, the Lord would always have us run across statements written by Adventist authors who were firm believers in Ellen White, that would demonstrate that our logic was sound, correct, and even the logic, traditionally in the past, presented in support of Ellen White if consistently held and followed to its logical end. Two examples of such statements are found at the end of the chapter “*The Storm Deepens*” and at the end of the chapter “*A Spirit and Broken Bones*” of this book. They are quotes by the late Dr. Collin Standish. As an author who wrote over forty books on Adventism, a college professor, president of an Adventist college, minister with a ministry that circled the globe, a firm loyal believer with traditional orthodox views on Ellen White, and possessing a Doctorate degree, a historic Adventist can hardly question his logic.

Other examples could be given; however, we will mention just one more. We found this helpful. It was in a book published by Pacific Press (an Adventist denominational publisher) titled *Valley of Decision*. It was the true story of a Mormon family’s journey out of Mormonism and their conversion to Adventism. In their journey, they discovered that Joseph Smith was not a true prophet. This book described one of the main reasons that Smith did not measure up to being a real prophet from God in these words:

"I answered, Joseph Smith often uses the expression, 'Thus saith the Lord,' but God warns in Ezekiel 13:7 and Jeremiah 23:31, 32.

"Have ye not seen a vain vision, and have ye not spoken a lying divination, whereas ye say, 'The Lord saith it; albeit I have not spoken?'"

"Behold, I am against the prophets, saith the Lord, that use their tongues, and say, 'He saith.' Behold, I am against them that prophesy false dreams, saith the Lord, and do tell them and cause My people to err by their lies, and by their lightness; yet I sent them not, nor commanded them.'

"Thus, God has warned us. But how can we know when the Lord has spoken and when He has not? I asked.

"By their fruits,' Uncle Ted answered quickly. ...[Y]our answer is correct. 'By their fruits ye shall know them;' and we are admonished in 1 Thess. 5:21, 'Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.'

"...I had studied ever deeper into the Latter-Day Saints books. Since we had found several contradictions already, we assumed there would be more. We couldn't keep from looking for them.... So, when Uncle Ted was visiting us' I told him I had brought together some comparisons taken from Latter Day Saints books that I'd like him to read.

"I gave him my notebook... 'Lou, what are you going to do with this?' he asked.... 'Uncle Ted,' I said, 'I shall let you answer your own question.' After examining the fruits, is it more reasonable to believe a modern revelation, a modern book, a modern prophet? The poor old man had no answer." (*Valley of Decision*, p. 118-122)

Notice that contradictions within Joseph Smith's writings were considered a bad fruit of his ministry, and contradictions are a type of mistake in the writings. If we as Adventists have used these tests to ascertain the fruit of Joseph Smith and to show he is a false prophet, can it be false logic to apply the same line of reasoning and tests to ascertain the fruit of Mrs. White's prophetic office as well? It would seem that it is only fair and based on the soundest logic.

We view the Mormon family's experience related in the book as God leading them in a big step into more truth. Adventism certainly has a lot more truth than Mormonism. But it was not into the full truth as they thought and hoped. God sometimes leads individuals and/or families in steps towards His full truth as they are able to bear it. Jesus made this plain when he said:

"I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now."³⁹⁷

We pray that their descendants have not lost their ancestor's love of truth and that they will yet take one more step into the truth in Christ Jesus.



One of the matters we have not discussed in this book is the testimony of L. Richard Conradi, who was a Seventh-day Adventist minister, author, and administrator. In 1889, he established the headquarters of the German Seventh-day Adventist Church in Hamburg. In 1901, he became the first chairman of the General European Conference,³⁹⁸ then later a president of the European Division and the vice-president of the General Conference. [He was also chosen to update and revise the popular book, *History of the Sabbath*.] He remained head of the work in Europe until 1922.³⁹⁹

I remember reading a college-level textbook on the history of the Adventist denomination from the mid-1920s that was put out by the denomination at that time, which described Conradi as an outstanding pillar of the church. However, Conradi, in his testimony, tells how he ran into suspicious things as head of the work that caused

³⁹⁷ John 16:12

³⁹⁸ In 1901, with the reorganization experiment that took place, the General European Conference was technically independent of the American General Conference and equal to it. The chairman was the highest office that existed and was often treated, for all practical purposes, like a General Conference President. Later, things were reorganized again, and the General European Conference was brought under the control of the General Conference in America, and it became the Conference of the European Division.

³⁹⁹ Ludwig R. Conradi Wikipedia as of 2019

him to do research that led him to discover facts that, he claimed, had been kept from the Adventist laity of his day and most of the ministers. This caused him to leave the Adventists and join the Seventh-day Baptist Church at the very end of his life. Of course, once he left the Adventist church, they revised their history books to present a far less favorable picture of Conradi.

Why would a man so high up at the end of his life leave an organization knowing it would ruin his life work and the memory of his name if he was not sincere? Some Adventist apologists will try to say he was sore for being removed from the very head of the work in Europe in 1922. However, even though he was removed from the very head position in 1922, he continued to be among the prominent leaders, including the editor for their European magazine. Also, if he was merely sore over being replaced, why did it take him ten years to leave? A rather delayed response for one reacting from mere anger. It seems to me rather unlikely and simply an attempt to smooth over an embarrassing circumstance. Below is a link to his book on the subject in PDF format.

It is very interesting and informative in telling the results of his research into Adventist documents and what caused him to leave the church. Copy and paste the link into your internet address bar. If the link is dead, Google it. Its title is The Founders of the Seventh Day Adventist Denomination by L. Richard Conradi and can be found for free at Internet Archives.

https://ia800703.us.archive.org/30/items/LudwigR.Conradi.FoundersOfTheSeventhDayAdventistDenomination1939/Conradi_foundersOfTheSdaDenomination_1939.pdf

Evidence of Charismatic Pentecostal Type Manifestations and Worship Services Among the White's and Friends

Rev. Marsh was often quoted in the Millerite paper the "Midnight Cry," and his daughter, remembering the Millerite movement, wrote in 1908:

"I was six years old [A.D. 1843] when my father, the pastor of a country parish in eastern New York, come [sic] out of Babylon; burned his ships behind him, and moved his family to Rochester to fill the place designated for him by Father Miller as head of the western centre of the movement, becoming the head of the weekly journal and

of countless publications of the cause. His home was a port of storms for the traveling preachers and their families as well, and its elastic hospitality included a large contingent of the faithful from the country roundabout, who had left their all to spend the remnant of time remaining in constant attendance upon the meetings of the believers.... Going to meetings as much as we children did that summer (and oh! So many fast days!)” Going on, she describes some things that happened at the meetings. “...then sometimes a woman would fall into a trance and see strange things, or Brother somebody would speak with tongues and have to be sung down! That we always enjoyed immensely.” (*The Outlook*, May 18, 1908, Jane Marsh Parker, as quoted in *Days of Delusion*, Chapter 7, 1924, Clara Endicott Sears)

Ellen White Speaks of her Personal Experience

“We used to have some very powerful meetings. But it is not all out there, and I don’t know as there is any need of putting it out. [Stockman] talked as though inspired by the Holy Spirit, feeble as he was. I always sat on the front seat next to the stand, and as I heard a noise like a groan, I saw that Elder Brown was as white as human flesh could be, and he was falling out of his chair. I suppose my interested look to him called the attention of Stockman and he looked around, and [Elder Brown] was ready to fall on the floor. [Stockman] turned around and said, “Excuse me,” and took him in his arms and laid him down on the lounge. [Elder Brown] was one that did not believe in these things, and he had a taste of it right there. The power of the truth came upon him so. (That was one instance I saw that Marian had not put in. There is but an item now and then [that is left out], but I do not know as that is essential. I was going to call attention to it. That is, I think, as well as it could be written. **We had a great deal of this, but we never can tell it.**)” {Ms131-1906}

The power of God came upon him, and his strength went away just as mine did, and they thought he was dead. They ran to get this thing and that thing, and [then there] came the sweetest “Glory” from his lips, and praise to God and thanksgiving....” {Ms131-1906}

“Then Harris and Theodore went up where the Townsends were. There was a room devoted to the social meeting, and they would talk to Sister Townsend [about] why it was. It seemed as though it ought not to be like that—losing strength, etc. I knew the opposition was there; I felt it, and I prayed that the Spirit of God might come upon

Harris. He was the worst one, and [I prayed] that it might come to him. And as we were praying, the Spirit of God came upon Harris, and he lost his strength, and then, of course, the rest had to keep their mouths shut. [To] Theodore, it seemed as though it was not the thing [to have happen] in a meeting. But in a meeting or two after, he lost his strength." {Ms131-1906}

"And then there was Rich that opposed a great deal. He prayed, 'Oh, Lord, if that is Thy Spirit, let it come upon me.' He had no more got the prayer done than he fell, his whole length right on the floor. You know, some of these things put life and power into that meeting, and many souls were converted to the truth." (Manuscript 131, 1906, Ellen White)

[Our Note: Notice that many souls were converted not based on conviction from calm study of the Bible and endeavoring to rightly divide the Word of God, but rather it seems to be based on supernatural manifestations.]

"There was no room for my feet, hardly any room. Then the Spirit of God would come upon me and take my strength away. They would take me right in their arms. Then the condition they were in—and their names—was given to me, and I would stand right up there and bear my testimony until every soul in that room was struck down helpless. Then they knew; they had the evidence."

[Our Note: She says: "they had the evidence." So, if this is the evidence, is this evidence based on careful prayerful study of the Bible, testing it and her to see if this is of God? Or is it not rather belief based on experience of supernatural manifestations? If so, it would have to be termed Mysticism--basing one's beliefs on feelings and experience.]

".... Then we would start out, and we would say, 'Shall we go this road?' We knew they were lying in wait, the men were, when we would go from these meetings. 'Shall we go this road?' Just as distinctly [we would hear:] 'Take another road.' And they were left. They were there in that road; we found out decidedly that they were there in the other road, and they were all waiting to take us and shut us up." {Ms131a-1906}

"But I never was shut up. I never had a man's hand laid on me to harm me, and the promise was [that] it never should be. They tried once. They tried to hold me, and the brethren felt terrible. The officers of justice got hold of me, and said I, 'Brethren, do not worry about me. The light has come to me that no man's hand should be laid upon me

to hurt me, and so you need not have any fears.' Then these men would turn white, and the very men that they were trying to get hold of, they could not hold them. The power of God was upon His people and evidence of it was given." (Manuscript 131a, 1906, Ellen White)

Ellen White relates how one of her friends was struck with what today would be called Holy Laughter.

"Our united prayers went up to God and the answer came. Sister Harris and Clarissa were set entirely free and they praised God with a loud voice. The spirit caused Clarissa to laugh aloud. James was healed every whit," (Letter 12, 1850).

A quote from a letter by James White to a brother in the faith:

"There has been some division [in Connecticut] as to the time of beginning the Sabbath. Some commenced at sundown. Most, however, at 6:00 P.M.

"A week ago Sabbath, we made this a subject of prayer. The Holy Ghost came down; Brother Chamberlain was filled with the power. In this state, he cried out in an unknown tongue. The interpretation followed, which was this: 'Give me the chalk. Give me the chalk.'

"Well, thought I, if there is none in the house, then I shall doubt this, but in a moment a brother took down a good piece of chalk. Brother Chamberlain took it, and in the power, he drew this figure on the floor [a circle divided by crossing horizontal and vertical lines and the figures, 12, 3, 6, and 9 written in, as on the face of a clock].

"This represents Jesus' words. Are there not twelve hours in the day? This figure represents the day or the last half of the day. Daylight is half gone when the sun is south or halfway from each horizon, at twelve o'clock. Now go each way six hours, and you will get the twelve-hour day. At any time of year, the day ends at 6:00 P.M. Here is where the Sabbath begins at 6:00 P.M." —JW to "My Dear Brother," July 2, 1848.

James White added, "Satan would get us from this time. But let us stand fast in the Sabbath as God has given it to us and Brother Bates. God has raised up Brother Bates to give this truth. I should have more faith in his opinion than any other man's." —Ibid. (*1BIO - Ellen G. White: The Early Years* Volume 1 - 1827-1862, By Arthur L. White, p. 199-200 (1985)

As we examine the above quote, it is well to remember that Brother Bates was the originator and strong promoter of the 6:00 P.M. time. We can see in the above quotes that speaking in unknown tongues

took place and that no one was exceptionally surprised. Any slight question James White may have had regarding this being of God was removed by the fact that chalk was indeed in the house, and that James and his group of faithful friends accepted this as of God. Worse yet, they proceeded to base a doctrine on it rather than basing it on the Bible. James White even says that “Satan would get us from this time.” Years later, J. N. Andrews would do a study in the Bible and find the truth that the Sabbath is sunset to sunset. This not only reveals what kind of spirit was controlling this movement, but it proves that the leaders of this movement were quite willing and vulnerable to basing doctrines on supernatural manifestations rather than earnest study of the Bible. It is interesting that Ellen White never received a vision correcting this error until years later after Andrews had presented his case for sundown to sundown observance of the Sabbath and everyone had essentially been convinced of it. This was despite the fact that all those years she had visions in which the Sabbath was mentioned. Ellen often claimed that one of her main missions was to keep the church from falling into error. Due to the instruction in an unknown tongue, from the spirit that seems to have dominated the movement, and the confirmation by silence of the spirit (no doubt the same spirit) that instructed Ellen White, all of them broke the Sabbath every week for years. For more documentation regarding similar things, as well as evidence that Ellen White’s statements of early events in her life differed from historical records of those events, please check out the intense and thorough research of Bruce Weaver that he did in the 1980s on Ellen White. Delving into secular documents he found very revealing documentation on Ellen White’s early years that paint quite a different picture of those times than she presents.

You can find his material as well as some of his primary sources at Internet Archives. Type in his name “Bruce Weaver” in the search engine at Internet Archives and then look for his material on Israel Dammon. Or use the links below. Make sure to not only read his article but also the paper’s account of the trial:

https://ia802705.us.archive.org/3/items/BruceWeaverIncidentInAtkinsonTheArrestAndTrialOfIsraelDammon1988/1988_weaver_incidentInAtkinson_theArrestAndTrialOfIsraelDammon_advCurr_v3_n1_p16-36.pdf

https://ia800504.us.archive.org/29/items/HoytFr.TrialOfElderI.DammonReportedForPiscataquisFarmer1987/HoytFr._trialOfElderI.Dam

Shut Door

We have also not discussed in our book the strong evidence against Ellen White in regard to the shut door. Many Adventists, including myself in the past, have accepted the explanation of Francis D. Nichol as an answer in this area. However, documents that have finally come to light since his books were published make his explanation no longer viable. The link below will take you to a research paper written by an Adventist academy Bible teacher revealing the results of his research. His findings caused him to leave Adventism. Many feel that this evidence is one of the strongest against Ellen White being a prophet of God. Some of the websites given at the end of this appendix also provide information on this topic. If the link has gone dead, Google it. The title is:

The Shut-door and the Sanctuary: Historical and Theological Problems, by Wesley Ringer.

www.cbbci.us/gallery/12-20-11-wes-ringer-shut-door.pdf

As you read the above material by Bruce Weaver on Israel Dammon as well as the paper on the shut door, keep the following quotes uppermost in your mind:

"The Lord hates all deception, secrecy, and guile. This is Satan's work; the work of God is open and frank." (Ellen White, *Special Testimonies for Ministers and Workers*, No. 6, p. 12)

"For our exhortation was not of deceit, nor of uncleanness, nor in guile: But as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts." (1 Th. 2:3-4)

Thoughts on Alleged Mistakes in the Bible

It is important to keep in mind as we discuss this subject that the following discussion is not made to stand alone but to be considered in the light of the evidence that has been presented earlier in this book regarding the nature of inspiration.

Unfortunately, those who are up against a wall, so to speak, in defending Ellen White often resort to tearing down the Bible by repeating the accusations of inaccuracy that atheists and Bible deniers have for centuries thrown at Christians and the Bible. It shows how unreasonable one may become in an effort to hold to a belief that has been proven false.

There is a great difference between Ellen White's proven errors and the difficulties we at times have with harmonizing certain statements in scripture that at first glance may have the appearance of being in error. First, we must remember that God used in the Bible different men that He inspired. These men He often used to bring out different viewpoints by using the bent of the minds that He had created in the first place for this very work. For instance, in the Gospels, we find what sometimes seems to be a contradiction between one gospel account and another that, on closer examination, proves to be a situation similar to two witnesses at a court case that seem to conflict with each other on the surface, but on closer examination, it is found that they are just relating the facts in such a way that different aspects are emphasized and others left out as compared to the other. But both are truthful and accurate. God is just using them to bring out different viewpoints. This is why God inspired more than one man to relate the story of His Son here on earth. He could have just had one Gospel done by just one disciple. But He wanted to bring out different aspects in regard to Jesus. Lawyers run into witnesses that, on the surface, seem to conflict with each other who, in reality are both truthful and accurate, but bringing out different aspects of the same event. However, with Ellen White, we do not have this. She is one person and the only prophet that wrote her writings.

Secondly, we must remember that the Bible is very ancient, and we are thousands of years removed from the writing of the Bible and the cultures, history, and circumstances under which it was written. Many times, this is the cause, directly or indirectly, of the difficulties we encounter. However, on the other hand, it is why many of the problems are now solved that used to be alleged as errors by critics of past years due to our increased knowledge. But it is also important to remember that our knowledge is still quite limited. As one scholar observed:

"It is the early 20th century, and the Bible is under attack as never before. It is under attack by theological modernists with impressive credentials. They say that the Bible is filled with myths. They claim that Ur of the Chaldees, the Hittites, Nebuchadnezzar and his Babylon, Belshazzar, Sargon, King David, and Solomon were

mythical. They say that Moses couldn't have written the first five books of the Bible since writing was unknown in his day. They say there were no ancient complex law codes and no Babylonian captivity. They say that parts of the New Testament were not written until at least 100 years after the events and were based on mythical stories passed down from generation to generation by word of mouth. They say that the book of Acts is filled with historical inaccuracies. A chorus of voices have joined that of the infidel Thomas Paine, who wrote in his popular book *The Age of Reason* that Genesis is "an anonymous book of stories, fables, and traditionary or invented absurdities, or of downright lies."⁴⁰⁰

These critics of the Bible were proven wrong in every one of these assertions by future facts that came to light! While the archaeological world, as well as modernist-leaning theologians, have been skeptical of God's word and many times claimed that archaeological or other scientific evidence was in conflict with it, and at times still do, they have had to backtrack time and again as future facts have blown their previous supposed indisputable evidence to bits, establishing that the Bible was right after all. In other words, **the Bible has a proven track record, and it only makes sense to give the benefit of the doubt and have faith in such a book when we come upon a few unresolved difficulties that might still remain.**

Such is not the situation with Ellen White. She is very close to our time. I myself have communicated and been close to people who lived during her lifetime. While times have changed to some degree, the change is very well documented, and most of it has happened during our life or the life of those we have known. There is no valid reason or excuse for difficulties like there is in the Bible. Everything is very well documented in Ellen White's situation. In addition, there is no reasonable reason for manuscript difficulties. We are, for the most part, in possession of the actual autographs of her work or at least of manuscripts copied directly from the original.

Last of all, while the above would be enough to show a great difference between Mrs. White and the Bible, there is more. With Ellen White, we find false statements of fact. These statements, years later, after they were brought to her and her helpers' attention, were overthrown by herself backtracking (many times changing the statement in the new edition of the very same book) and contradicting

⁴⁰⁰ *An Unshakable Faith*, p. 4, by David Cloud

her previous statements in order to cause her writings to finally match well-established truth. Both statements are supposedly inspired. Often, those false statements directly contradict the Bible.

While Bible difficulties have been more and more resolved compared to the past, Ellen White has had more and more irresolvable problems emerge as documents long hidden from the laity have come to light. While, in the area of health, many of her claims have proven right, one must remember that this was true of other health reformers of her day who were not inspired and is true of some New Age spiritualists of today.⁴⁰¹ It also only represents a part of the picture with Ellen White. While, by and large, looking at her situation as a whole, we see quite another picture. Time and again, the Devil has caused a false prophet to be very accurate in some aspects and yet very inaccurate in other areas. For instance, just consider the statement to King Saul by the spirit at the Witch of Endor that he would die. As we have shown earlier in this work, God has made it clear that one of the marks of a false prophet is getting something wrong in their supposed inspired message. It matters not if they get ninety-nine percent right and only one percent wrong. It only brands them by God himself as a false prophet. God requires us to have faith (Heb. 11:6), but never a blind faith such as one would have to have to ignore Ellen White's problems. Rather, what He requires is the kind of faith one would have that trusts in a book that time and again has been accused of

⁴⁰¹ While Ellen White has been proven right in many instances regarding her views on health, it should be noted that there is evidence presented by some of her critics that would seem to indicate that she made statements on health during her life that proved detrimental to health and that she was forced to back away from them with other, more moderate statements. Also, some have shown evidence that would indicate that a few of her statements that were never corrected by her were wrong as well. One example of this is her claim that heating the head causes insanity, alluded to earlier in this book. Even some Adventist scholars have expressed doubts in this area. In 2002, at *The First International Conference on Ellen G. White and Seventh-day Adventist History*, convened by the General Conference at the request of the White Estate, Dr. McMahon, when speaking of the results of his research into the accuracy of Mrs. White's health statements in the book *Ministry of Healing*, stated that only sixty-six percent of them would be accurate by modern medical standards. ("A New Era of Ellen G. White Studies?" *Spectrum*, vol. 30, No. 4, 2002). It is noteworthy that, according to this article, no one at this General Conference-convened conference on Ellen White expressed any surprise or even seemed to question Dr. McMahon's findings. It is impossible to cover all aspects of the evidence regarding Ellen White in a book of this size, and therefore it is beyond the scope of this book. Other works have been written by more able men that cover this topic. For our purposes in the above section, and for the sake of argument, I discuss it from the viewpoint that she was always right on the subject of health.

being wrong and has been, in the end, proven true like the Bible. He also requires and commands us to:

“... believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.” ⁴⁰²

That is a command from our King! To not honestly obey it is rebellion and insubordination! In fact, the Holy Spirit, through the Apostle Paul, pronounced a blessing on those who tested the spirit that spoke through him. “These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.” ⁴⁰³

It should also be kept in mind that even if one was to admit, purely for the sake of argument, that there were mistakes in the Bible, it would not help those defending Ellen White. For it would only prove that the Bible was not preserved to the extent of keeping scribal errors from creeping into the text. For it to help Ellen White one would have to prove that such alleged mistakes originated from the hand of the inspired writers and thus from inspiration itself. For Ellen White’s writings are not far enough removed from the original autographs to have any meaningful mistakes creep into the text. Especially is this so with modern printing and preservation techniques that are available and have been used in preserving her writings. This clearly demonstrates the futility of one attempting to downgrade the Bible in order to save their prophethess.

Almost all of the Bible “problems” that supposedly have “no answers” and are alleged by people (some of whom have doctorate degrees and should know better) actually do have reasonable solutions. They just choose to ignore them. As for the one or two problems yet unresolved with the Bible, unlike Ellen White, it has such a track record that gives us a solid foundation to rest our faith upon. It only makes sense, therefore, to trust that these last few problems will also one day be resolved. Following are just a few of the many Bible texts, most of which we have discussed earlier, that are important to keep in mind when discussing this subject:

“I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them

⁴⁰² 1 John 4:1

⁴⁰³ Acts 17:11

all that I shall command him..... But the prophet, which shall presume to speak a word in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods, even that prophet shall die.”⁴⁰⁴

This makes it plain that a prophet is given the words by God himself and that a prophet who speaks even a word wrong that God has not commanded him to speak was to die. God considered every word to be that important.

“... God, that cannot lie, ...” Titus 1:2 see also Heb. 6:18

“...It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.” Mat.4:4

“... yea, let God be true, but every man a liar...” Rom. 3:4.

Other texts have been given earlier in this book that further substantiates the nature of inspiration.

For those wishing more information on answering Bible difficulties, I would highly recommend two books. The first, *Things Hard to Be Understood: A Handbook of Biblical Difficulties* by David Cloud and the second, [The Book of Bible Problems by Gerardus Bouw.pdf](#) . As far as I know it is out of print but available for free download at Internet Archives. Just go to their site and type the name of the book if the link has gone dead. Sometimes there is more than one possible answer for a Bible problem and one book presents one possible explanation and a different book the other possible explanation. So it can be helpful to look at more than one book.

While perhaps differing on one or two points, I would also recommend the book *Thy Word is Truth* by Dr. Edward J. Young. The pamphlets mentioned in Appendix A might be helpful in providing important background information as well. Also, while I have found better answers for a few problem texts from different sources that are more consistent with preservation, by and large, Dr. Norman L. Geisler's and Dr. Gleason L. Archer's books and articles on Bible difficulties are excellent. *Archer's Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties* is especially helpful. The internet has also become a means for Bible believers to share the answers they have found with the help of the Holy Spirit in regard to difficult Bible texts. Of course, one must always use discretion and much prayer when using this or any other resource. Last of all, for any who might have deeper questions and be

⁴⁰⁴ Duet. 18:18, 20

questioning the validity of Christianity itself, I would recommend the book *An Unshakable Faith*, 2015, by David Cloud, ISBN 978-1-58318-119-5. As a general rule, books by Josh McDowell are very helpful as well in this area. Answers in Genesis: www.answersingenesis.org is very helpful on the subject of creation/evolution issues. As are Creation Science Evangelism: www.drdino.com Institute for Creation Research: www.icr.org The Biblical Creation Society: www.biblicalcreation.org.uk and The True Origin Archive: www.trueorigin.org . It should be kept in mind that while most of the above that I have recommended are very helpful in the areas I have mentioned, most of them, excepting David Cloud, are New Evangelical and as a consequence have the potential for the problems that often brings. For a discussion of these possible problems I highly recommend you read the booklets: *New Evangelicalism: It's History, Characteristics, and Fruit* and *The Treacherous Waters of Evangelicalism* by David Cloud. They can be found for free download at: www.wayoflife.org

Regarding Ellen White's Separation of the Sacred and the Common

As we discussed earlier in this book, beginning in the 1950s, one or two apologists of Ellen White began to openly teach before the laity that Ellen White did not claim to be infallible or to have inerrancy in her inspired works. This claim, which started as a whisper, has become louder and louder over the years until now it has become the prominent view in educated circles in Adventism and probably even among the younger laity of the mainline denomination.⁴⁰⁵ This was

⁴⁰⁵ Perhaps Willie White, in a work he wrote in the 1930s, was the first to begin to release this idea. However, his work and the lectures he delivered were aimed at the ministry and not even very widely circulated among them. His work was the first crack that marked a change from just a few men in the "know" to a wider audience and signaled the very beginning stages of conditioning the church to accept a prophet with mistakes. It was not until the 1950s that this view really began to be promoted before the laity in a meaningful and clear manner. Even then, it was in the extreme minority. The author was only able to find two books from the 1950s, out of the ones he examined, that promoted this new view, that inspiration contains mistakes, and they were both by the same author. If Willie White had really sincerely wished to inform the church as a whole and not simply condition them, he would have released this information years

not the case in years gone by. Most of the Adventist ministers and laity traditionally had a very high view of inspiration in regard to the Bible and Ellen White's writings. This is exemplified by the following excerpt from a resignation letter written by an Adventist minister leaving Adventism in 1897:

"[Y]ourselves know also that a minister in your connection would not be tolerated as such if he should express his unbelief in the **plenary inspiration in every word** of Mrs. White's writings."⁴⁰⁶ But over the years, with the problems in Ellen White's writings becoming more and more widely known, one can trace a corresponding increase in Ellen White's apologists turning in desperation to tactics used, in days gone by, by the higher critics and Bible deniers. They downgrade inspiration and claim that it is not plenary (extending to all that is written in an inspired work) nor inerrant. In other words, they claim that it is only limited inspiration. Many times, those who support this view take Ellen White's statements about her own fallibility, and that she is fallible in her personal life, out of context. They only quote part of the statement in order to give the impression that she is talking about her inspired writings. Another quote they often use is the statement by Ellen White that one should not mix the common and the sacred, that there are common things that are not inspired and there are sacred things that are. However, upon looking at the whole quote in Manuscript 107-1909, one soon realizes that this can be understood in accordance with the traditional Adventist interpretation of inspiration and makes more sense than any other explanation. Let's look at some of it:

I am troubled in regard to Brother [A], who for some years has been a worker in Southern California. He has made some strange statements, and I am pained to see him denying the testimonies as a whole because of what seems to him an inconsistency—a statement made by me in regard to the number of rooms in the Paradise Valley Sanitarium. Brother

before when Prescott and others begged him to. He would have done so not in some obscure lectures and booklets written at the very end of his life but rather in the Review that was the main organ of the church. No one can doubt that any article submitted for publication by him on such an important matter and with his position would have been published, especially if done in Ellen White's lifetime and with her approval, which assuredly would have taken place if they were sincere and not just conditioning the church.

⁴⁰⁶ Elder S. McCullagh resignation letter, March 23, 1897, *Ellen G. White: The Australian Years 1891-1900*, vol. 4, p. 280

[A] says that in a letter written to one of the brethren in Southern California, the statement was made by me that the sanitarium contained forty rooms, when there were really only thirty-eight.... The letter to which Brother [A] refers I do not now call to mind at all. He should send me the written words and see if I can call to mind this special statement, which was not a testimony. The information given concerning the number of rooms in the Paradise Valley Sanitarium was given not as a revelation from the Lord, but simply as a human opinion. There has never been revealed to me the exact number of rooms in any of our sanitariums; and the knowledge I have obtained of such things I have gained by inquiring of those who were supposed to know. In my words, when speaking upon these common subjects, there is nothing to lead minds to believe that I receive my knowledge in a vision from the Lord and am stating it as such.... {Ms107-1909}

When the Holy Spirit reveals **anything** regarding the institutions connected with the Lord's work, or concerning the work of God upon human hearts and minds, as He has revealed these things through me in the past, the message given is to be regarded as light given of God for those who need it. But for one to mix the sacred with the common is a great mistake. In a tendency to do this, we may see the working of the enemy to destroy souls.... {Ms107-1909}

I gave myself, my whole being, to God, to obey His call in everything; and since that time, my life has been spent in giving the message with **my pen** and in speaking before large congregations. It is **not I who controls my words** and actions at such times. {Ms107-1909}

But there are times when common things must be stated, common thoughts must occupy the mind, common letters must be written, and information given that has passed from one to another of the workers. Such words, such information, are not given under the special inspiration of the Spirit of God. Questions are asked at times that are not upon **religious subjects** at all, and these questions must be answered. We converse about houses and lands, trades to be made, and locations for our institutions, their advantages and disadvantages.... {Ms107-1909}

In several instances, the Lord has pointed out to me certain properties which He had appointed to have secured to His cause that the work of health reform might be advanced. I have carried heavy burdens when the presidents of conferences have made determined efforts to resist these advance moves and have set their minds and their plans against the Lord's will and plan. The Lord has been dishonored by the unbelief expressed by some men in authority who have persistently worked to counterwork the way of the Lord....

It was not the woman, through whom God was working to secure these properties, against whom these men were fighting, but against God and His work. The Lord was dishonored before His people. The real nature of the opposition is not understood. It is lack of faith that holds men back when the Lord says, Go forward. In every forward movement, the Lord knew all about the hindrances that would have to be met. Let us not be drawn away by human agencies from following the definite directions of God. {Ms107-1909}

We have a forgiving God, one who pardons transgression and sin. {Ms107-1909}

One notices that Ellen says that she cannot recall the letter in question at all:

The letter to which Brother [A] refers I do not now call to mind at all.

But she does point out that she thinks it was not a letter that was a Testimony:

He should send me the written words and see if I can call to mind this special statement which was not a testimony.

She then proceeds to warn that the sacred and the common should not be mistaken for each other and defines the difference as being:

When the Holy Spirit reveals anything regarding the institutions connected with the Lord's work, or concerning the work of God upon human hearts and minds, as He has revealed these things through me in the past, the message given is to be regarded as light given of God for those who need it.

In other words, if anything is of a spiritual nature or is counsel regarding the institutions, it is inspired. She continues:

My life has been spent in giving the message with my pen and in speaking before large congregations. It is not I who controls my words and actions at such times.

She says that when she is “giving the message” (that is inspired) with speech or pen, she does not control the words or actions, but God does. So, if she is indicating in this manuscript regarding the sacred and the common that her inspired writings are not inspired in certain areas but rather contain mistakes in parts of them, it would indicate that God inspires error and lies. For she explicitly says she does not control her words as she speaks the message or writes them. Of course, in another place, she indicates that prophets are not inspired in regard to their words, but God leaves them to choose their words to the best of their ability. Thus, she seems to contradict herself, which is an error in itself and a trademark of a false prophet. Going on, she says:

But there are times when common things must be stated, common thoughts must occupy the mind, common letters must be written and information given that has passed from one to another of the workers. Such words, such information, are not given under the special inspiration of the Spirit of God. Questions are asked at times that are not upon religious subjects at all, and these questions must be answered. We converse about house and lands, trades to be made, and locations for our institutions, their advantages and disadvantages.

Once again, she says the common consists of letters that are not on spiritual subjects. Those that are common everyday correspondence discussing only everyday life, such as if we should buy this house or that or regarding trades, are not inspired. For example, if she were to write a letter asking her daughter-in-law to pick up a certain food item. By the way, such a letter does actually exist at the Ellen White vault. These are the letters that are common that are not Testimonies, and it would seem to include the letter written that mistakenly stated the number of rooms at Paradise Valley. It would seem that this was probably a common letter on everyday matters that, while it may have mentioned the sanitarium in passing, it was not a letter directly giving counsel regarding the institution, nor did it probably discuss spiritual matters. Adventism’s traditional orthodox view is that all writings of Ellen White on spiritual subjects are inspired. Ellen White goes on to

explain that while in communications regarding everyday matters she is not ordinarily inspired, yet:

In several instances, the Lord has pointed out to me certain properties which He had appointed to have secured to His cause, that the work of health reform might be advanced. I have carried heavy burdens when the presidents of conferences have made determined efforts to resist these advance moves and have set their minds and their plans against the Lord's will and plan.... It was not the woman through whom God was working to secure these properties against whom these men were fighting, but against God and His work. The Lord was dishonored before His people... Let us not be drawn away by human agencies from following the definite directions of God.

We have a forgiving God, one who pardons transgression and sin.

Therefore, in everyday matters, such as stating her personal opinion to her son on the choice of a new suit or on her recommending her preference for a certain piece of property that he might be thinking of buying, those things would not be inspired but rather common. But there were times when she gave counsel from God regarding purchasing lands for institutions that was inspired of God, and she says it was a sin for the leadership to treat her counsel as if it came from Ellen White. So, it would seem that this discussion of Ellen White on the common and the sacred could easily be interpreted in accordance with the traditional orthodox interpretation regarding Ellen White's interpretation that was promoted publicly by almost all ministers and laity of Adventism well into the latter half of the twentieth century. In fact, it is still believed by a large number of Adventists today. It would also agree with another of Ellen White's statements on the subject that we quoted from earlier in this work where she says:

"The Holy Ghost is the Author of the Scriptures and of the Spirit of Prophecy." ⁴⁰⁷

"God sets no man to pronounce judgment on His Word selecting some things as inspired and discrediting others as uninspired. The

⁴⁰⁷ *Selected Messages*, vol. 3, p. 30

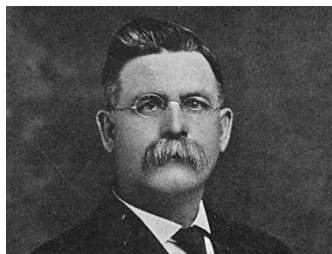
testimonies have been treated in the same way; but God is not in this." ⁴⁰⁸

However, if it were true that she was saying that we must choose in inspired writings between the common and the sacred parts of them, she not only would be contradicting herself, as we just pointed out, but also be once again in agreement with the higher critics who claimed that there are inspired parts of inspired writings and non-inspired parts, and that we must choose between them. It would be yet another example of an instance, such as we saw with Willy White's letter, where she and Willy downgrade Inspiration and the Bible, claiming that there are mistakes in it or statements downgrading scripture that we found in the chapter "*The Bible and Ellen White*," where she downgrades the Bible and joins forces with the higher critics of her day in tearing down inspiration. It goes without saying that it would also contradict the Bible's definition and view of inspiration and thus brand Ellen White as a false prophet. ⁴⁰⁹ The Bible does not allow for an inspiration that gets some things right and some things wrong. As a prophet who is being tested by the Bible, she, as we pointed out earlier in the book, cannot be allowed to define the answers to the test questions that she is to be tested by. She cannot be allowed to redefine what inspiration is in order to bend things so she can pass the test in the areas she comes short in. If we allowed other prophets, that we know to be false, to redefine what inspiration is, there is no way any of them would ever fail the biblical test of a prophet. The Bible has stated what qualities inspiration has, and any prophet that does not measure up to them is branded by God himself as a false prophet. So, if modern Adventist scholarship is right in their interpretation of this statement of Ellen White's under discussion, it actually does more harm to Ellen White's cause than it helps. Either way you wish to interpret her statement regarding the common and the sacred, one is left with the unavoidable conclusion that it really does not provide an answer that vindicates her and brings resolution

⁴⁰⁸ 1888 Material, p. 238

⁴⁰⁹ In an Adventist college text on Ellen White & inspiration released in 1955 for training Adventist ministers, it says, in regard to testing a prophet, that: "If any teaching or action deviates from the pattern prescribed in the revealed standard of truth [the Bible], it is to be recognized as coming from the realm of darkness rather than light. Prophets spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit, and the Spirit never contradicts His former instruction. All else that stems from the same source will harmonize with what has already been given." (*A Prophet Among You*, p. 100-101) Even according to this Adventist book, Ellen White is a false prophet if she contradicts herself or the Bible in her inspired writings.

to the issue. I pray that God may continue to give you spiritual eye salve that you may see through to the precious truth of looking to God and the Bible alone, the firm foundation of our faith.



The Testimony of a Prominent Adventist Minister

Four years ago [1905], the writer was separated from the ministry of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and from fellowship in that body because of convictions entertained regarding the mediatorial work of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary. When asked by the brethren what my future plans would be, I replied that I would go aside and labor with my hands and earn my bread, and that of my family, with the sweat of my face, and see how my convictions would stand the test of stress and storm, of toil and time. I told them that I would not then become aggressive, but as my friends and acquaintances in the denomination should ask the reason of the hope that is within me, I would try to give it in meekness and fear. Besides, it seemed but fair to give the brethren time to carefully examine my position and refute it from the Word if they were able. This I did in response to their pleas that, while I had given the subject much study, they had not had time to carefully consider it. I have failed to respond to all the calls of my brethren and sisters for copies of my manuscript, as my time and strength have been largely taken up in providing food, clothing, and shelter for my family. When the crisis came, it found me in the position of most of the earlier ministers of the denomination, without means for the care of my family. But this will not excuse my failure to answer the calls for copies of my position. If I had always sought first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness, "all these things" would have been added, as in many cases they were: and I hereby testify to the faithfulness of God and the kindness of his children in this matter.

I have felt condemned when friends, anxious to possess copies of the manuscript, have gone to the expense of time and means to make copies for themselves, and it is for this reason that the matter now appears in print. Yes, dear reader, it is possible for me to be in error in these things, but it would be feigned humility to appear not to believe them with all my heart; for I do believe them and have shown my

faith by sacrificing for them all that the human heart holds dear, save life itself. Now let the reader follow the noble Bereans in searching the Scriptures to see whether these things are so, and if they are found to be in harmony with the Word, believe them; if not, reject them, and then, like one who is his brother's keeper, attempt to show the writer where his convictions of truth contradict the plain "thus saith the Lord."

To the timid soul, whose love of peace and unity leads him to fear the consequences that may follow an investigation of the subject, let me say there is something more blessed than church conformity, and that is the stately, triumphant, onward march of truth; something more to be desired than stagnant peace, and that is a Jerusalem Council, a Diet of Spires, or a Minneapolis Conference, from whose "No small dissensions and disputations," truth, less shackled, bounds onward toward the perfect day. "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth; I came not to send peace but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law." Matt. 10:34, 35. The reader is urged to read the following quotation from the pen of Mrs. E. G. White (Test. 33, pp. 234-236), as presenting the writer's convictions on this important subject:

"Peter exhorts his brethren to 'grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.' When the people of God are growing in grace, they will be constantly obtaining a clearer understanding of his Word. They will discern new light and beauty in its sacred truths. This has been true in the history of the church in all ages, and thus it will continue to the end. But as real spiritual life declines, it has ever been the tendency to cease to advance in the knowledge of the truth. Men rest satisfied with the light already received from God's Word and discourage any further investigation of the Scriptures. They become conservative and seek to avoid discussion. The fact that there is no controversy or agitation among God's people should not be regarded as conclusive evidence that they are holding fast to sound doctrine. There is reason to fear that they may not be clearly discriminating between truth and error. When no new questions are started by investigation, when no difference of opinion arises which will set men to searching the Bible for themselves, to make sure that they have the truth, there will be many now, as in ancient times, who will hold to tradition and worship they know not what.... This light should lead us to a diligent study of the Scriptures and a most critical examination of the positions which we hold... God would have all the bearings and positions of truth

thoroughly and perseveringly searched, with prayer and fasting. Believers are not to rest in suppositions and ill-defined ideas of what constitutes truth. Their faith must be founded on the Word of God."

No one who has not experienced it can realize the soul anguish that overwhelms one who, in the study of the Word, finds truth which does not harmonize with that which he has believed and taught during a whole lifetime to be vital to the salvation of the soul. This is the position to which I have been brought by a most earnest and prayerful study of the Word, and I am... praying that, if there is light that will harmonize the old position with the new, or show the new position to be unscriptural, the reader may be able to make it plain to me. I appeal by this to those in places of greatest responsibility down to the humblest believer in present truth. I care not through whom the help may come, only so it come... I plead with my brethren and sisters not to condemn me suddenly, but to examine carefully the Scriptures which have led me to take the position I have, and if possible, see wherein I have missed the path of truth.

From a child, I have been taught to demand a "Thus saith the Lord" in proof of every doctrine, and I have looked forward to the time when the great controversy should reach its crisis, and we would be called upon to stand for our lives, at which time we have been taught that we should say, when the powers of earth demand submission to the laws of men in opposition to the law of God, "Show us from the Word our error." I repeat, all my life long I have been taught that "before accepting any doctrine or precept we should demand a plain 'Thus saith the Lord' in its support;" that "God will have a people upon the earth to maintain the Bible, and the Bible only, as the standard of all doctrines, and the basis of all reforms. The opinions of learned men, the deductions of science, the decrees or decisions of ecclesiastical councils, as numerous and discordant as are the churches which they represent, and the voices of the majority--not one or all of these should be regarded as evidence for or against any point of religious faith. Before accepting any doctrine or precept, we should demand a plain 'Thus saith the Lord' in its support... Though the Reformation gave the Scriptures to all, yet the selfsame principle which was maintained by Rome prevents multitudes in Protestant churches from searching the Bible for themselves. They are taught to accept its teachings as interpreted by the Church, and there are thousands who dare receive nothing, however plainly revealed in the Scriptures, that is contrary to their creed or the established teaching of their church. There are today thousands of professors of religion who can give no other reason for points of faith which they hold than that they were so taught by their

religious leaders. They pass by the Savior's teachings almost unnoticed and place implicit confidence in the words of the ministers. But are ministers infallible? How can we trust our souls to their guidance unless we know from God's Word that they are light-bearers? A lack of moral courage to step aside from the beaten track of the world leads many to follow in the steps of learned men, and by their reluctance to investigate for themselves, they are becoming hopelessly fastened in the chains of error."

As the reader examines the positions of the writer, let him remember that for believing these things, he was cast out of office, cast out of the ministry, and with his companion, cast out of the church and rejected when, on invitation, application was made for membership; and all this before he had ever publicly taught these things either by voice or pen.

Many of the brethren, after listening to Scripture evidences of my position, have admitted that from the standpoint of the Scriptures, the teaching appeared sound; but invariably they would remark in substance: "Yes; but how about the testimonies?" The only answer I am able to make to this question is found in the following copy of a letter recently addressed to Sr. White:

[**Our Note:** The following letter was never answered]

- Dear Sr. White:

For some time I have been constrained to write to you regarding my convictions on the sanctuary. Many of my friends have urged me to do this, while others have thought it useless inasmuch as, in their opinion, the letter would never reach you. Nevertheless, I have decided to write and state my difficulty frankly. My first difficulty is with the interpretation which you give to the following scripture found in Heb. 6:19, 20, "Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil, whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus made an high priest forever after the order of Melchisedec." I cannot help believing that this term "within the veil" refers to the holy of holies of the heavenly sanctuary, and the scriptures which convinced me are given below. On one side, I have placed the interpretation given this scripture by the Word of God, and on the other side, the interpretation which you have given it. You will note that you merely assert that this term applies to the first department of the heavenly sanctuary, but you do not refer to any scripture which uses the term and applies it to the first apartment. What I am pleading for in this letter is that if there

be a "thus saith the Lord" to support your statement, that, out of compassion for my soul, you furnish it.

"WITHIN THE VEIL" As the Bible Interprets It. As You Interpret It.

"And thou shalt hang up the veil under the taches, that thou mayest bring in thither within the veil the ark of the testimony: and the veil shall divide unto you between the holy place and the most holy." Ex. 26:23. "And the Lord said unto Moses, Speak unto Aaron thy brother that he come not at all times into the holy place within the veil before the mercy seat, which is upon the ark, that he die not: for I will appear in the cloud upon the mercy seat." Lev. 16:2. "And he shall take a censer full of burning coals of fire from off the altar before the Lord, and his hands full of sweet incense beaten small, and bring it within the veil." Lev. 16:12. "And he shall kill the goat of the sin offering that is for the people, and bring his blood within the veil, and do with his blood as he did with the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it upon the mercy seat, and before the mercy seat." Lev. 16:15. "Therefore thou and thy sons with thee shall keep your priest's office for everything of the altar, and within the veil." Num. 18:7. Sr. White, you refer the terms "within the veil" to the first apartment, while the Lord applies the terms "without the veil" and "before the veil" to the first apartment, as appears from the following scriptures. "And thou shalt set the table (of shew bread) without the veil." Ex. 26:35. "And thou shalt command the children of Israel that they bring thee pure olive oil beaten for the light, to cause the lamp to burn always in the tabernacle of the congregation, without the veil, which is before the testimony." Ex. 27:20, 21. "And he put the table in the tent of the congregation, upon the side of the tabernacle northward without the veil." Ex. 40:22. "And he put the golden altar in the tent of the congregation before the veil." Ex. 40:26. "And the priest that is anointed shall take of the bullock's blood, and bring it to the tabernacle of the congregation: and the priest shall dip his finger in the blood and sprinkle of the blood seven times before the Lord, before the veil of the Sanctuary." Lev. 4:5, 6. "And the priest that is anointed shall bring of the bullock's blood to the tabernacle of the congregation, and the priest shall dip his finger in some of the blood, and sprinkle it seven times before the Lord, even before the veil." Lev. 4:17. "And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Command the children of Israel that they bring thee pure olive oil beaten for light, to cause the lamps to burn continually without the veil of the testimony, in the tabernacle of the congregation." Lev. 24:1-3.

"The ministration of the priest throughout the year in the first apartment of the sanctuary, 'within the veil,' which formed the door

and separated the holy place from the outer court, represents the work of ministration upon which Christ entered at His ascension.

"It was the work of the priest in the daily ministration to present before God the blood of the sin offering, also the incense which ascended with the prayers of Israel. So did Christ plead his blood before the Father in behalf of sinners and present before him also, with the fragrance of his own righteousness, the prayers of penitent believers. Such was the work of ministration in the first apartment of the sanctuary in Heaven. Thither the faith of Christ's disciples followed him as he ascended from their sight. Here (in the first apartment) their hopes centered, 'which hope we have,' said Paul, 'as an anchor of the soul both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest forever.'" G. C. pp. 420, 421-61

Five times the Lord uses the term "within the veil," and in every case, it is applied to the second apartment of the sanctuary, and not to the first. Seven times the Lord uses the terms "without the veil" and "before the veil," and in every instance, he applies them to the first apartment or tabernacle of the congregation, and never to the court outside the door of the tabernacle. But if "within the veil" applies to the first apartment, as you teach in your interpretation of Heb. 6:19, 20, then the term "without the veil" must apply to the space in the court outside the tabernacle door. Every one of these seven scriptures, which plainly state that "without the veil" and "before the veil" is in the first apartment, is a divine witness to the truth that "within the veil" in Heb. 6:19, 20, must apply to the second apartment. There are therefore twelve witnesses, a twelve-fold "thus saith the Lord," testifying that the term "within the veil" refers to the holy of holies, and not to the first apartment of the heavenly sanctuary as you assert. At my secret trial four years ago, three leading brethren were chosen to answer me. (It is interesting to note in passing that two out of the three were then and are still under your condemnation inasmuch as they both teach that the "daily" of Dan. 8:13 refers to the heavenly service instead of paganism, as taught by you in *Early Writings*.) In private conversation with me, one took the position that "within the veil" meant within the sanctuary, but did not refer to either apartment. Another asserted at the trial that the term applied to the first apartment as you have interpreted it. The third, compelled by the witnesses quoted above, admitted in his answer that the term "within the veil" does apply to the holy of holies, but that it is spoken prophetically, and although the scripture says Christ IS entered "within the veil," we are to understand it to mean that he WILL enter

in 1844. This babel of voices did not help me to see my error, if error it be.

Before publishing my MS, I sent it to several ministers holding official positions, whose loyalty to the denomination is unquestioned, and asked them out of love for the truth and my soul, to show me from the Scriptures where I was in error. I promised that should they do this, I would never publish the MS. Not one of these brethren attempted to show me my error from the Word. One wrote thus:

- "Candor compels me to say that I can find no fault with it from a Bible standpoint. The argument seems to be unassailable."

Another said: -

"I have always felt that it was safer to take the interpretation placed upon the Scriptures by the Spirit of Prophecy as manifested through Sister E. G. White rather than to rely upon my own judgment or interpretation."

This last quotation expresses the attitude of all those who have admitted that my position seemed to be supported by the Scriptures but hesitated to accept it. Honestly, Sister White, I am afraid to act upon this suggestion, because it will place the thousands upon thousands of pages of your writings in books and periodicals between the child of God and God's Book. If this position be true, no noble Berean dare believe any truth, however clearly it may seem to be taught in the Scriptures, until he first consults your writings to see whether it harmonizes with your interpretation. This is the principle always advocated by the Roman Church and voiced in the following quotation:

"Like two sacred rivers flowing from Paradise, the Bible and divine Tradition contain the Word of God. Though these two divine streams are in themselves, on account of their divine origin, of equal sacredness, and are both full of revealed truths, still of the two, TRADITION is to us more clear and safe." *Catholic Belief* p. 54

It was against this putting of an infallible interpreter between the man and his Bible that the Reformation waged its uncompromising war. The Romanists robbed the individual of his Bible, denouncing the right of "private interpretation," while the Reformation handed the Bible back to the individual while denouncing the papal dogma that demands an infallible interpreter between the child of God and his Bible. The brethren urge me to accept your interpretation of the Scriptures as clearer and safer than what they call my interpretation.

But I have not interpreted this Scripture; I have allowed the Lord to do this and have accepted His interpretation. Let me illustrate: The first mention of the Sabbath in the New Testament is found in Matt. 12:1. It does not there tell us which day is the Sabbath, assuming that the reader knows which day is referred to, or if not, he will be able to learn from the Old Testament which day it is. When one turns to Ex. 20:8-12 and reads, "The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord," is not that God's interpretation? Has anyone the right to reply, "That is your interpretation"? Surely not. In like manner, the first and only instance where the term "within the veil" is used in the New Testament is found in Heb. 6:19. It is taken for granted that the reader will know to which apartment the Holy Spirit refers; but if not, the searcher can learn from the Old Testament which place is meant.

Now, when I turn to the Old Testament and find that in every instance this term is applied to the holy of holies, can it honestly be charged that this is my interpretation? I have not interpreted it, but have given that honor to the Holy Oracles themselves. And now Sister White, what can I do? If I accept the testimony of the Scriptures, if I follow my conscientious convictions, I find myself under your condemnation; and you call me a wolf in sheep's clothing and warn my brethren and the members of my family against me. But when I turn in my sorrow to the Word of the Lord, that Word reads the same, and I fear to reject God's interpretation and accept yours.

Oh, that I might accept both. But if I must accept but one, hadn't I better accept the Lord's? If I reject His word and accept yours, can you save me in the judgment? When side by side we stand before the great white throne; if the Master should ask me why I taught that "within the veil" was in the first apartment of the sanctuary, what shall I answer? Shall I say, "Because Sister White, who claimed to be commissioned to interpret the Scriptures for me, told me that this was the true interpretation, and that if I did not accept it and teach it I would rest under your condemnation?"

Oh, Sister White, that this answer might be pleasing unto the Lord. Then would I surrender to your testimony. Then would you speak words of encouragement to me again. Then would my brethren, with whom I have held sweet counsel, no longer shun me as a leper. Then would I appear again in the great congregation, and we would weep and pray and praise together as before. But on the other hand, should the great and terrible God say to me on that day, "But disobedient servant, WHAT DID I SAY?" Oh, what could I answer?

If I surrender my convictions to escape the testimonies of condemnation which you heap upon my head; if I yield the Word of God that I might again enjoy the love and fellowship of my brethren, how can I again look into the face of him who died for me? How could I again lay my Bible open upon my bed, and kneeling, plead for light upon his Word? No, no, I cannot do that. I must go on my pilgrimage alone. And while I would not put myself in the company of Him who was despised and rejected of men, the Man of sorrows, the Man of the lonely life, yet I am comforted in the thought that He knoweth my sorrow and is acquainted with my grief.

Your younger brother in Christ,

A. F. BALLENGER.

Tropico, Cal.

Towards the end of Ballenger's book, he says to the reader:

"If you are able to see clearly where I have missed the narrow way in my search after truth, point it out to me.... Four years have passed since my separation from the denomination, and not a single soul in the church has come to me, Bible in hand, desiring to show me from that Word where I am wrong."

(The above are excerpts from his books *Cast Out for the Cross of Christ*, and *An Examination of Forty Fatal Errors Regarding the Atonement*)

To read more in depth of his reasons on this subject please use the link below to download his book *Cast Out for the Cross of Christ*. Or find it at Internet Archives if the link has gone dead.

<https://ia600300.us.archive.org/7/items/BallengerA.F.CastOutForTheCrossOfChrist1909/BallengerA.F.CastOutForTheCrossOfChrist1909.pdf>

Here is his later pamphlet on the same subject answering objections that is also available at Internet Archives; the title of it is: *An Examination of Forty Fatal Errors Regarding the Atonement*:

https://ia800703.us.archive.org/20/items/AlbionFoxBallangerAnExaminationOfFortyFatalErrorsRegardingThe/1913_ballanger_examinationOfFortyFatalErrorsRegardingTheAtonement.pdf

I personally discovered the truth regarding Christ entering behind the veil just after having the interpretive lenses of Ellen White removed from my eyes. I did not know that Ballenger had taught it, nor did I get it from anyone else. I had just decided to read my New Testament through, trying to ascertain with the aid of the Holy Spirit and the Bible itself what it seemed to be saying without the influence of others or preconceived ideas getting in the way. I came to Hebrews and was shocked to discover that it did not back up the Seventh-day Adventist position on the sanctuary. In the past, I had always thought it did, but now it was like I was reading a new book. Hebrews was destroying my past beliefs regarding 1844 and the Adventist interpretation of the sanctuary. It was only after I became convinced of the truth presented in Hebrews that Christ entered the Most Holy Place at His ascension, removing the veil and ministering there, that I discovered that Ballenger had taught this exact doctrine. As for Ballenger's ideas presented in his last book that he wrote on salvation and universal atonement (this is a different book than the two I have links to above), at this time, I withhold my opinion having not examined it yet closely enough. I have found in my research that much of what we, as Adventists, have been told regarding this man is not accurate. The only way to discover what he really taught is to investigate his works for yourself. While I have not finished my analysis of all of his works, I can safely say in regard to his views that he did not believe that everyone would be saved or that those who did not have the fruit of good works in their lives would be saved, as some have thought.⁴¹⁰ It should also be kept in mind that his ideas on a universal atonement and his views on Christ entering behind the veil into the most holy place and ministering there at his ascension are not inseparably tied together. His greatest value, in my opinion, is that he proves from the Bible beyond reasonable doubt that Jesus did not go into the most

⁴¹⁰ In a tract published by Ballenger (concurrently with his book on universal atonement, *The Proclamation of Liberty and the Unpardonable Sin*) entitled *Why Salvation is Free*, on page 5 we read: "Then are there no good works connected with salvation? Yes, plenty of them. And if good works do not appear, man's claim to salvation is a fraud." It appears likely to this author that the trouble is that Ballenger used, at times, confusing language to describe certain aspects of salvation that his enemies found very convenient to twist and use to their own purposes. For instance, take a look at this statement on page 7 of the same tract: "The sinner is redeemed whether he believes or not. Faith only takes that which is already his in Christ's redemption. 'We trust in the living God who is the savior of all men, especially of those that believe.' 1 Tim. 4:10." Wow, that sounds like Universalism, doesn't it? Right here his enemies might run off with this and present it as evidence. But look what he says in the next sentence: "There is a general or 'common salvation' which includes all men, and there is a special salvation for those who believe. The general salvation will avail nothing to the man who refuses to believe."

holy place in 1844 but rather at his ascension and ministered there. This all other Christians do and have always believed. Yet, they do not all necessarily endorse his views on universal atonement. This proves that these two ideas are separable. One does not necessarily follow the other. We must keep in mind that while we do not necessarily endorse or condemn everything that he ever wrote, we do feel that he certainly was unfairly treated and that he proves that the Adventist interpretation of 1844 and the sanctuary are not supported from the Bible. This does not mean that there is not a literal sanctuary in heaven. There most certainly is a literal sanctuary in heaven, as Ballenger also believed. We must just remember that no man is infallible. Martin Luther was used of God to present truth; however, he was not necessarily infallible or right on everything that he ever wrote. Neither Ballenger nor Luther were inspired. That is why we are supposed to be good Bereans and investigate God's Word for ourselves. This is what Ballenger states clearly that he wishes his readers to do, and it is what we would encourage you to do not only when reading Ballenger's works but with everyone's literary endeavors, including our own.



A Former Prominent Adventist Minister's Testimony

"Thirty years Brother Ballenger and I were workers together.... I have ample reason to believe that no other man had so much of Brother Ballenger's confidence as I; and that with no other man was he in freer, fuller, or truer Christian fellowship than with me.

"And I can truly say that never have I known a man of a kinder heart or more tender spirit than he, nor one who more genuinely and

devoutly feared the Lord, or was more deeply devoted to His service and His worship.

“He was cruelly treated by his “brethren,” and all of it was peculiarly painful to him. But he never entertained the slightest spirit of resentment; and ever prayed and longed that they might see the blessed truth that he saw, that they might enjoy the wealth of the joy and peace that he knew was in it. And in his books and other writings, he will yet and always be preaching the same gracious truth.”

(Alonzo T. Jones, *The Gathering Call*, Sept.-Oct., 1921, p. 3)



Statement by Raymond F. Cottrell, D. Div.

“...On an average of every fifteen or twenty years or so since 1887, an experienced, respected, and trusted [SDA] church administrator or Bible teacher has called the attention of fellow church leaders to flaws in the traditional interpretation of Daniel 8:14, forfeited his ministerial credentials, and either been disfellowshipped or voluntarily left the church. With one or two possible exceptions, none of them had either spoken or taught their doubts regarding the biblical authenticity of the sanctuary doctrine but were fired for thinking such thoughts and sharing them with fellow church leaders! Furthermore, none of them were novices, but experienced administrators or Bible teachers. Three of them had served the church faithfully for more than half a century each.... Albion F. Ballenger had served the church faithfully for many years, and in 1905 was an administrator in charge of the Irish Mission. He was an able speaker and writer and a diligent student of Scripture. Like Canright, Ballenger had never mentioned his views on the

sanctuary in public, but a committee of twenty-five the General Conference appointed to hear him reported that he entertained views regarding the ministry of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary contrary to that of the church. He acknowledged the possibility that he might be wrong and pleaded for someone to point out from the Bible where he was wrong, but no one did, either then or later. The church withdrew his ministerial credentials and disfellowshipped him because of what he believed, not for anything he had said or done. Twenty-five years later, W. W. Prescott (a member of the GC ad hoc committees appointed to meet with the dissidents) commented in a letter to W. A. Spicer, then president of the General Conference: "I have waited all these years for someone to make an adequate answer to Ballenger, Fletcher, and others on their positions re. the sanctuary, but I have not seen or heard it." Ballenger subsequently explained his views in the book *Cast Out for the Cross of Christ*....

"I first encountered problems with the traditional interpretation of Daniel 8:14, [the Adventist Sanctuary doctrine] professionally in the spring of 1955 during the process of editing comment on the Book of Daniel for volume 4 of the SDA Bible Commentary. As a work intended to meet the most exacting scholarly standards, we intended our comment to reflect the meaning obviously intended by the Bible writers. As an Adventist commentary, it must also reflect, as accurately as possible, what Adventists believe and teach. But in Daniel 8 and 9, we found it hopelessly impossible to comply with both of these requirements. In 1958, the Review and Herald Publishing Association needed new printing plates for the classic book Bible Readings, and it was decided to revise it where necessary to agree with the Commentary. Coming again to the Book of Daniel, I determined to try once more to find a way to be absolutely faithful to both Daniel and the traditional Adventist interpretation of 8:14 but again found it impossible. I then formulated six questions regarding the Hebrew text of the passage and its context, which I submitted to every college teacher versed in Hebrew and every head of the religion department in all of our North American colleges--all personal friends of mine. Without exception, they replied that there is no linguistic or contextual basis for the traditional Adventist interpretation of Daniel 8:14. When the results of this questionnaire were called to the attention of the General Conference president, he and the officers appointed the super-secret Committee on Problems in the Book of Daniel, of which I was a member. Meeting intermittently for five years (1961-1966), we considered 48 papers relative to Daniel 8 and 9, and in the spring of 1966 adjourned sine die, unable to reach a consensus.

"The commentary experience with Daniel already mentioned led me into an unhurried, in-depth, spare-time, comprehensive study of Daniel 7 to 12 that continued without interruption for seventeen years (1955-1972), in quest of a conclusive solution to the sanctuary problem. My objective was to be fully prepared with definitive, objective, biblical information the next time the question should arise during the course of my ministry for the church. Among other things, I memorized, in Hebrew, all relevant portions of Daniel 8 to 12 for instant recall and comparison (60 verses), conducted exhaustive word studies, 38 of more than 150 relevant Hebrew words Daniel uses throughout the Old Testament, studied the Hebrew grammar and syntax in detail, made a minute analysis of contextual data, compared ancient Greek and Latin translations of Daniel, investigated relevant apocryphal and New Testament passages, traced Jewish and Christian interpretation of Daniel from ancient to modern times, and made an exhaustive study of the formation, development, and subsequent Adventist experience with the traditional sanctuary doctrine. Eventually, I incorporated the results of this investigation into an 1100 page manuscript, which I later reduced to 725 pages but decided not to release for publication until an appropriate time. The above considerations conclusively demonstrate that our traditional interpretation of Daniel 8:14, the sanctuary, and the investigative judgment, as set forth in Article 23 of Fundamental Beliefs, does not accurately reflect the teaching of Scripture with respect to the ministry of Christ on our behalf since His return to heaven...."

"It was the sanctuary doctrine based on Daniel 8:14 that made us Seventh-day Adventists and that remains, today, the keystone of our distinctive belief system and our mission to the world. Of it, Ellen White wrote: "The Scripture which above all others had been both the foundation and central pillar of our faith was the declaration, 'Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed'" and "The correct understanding of the ministration in the heavenly sanctuary is the foundation of our faith." (*The Sanctuary Doctrine: Asset or Liability* by Raymond Forest Cottrell, D. Div. (1912-2003).

"In 1942, M. L. Andreasen, a seminary professor and at the time dean of Adventist theologians, expressed similar concern in a letter addressed to J. L. McElhaney, president of the General Conference, and W. H. Branson, a vice president:

"To the best of my knowledge and belief, there has been no official or authorized study [on the sanctuary] since [Fletcher and Conrade left

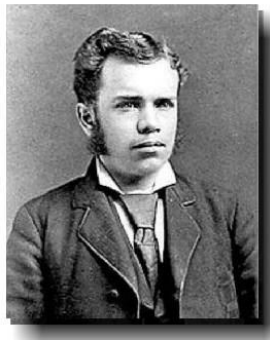
the church over the sanctuary question]. We shall be unprepared when another crisis occurs.

"I doubt that we fully appreciate how much these heresies have undermined the faith of the ministry in our doctrine of the sanctuary. If my experience as a teacher in the seminary may be taken as a criterion, I would say that a large number of our ministers have serious doubt as to the correctness of the views we hold on certain phases of the sanctuary. They believe, in a general way, that we are correct, but they are as fully assured that Ballenger's views [nearly forty years ago] have never been fully met and that we cannot meet them. . . . This is not a wholesome situation. If the subject is as vital as we have thought and taught it to be, it is not of secondary importance. Today, in the minds of a considerable part of the ministry, as far as my experience in the Seminary is concerned; it has little vital bearing, either in their lives or theology.

I dread to see the day when our enemies will make capital of our weakness. I dread still more to see the day when our ministry will begin to raise questions." (*Raymond Cottrell on Dr. Ford* by Raymond Cottrell).

"Cottrell was a renowned Adventist pastor, missionary, teacher, writer, and theologian. He was the associate editor of the Seventh-Day Adventist Bible Commentary in the 1950s and co-founder of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventist Bible Research Institute (BRI). He is the grandson of Roswell Cottrell, who followed William Miller. During the long decades of his privileged involvement with the SDA church's administrative and theological leadership at its headquarters, Cottrell was part of the behind-the-scenes of major theological controversies the church experienced in the 20th century." (Author Unknown)

Our Note: It is significant that Cottrell, who remained a loyal SDA and defender of his church to the end of his life, admitted these things and wished the SDA church to change.



Excerpts From: *Confession of Faith*

[Insights into the 2300 Days.]

By: E. J. Waggoner

"...twenty-five years ago [1881] these truths...made it clear to me that ... [T]here could, consequently, be no such thing, either in 1844, A.D., or at any other time, as the "cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary."

"Then what took place in 1844?"

That question puzzled me for many years; for I have been so thoroughly indoctrinated with the idea of a 2300-year period ending in 1844, that it never occurred to me to doubt it. Indeed, I never did doubt it for a moment; but one day the light dawned on me, and I saw that period had no foundation whatever, and then of course I simply dropped it.

How did I learn this? You asked. Well, I suppose I should never have seen it if I had not been for so many years fully convinced that the thing which I, from my boyhood, had been taught took place in 1844 did occur, then not at any other time.

But what about the 2300 days? Are we to throw the prophetic rule of "a day for a year"? By no means; that rule holds, but it has no application in this case, for the simple reason that the eight chapter of Daniel makes no mention whatever of 2300 days. ... The Hebrew text,

must settle the question, and that says, "two thousand and three hundred evenings and mornings." (literally "evening-mornings")... .

"But", it [is] asked, "doesn't an evening and a morning make a day?" Yes; but what reason have we for gratuitously assuming that the term is here used as a periphrasis for "day"? In that case we should have a figure of a figure! We are placed under the necessity of interpreting a figure of speech, and then taking that interpretation as a prophetic figure. When a prophetic symbol is used, the symbol itself ought to be absolutely clear, needing no explanation. But here we are told to believe that we have for the figurative day a term that is never elsewhere used in the Bible for the word "day." Why should we assume an exception here? There is a Hebrew word that is everywhere rendered "day," and it is the only word for "day" in the Hebrew language. It occurs more than 2000 times in the Hebrew Scriptures. Has it never occurred to you to wonder why an exception should be made here? It certainly rests with those who claim an exception here to show the most clear and convincing proof of the alleged fact, and to give a plain and conclusive reason therefore.

....I ask again, what reason can be given for the introduction by inspiration of a new, absolutely unknown, and clumsy expression, instead of the simple and well-known word for "day," if the reader were intended to understand "day?" I say "clumsy expression," meaning only, of course, as a circumlocution for "day." In reality there is nothing clumsy about it when taken in its obvious sense. It seems so obvious as to need no argument, that the term "evening-mornings," when used in connection with the sanctuary, must refer only to evening and morning sacrifices.

"But what about the Investigative Judgment?" Yes, indeed, what about it? In truth, there is no responsibility resting on me to say anything about it, because in the entire Bible, from Gen. 1:1 to Rev. 22:21, inclusive, there is never once any mention of such a thing. A long time ago I found that the only way to avoid misunderstandings in Bible discussions was to keep clear of theological terms not found in Scripture, and hence not susceptible of Bible explanation. A brief consideration of the Judgment in general will show that there is no place for an "investigative" Judgment before the coming of Christ. You will pardon me for quoting several passages of Scripture in full, instead of merely giving the references. I want the truth that they contain to stand out so boldly that it will be apparent what a libel upon God it is to assume that He is under the necessity of

investigating the record of men's lives and characters, in order to ascertain whether or not He can take them to Heaven.

"Known unto God are all His works from the beginning of the world."
[Acts 15:18]

"Can any hide himself in secret, that I shall not see him? Saith the Lord. Do not I fill heaven and earth? Saith the Lord." [Jer. 23:24]

"The word of God is living and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. And there is no creature that is not manifest in His sight; but all things are naked and laid open to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do." [Heb. 4:12, 13]

"O Lord, Thou hast searched me, and known me. Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising. Thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou searchest out 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." [Ps. 139:1-4]

"The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are His." [2 Timothy 2:19]

"Jesus did not commit Himself unto them, because He knew all men, and needed not that any should testify of man; for He knew what was in man." [John 2:24]

"Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray Him." [John 6:64]

In the face of this truth so often repeated, how can any thoughtful believer of the Bible teach that it is necessary for God to spend years in searching records, to find out who are true followers of Him, and who are not? We are expected to teach as a fundamental article of faith, that it has already taken God, assisted by hosts of angels, almost seventy-two years [It has now been 182 years] to go over the records (several times longer, by the way, than it was supposed would be required), and still the work is not done. It brings God down to the level of man.

But is there not to be a Judgment? Most certainly; for the Scriptures teach that "when the Son of man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him," then He shall sit upon the throne of His glory, and the dead, small and great, of all nations, shall stand before Him to be judged; but they nowhere say anything about any Judgment before Christ's coming.

The object of the Judgment is not that God may learn all about men, but men may learn the truth about God. They will not learn it through the preaching of his Word, so they must see everything for themselves, just as it was in relation to every other thing, so that every knee, even Satan's, shall involuntarily bow, and every tongue confess to God, acknowledging that Jesus Christ is Lord. Everyone that is cut off must acknowledge that his punishment is just; and even the righteous, who have trusted God and believed in His goodness and justice, without understanding all things, must have all things set before them so clearly that there will be no possibility for any doubt or question ever to rise.

Seventh-day Adventist teaching concerning the sanctuary, with its "Investigative Judgment" to precede the blotting out of sins, is virtually a denial of the atonement. True, much is made of the "antitypical day of atonement" beginning in 1844; but that very thing minimizes, if it does not nullify, the value of the blood of Christ, in that it teaches that a man may receive the blood-- the life-- and not receive the atonement. The Gospel has been turned into ceremonialism. The eyes of many have so long been fixed upon "the shadows" that it is almost impossible for them to see the light. I am not bringing any charge against their lives, but only against their teaching---making the word of God of none effect that they may maintain their tradition. Look over the literature from the beginning, and it will be apparent that they have transferred the Jewish sanctuary and its ceremonies into Heaven, and have made the atonement itself only ceremony. Everything must be made to "fit the type," as though the shadow of a thing were of more importance than the thing itself. You do not depend upon photographs to give you exact information as to your wife's features and characteristics. I dare say there was a time, before your marriage, when you paid a good deal of attention to her picture, and you no doubt have some of those pictures still; but I don't believe that you have spent much time studying them in the last thirty-five or forty years. You don't care for her picture, as long as you have her. And I am sure that you don't insist that she can't be your wife if she does not in all respects correspond to those pictures. Why,

then, should we spend time studying shadows, when we have the reality? For we have "come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in Heaven, and to God, the judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling."

The ancient sanctuary with its ceremonies was essentially a type by contrast. It was built because the children of Israel would not have God to dwell in them. But for their unbelief they might have come direct to the sanctuary which God's hands had established, and might have talked with God face to face, as Moses did. The promise was, if they kept God's covenant as Abraham did, they should be a kingdom of priests; instead, the priesthood was confined to one tribe, and to one family of that tribe, and was utterly useless so far as freeing from sin was concerned. Instead of having the law of the Spirit of life in Christ, the Living Stone, from which they could drink righteousness, they had law on lifeless stone, a "ministration of death." The "tabernacle of witness" was continual witness against them. Of course they were not shut up to those weak and unprofitable things, for whoever turned to the Lord in truth had the veil taken away, and could, like Moses, behold the glory of God. What I wish to emphasize is that we are not to spend precious time studying the minutest details of a system that was only the product of unbelief, when with Abraham and Isaiah and Paul we may by faith have boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus. The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, in referring to the tabernacle and its instruments said, "of which we cannot now speak particularly"; and it seems to me that we would do well to follow his example.

Let me note, by the way, an inconsistency on the part of those who insist that everything must "fit the type." In the type, the atonement day was just one day out of 360 days--the last day of the year. According to S.D.A. teaching, Christ was in the first apartment of the heavenly sanctuary from his ascension till 1844, or 1810 years, which time corresponded to the yearly service in the tabernacle, leading up to the day of atonement. The 1810 years corresponded to the 359 days in the type. Now 359 days is to one day as 1810 years is to five years and fifteen days. Therefore if the type were to be followed exactly, the "antitypical Day of Atonement" ought to have ended some time in 1849. Why insist on following the "type" so closely in other respects, and ignore it in the important matter of time?

But to come to the really serious indictment, I have said that the teaching that atonement for sins was deferred until 1844, and that no sins were blotted out till then, the sins of the living not being blotted out even yet, minimizes or even nullifies the value of the blood of Christ. It makes a distinction between things that do not differ, and teaches that the blood--the life--of Christ received by a person exercises only a portion of its virtue at the time of its reception,--that is divided in its action. Seventh-day Adventists do believe in the forgiveness of sins. At least it is taught in the denomination, and is believed by many. But forgiveness is obtained only by the reception, consciously, of the life of Christ, which is given freely on the cross for all men. We are "justified (made righteous) freely by His grace, through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus." This forgiveness is reconciliation to God, for it was our "wicked works" that constituted our enmity to God, and Christ has reconciled us in the body of His flesh, through death. Col. 1:21, 22. Justified by His blood is the same as reconciled by His death (Rom. 5: 9, 10), and this is the atonement. By Christ "we have now received the atonement." [Rom. 5:11] I know that there is an attempt to evade this truth, by using the word "reconciliation," which is given in the margin; but the fact remains that reconciliation and atonement are identical. Reconciliation implies previous enmity. In this case the enmity was all on our side; we were enemies of God, who is the Friend of sinners. It is we who are reconciled to God, by destruction of the enmity that was in us. Once we hated His ways; now we love and yield to them, and are at one with Him. We have received the atonement, namely, the life of God in Christ.

And this is the blotting out of sins. How can it be otherwise, when the enmity is destroyed, "slain," and the enmity is the body of sin? "It is the blood that makes atonement for the soul," and this blood—life--is not divided. I am sure that you still sing with as much fervor as when we used to sing it together twenty-eight years ago,

"Amazing Grace 'tis heaven below to feel the blood applied;"

And I hope that sometimes even yet Adventist congregations join in singing from the old hymn book,

"My sin, O the bliss of the glorious thought! My sin, not in part, but the whole, Is nailed to His cross, and I bear it no more; Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, O my soul!"

And also from "Christ in Song,"

"Christ has for sin atonement made; What a wonderful Saviour! I am redeemed, the price is paid; What a wonderful Saviour!"

...."we have received the atonement." [Rom. 5:11] We should not dare come into the presence of God as lawbreakers knowing that our sins were charged up against us; but we can come with boldness to the throne of grace....

I think there is no disagreement as to the fact that the blotting out of sins is the atonement. What I object to is the denominational teaching that this is only a book transaction. That makes the atonement not a personal matter at all, but something which can take place without in the least affecting the individual concerned. It is like blotting out extreme hot or cold weather by breaking the thermometer. What possible difference can it make to a man what is done with a record of his sins, written in a book, when he himself has had them removed from him, "as far as the east is from the west?" A sick man is taken to a hospital and treated. When he enters his condition is noted, and every day that he is there a careful record of his case is made. Every rise of temperature is set down, together with every unfavorable symptom. By and by he is discharged, cured. That record of the course of his disease will remain on file in the hospital as long as the hospital stands; but the man knows nothing and cares nothing about it. He is freed from the disease, and that is all that he cares about. Just as little can the man who is forgiven and cleansed from sin care for or be affected by any record of his former sins. In saying this I am not implying that there will be retained for ever the record of men's sins. What I do mean is that the blotting out of sins is a vital thing in the sinner himself, and not a mere matter of bookkeeping.

The idea of making a man's salvation depend to any degree whatever upon his belief, or the fact, of whether or not Christ stood for a certain number of years upon one side or the other of a partition wall would be childish, if the matter were not so serious. Will nothing ever emancipate the denomination from the bondage of the observance of "days, and months, and times, and years?" Will they forever encumber and smother the glorious message of the everlasting Gospel with endless details of ceremonialism? Must the whole Levitical system be transferred to heaven till the end of time, and it be continually taught that God regards even His own followers as mere ticket-of-leave men?

What do I mean by this? I have reference to the teaching that no matter how humbly and contritely a man may confess his sins to God, how heartily he accepts Christ as his sacrifice and Savior, his sins are only provisionally forgiven; that they are held against him to see how he will "hold out." What is this but to make him a ticket-of-leaven man? It is at best but suspended sentence. You don't forgive an offender in such a manner, but whole-heartedly, letting the evil of the past be as though it had not been. Why should Christians charge God with doing that which in them would be un-Christian? Why not be content with the teaching that if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness? and that "as far as the east if from the west, "so far hath he removed our transgressions from us?"

The whole theory of a postponed blotting out of sin seems to be based upon the superficial reading of Acts 3:19.

[Our Note: It is a poor practice to base a doctrine on just one or two texts. It is similar to a two or three legged stool in the fact it can easily be knocked over. It is also a general rule in interpreting Scripture to be very careful in basing a doctrine on an interpretation of prophecy. It almost, if not without exception, is a bad idea. When looking at an obscure text such as Acts 3:19, in which more than one meaning can be given the text, a meaning should be chosen that agrees with the general tenor of the Bible. The Bible's clear teaching in other texts is that sins are forgiven at the time they are confessed to God. The text under consideration can easily be understood in accordance with this. It says the sins are blotted out at the times of refreshing coming from the Lord. When are the times of refreshing? Any who have experienced the real soul wrenching conviction of being guilty of sin and a lost soul crying to God for salvation, such as Martin Luther experienced as he sought salvation in the monastery, who find the way of salvation and are granted free and full forgiveness and salvation can testify to the joyful times of refreshing that come from the Lord to their souls as they realize that their sins have been forgiven and blotted out. Perhaps the Syriac Version is a little clearer when it says in this verse "that the times of refreshing may come."

As the famous 18th century Baptist minister John Gill said regarding this text: "....seasons of spiritual refreshment, joy, and peace, through the great and precious promises of the Gospel, and by the application of the blood and righteousness of Christ, to such penitent and converted sinners; which refreshment and comfort come from the

Lord, and are accompanied with his gracious presence: ..."]

There is no intimation that the blotting out of sins is to be delayed indefinitely after the repentance and conversion, for such a thing is an impossibility. The blood of Christ cleanses from all sin, when we repent, and then we have "fellowship" with the Father and the Son. We are at one with them. Where are the sins after we have been cleansed from them? Where was the leprosy after Christ touched the leper, and cleansed him from it? Where was Peter's wife's mother's fever after Jesus touched her hand, and it left her? Where did it go? and where was it kept stored up? Where is the pain after the healing balm has been administered? Where is the hunger after the nourishing food has been eaten? Where is the thirst after the refreshing draught? Where was the man's blindness after his eyes were opened? Where was the man's lameness after his feet and ankle bones received strength, and he leaped and walked? Where is the sin, after a man becomes a new creature?

Just as the other day I picked up an old volume of *Thoughts on Daniel* and read that the work of Christ since 1844 "consists in the remission of the sins of those who should be found worthy to have them remitted." I pass by the teaching that the remission of sins depends on a man's worthiness. That is too baldly unevangelical to need threshing out again. But we are taught in the Bible that remission of sins is something that is received by whosoever believeth in Jesus. Acts 10:43 Christ, in imparting the Spirit to the apostles, said: "Whose sins soever ye remit, they are remitted." There is no teaching of a future remission. The remission of sins is as real a thing as the healing of disease, and cannot take place apart from the individual.

I should be recreant to God if I did not recognize the light that He has given me; I could never understand why it was given to me, except on the ground that His gifts are bestowed, not according to deserts, but according to need.

[Our Note:] In regard to the Sanctuary Doctrine and the 2300 days issue, we would recommend you read the sections in the appendix of this book entitled "A Prominent Adventist Minister's Testimony", and "Statement by Raymond F. Cottrell, D. Div."

. Also, L. Richard Conradi did extensive research for years into prophecy and the 2300 days. He wrote a book (*The Impelling Force of*

Prophetic Truth) and a shorter tract (entitled, *The Founders of the Seventh-day Adventist Denomination*) in which he examines the historical interpretations in regards to the 2300 days. While still having it end in 1843-44 he gives another reasonable explanation for what took place rather than the cleansing of the sanctuary. He also gives the traditional old time protestant understanding of the Three Angels Messages that he discovered in his research. The point is that there is more than one possible explanation for this area of prophecy that is in much better accordance with Scriptural teaching than Ellen White's interpretation. The above was part of a letter Waggoner wrote a friend at the end of his life and he never intended to publish it. It was published after his death. As such, it was only a brief discussion of the subject.

Excerpts from Daniel Morneau's Testimony

".... My father is Roger Morneau; you may have heard of him, for he wrote five books for the SDA church, the first being *A Trip into the Supernatural*, then a set entitled *Incredible Answers to Prayer*, and the last *Beware of Angels*. Well guess what? I just got my own incredible answer to prayer; for the God of heaven has shown me the true spirit behind Mrs. Ellen G. White, and it's not the same spirit that I've been taught to worship. And so, it turns out that this woman is a fraud of the worst kind, the worst of the worst--a wolf in sheep's clothing!!!

I think I went into some kind of mental shock; I just couldn't believe it, yet it was true, oh so true. And so, for the first time in my life, things are now starting to make sense with regard to Mrs. White..... this ... is not the kingdom of heaven as it leads one to believe, but rather it's the land of the enemy.... I found the truth because I was looking for it and praying for it; however, when it came, it was not what I expected it to be, and this is an understatement to be sure....

Daniel Morneau."⁴¹¹

⁴¹¹ <https://www.nonsda.org/>

Excerpts from Chaplain, David DePinho's Testimony, July, 2001, Former Adventist Minister

.... I read! I read for months; I read into the night for weeks at a time. I read with zeal to vindicate not just Ellen White but myself, since I had for so long pointed to EGW as a genuine prophet for God's last-day Church. To my surprise and dismay, I was finding more problems than answers... I began by writing to friends of mine who are Adventist pastors to see what they knew, so they could talk me out of my preliminary conclusions.... But with regard to our topic, I was also impressed that they, like me, had not really taken the critics' material seriously. They had never done a fair and honest evaluation of EGW as I was seeking to do then. I wrote to the Ellen White Estate and spoke to two members of the staff. I called my Endorser at the General Conference Headquarters. I spoke with trusted senior Adventist pastors and other chaplains endorsed by the Adventist Church. I spoke with another General Conference officer who was related to a local church member. I spoke at length with my pastor at my local Adventist Church. Answers to solve the problems were not forthcoming.

I carried on a prolonged email dialogue with a professor who now teaches the Ellen White class at the university I graduated from. He was thoughtful and patient. However, he was unable to answer the problems....

An honest evaluation of Ellen White and her role in Adventism is absolutely essential before Adventists can honestly study Bible doctrine.... You ask why? Some of you reading this are saying, "I don't need Ellen White to support my beliefs; I believe, teach, and support everything from the Bible!" But hold it right there for a moment. I am about to PROVE that that is **impossible**.

Two points make it clear that Ellen White is where we must start:

First, looking at Ellen White (EGW) provides us an opportunity to deal with a "concrete" issue rather than a theological one. For instance, it's easier for us to get a handle on terms, ideas, and the application of those ideas. We can deal with actual events and happenings since there is a wealth of contemporary source material to test her work as a prophet. Second, EGW is a "doctrine" in and of herself within

Adventism, and that has a couple of serious implications. This must not be overlooked or downplayed. In the Seventh-day Adventist Church Manual dated 1986 and issued by the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, we find listed on page 28, doctrine number:

17. "The Gift of Prophecy."

"One of the gifts of the Holy Spirit is prophecy. This gift is an identifying mark of the remnant church and was manifested in the ministry of Ellen G. White. As the Lord's messenger, her writings are a continuing and **authoritative source of truth**, which provide for the church comfort, guidance, instruction, and correction. They also make clear that the Bible is the standard by which all teaching and experience must be tested." (Emphasis supplied.)

Adventists will often say they support their church doctrine because of the Bible alone and not EGW. I said it too, over and over again. But I can now see that that is impossible with the above doctrine. Logic dictates that if EGW is to be used for "guidance, instruction, and correction," and she is an "authoritative source of truth," then Adventism has two truth sources. So the last statement in doctrine 17 above, "the Bible is the standard," is a logical fallacy as long as EGW is doctrinally held to be an authoritative source of truth as well.... For those Adventists who still believe that the Bible is the supreme authority and are willing to **really** test EGW against the Bible, consider this: If EGW is not "biblical" and contradicts the Bible when she says "I saw" or "I was shown" or relates the scenes of a vision, then Adventism is teaching false doctrine in supporting her role as a prophet in the church. That is clear, isn't it?

Since Adventism is a system that is held to be truth, if acceptance of EGW as a prophet "falls," then all Adventist teachings must come under a fresh reevaluation, with the preface understanding that Adventism is wrong about EGW. This reevaluation, ultimately, was what led me to leave Adventism.

I finally concluded that EGW could not be a divinely appointed prophet. As a result, I began to look at Adventist doctrine openly and honestly for the first time.⁴¹²

⁴¹² <https://www.nonsda.org/>

For further study beyond our book, Weaver's material, Conradi's book, Ringer's paper, and Ballenger's material we would recommend the five websites listed below.

However, we would stress that we do not necessarily agree with or endorse all that is on these websites. While these sites dwell almost exclusively on exposing Adventist error and are very helpful, one should use caution and prayer. Most fit into the New Evangelical camp and as a consequence have the potential for the problems that often brings. For a discussion of these possible problems I highly recommend you read the booklet: *New Evangelicalism: It's History, Characteristics, and Fruit* by David Cloud. It can be found for free download at: www.wayoflife.org under the free book section or by using the direct link below.

https://www.wayoflife.org/free_ebooks/new-evangelicalism-history-fruit.php

<https://www.wayoflife.org/free-ebooks/treachorous-waters.php>

Nevertheless, these sites, run by former Adventists, have valuable research and they are trying to sound the warning in regard to Adventism! We can all appreciate their efforts and research in this area. Here are the links:

<https://www.nonsda.org/> www.nonegw.org/egw35.shtml This site by a former S.D.A is one of the best in proving Ellen White to be a false prophet. I found it most helpful when coming out of Adventism. However, he is currently a member of *The Church of God Seventh-day* which has its own problems. He does not seem to promote or really present them (at least at this writing) other than having a link to his denominations website. He mostly sticks to revealing the problems of Adventism.

<https://www.nonsda.org/egw/index.html>

<http://www.truthorfables.com/>

<https://www.lifeassuranceministries.org/index.html>

<https://www.sabbathinchrist.com/> This site has an especially helpful book written by a former Adventist minister entitled *Sabbath in Christ*. (Update): This site has been shut down. The book *Sabbath in Christ* may be read here: <https://lifeassuranceministries.org/sabbath-in-christ-2/>

While not necessarily endorsing every point of theology presented, I will say (as of this writing) I mostly agree with the following website. I would **highly recommend it** as a useful resource of helpful knowledge on a wide variety of spiritual subjects of interest to the Christian. It also has a free downloadable book on Adventism, *Avoiding the Snare of Seventh-day Adventism*, that is very helpful. The author has done a spectacular job in explaining the gospel in relation to Adventism. www.wayoflife.org

While the following websites do not have information regarding Adventism, and I don't endorse all of the theology that might be presented, I believe these websites will be helpful to be aware of for those who are coming out of Adventism and wish to know of other Christians who are trying to stand against apostasy.⁴¹³

Chick Publications: www.chick.com Good information on the Catholic Church. Has a newsletter, *Battle Cry*, that gives news notes on the times and covers other areas as well; lots of books.

Mark Cahill: www.MarkCahill.org focuses on personal evangelism by a man who does personal street evangelism full-time.

⁴¹³ One of the greatest obstacles to those contemplating stepping out of Adventism is that they are told that all other religious groups are Babylon and part of an emerging one world church. It is emphasized that to leave Adventism is to join that church and eventually receive the Mark of the Beast. As they look out at what they are stepping into when leaving Adventism, everything they see in the non-Adventist Christian world seems to confirm what they have been told and makes them feel they are going in the wrong direction. They also are used to a close network of ministries and churches that provides support and security. This is why when we were leaving Adventism we found it so helpful and **crucial** to know about the ministries I mention here that are not a part of the emerging church and are resisting it. While I might not agree with some of them in everything they present [I am not necessarily recommending these ministries but only making the reader aware of their existence], they are standing against apostasy. Those coming out of Adventism need to know that **they do not have to join the Emerging Church.** They need to know there are **many** who are resisting and holding a different torch and are crying to all those in false systems of worship to “come out of her my people” and stand upon the Bible and follow Jesus our head and King.

Trinitarian Bible Society: www.tbsbibles.org is a Bible society standing firm for Christ in an age of apostasy.

Far Eastern Bible College: www.febc.edu.sg is standing against apostasy in these last days; however, they are old-fashioned Presbyterians.

Thomas Ross: <https://faithsaves.net> is a theological professor who has written scholarly articles on a number of subjects, including the Bible version and manuscript issue. He is standing against apostasy. There is lots of other good information as well.

www.baptist-books.com is a bookstore and book publisher.

The Old Paths Publications: www.theoldpathspublications.com is a publisher of books.

www.streetpreaching.com is by an elderly man who spent his life living by faith as a street preacher. He has written books on his experiences and on methods of street ministry. His books are free or close to it, depending on where you get them.

www.bbc-cromwell.org/seminary.shtml is a Baptist theological seminary that is trying to stand against worldliness and the last day apostasy.

www.libertygospeltracts.com is a ministry that is a source of Bible studies and tracts.

[www.meropoltantabernacle.org/books/Dr-E-S-Williams E.S.](http://www.meropoltantabernacle.org/books/Dr-E-S-Williams-E.S) Williams is a doctor of medicine and has books on the dangers of "Christian psychology. They are titled: *The Dark Side of Christian Counseling* and *Christ or Therapy?*

www.surewordpublications.com Sure Word Publications.

www.stayinthecastle.com Ultimate Goal Publications (Stay in the Castle).

www.starr-publications.com Starr Publications.

www.purityplan.org Purity Plan Ministries.

www.shepherdingtheflock.com/store/c1/Featured_Products.html
More books.

www.pamweb.org/mainpage.html Psychoheresy Awareness Ministries.

www.prairiefirepress.com/ Prairie fire Press.

www.Northstarministries.com/ Northstar Ministries.

www.localchurchbiblepublishers.com Local Church Bible Publishers.

www.thekjvstore.com The KJV Store. Bibles.

www.lighthouse Trails.com/ Lighthouse Trails. More books.

www.goodandrightpublishing.com . Good and Right Publishing.

www.bethelbaptist.ca/contact.htm Bethel Baptist Print Ministry.

www.theberean Call.org/ Berean Call. Their books by Dave Hunt are generally quite good.

There are others as well that are resisting apostasy.

For those who are searching for a true Bible believing church, the following websites might be helpful. We do not approve, recommend, or endorse all the churches listed on these sites. The reader should use discretion sharpened by God's Word and much prayer in coming to their decision. However, these websites tend to have a higher percentage of churches that are holding to standards and are helpful tools **when used wisely**.

www.wayoflife.org/directory/index

www.kjvchurches.com

www.fundamental.org

www.Unaaffiliatedbaptistchurchfinder.blogspot.com/p/tx-wy.html

Appendix D

The following appendix contains information that will be of interest to those who (like the author and also many "Historic Adventists") consider the Greek text underlying the King James Version superior to the Greek text underlying the modern English versions.

For those readers who are of a different opinion, it is important to realize that what follows is only additional information and **the thesis of this book has already fully been made and substantiated in the main text of this book.** Feel free to skip this Appendix D if you wish. Our purpose in including the information below is not to enter at this time into a debate over versions of the Bible. Let's not allow our minds to be diverted into other questions by those who have no good answers for the problems in

Ellen White's writings. This is an extra item that some readers will find extremely interesting and some will not.



Did Ellen White Guard “God’s” Church against Perversions of the Bible?

John and Lily sat once again on the loveseat hand in hand. Slowly, John pulled his hand away and reached for some papers he had on the lamp stand. “What do you have there?” asked Lily. “I know we have quit researching into Ellen White, but I happened to run into one last item that I thought you might find interesting,” said John. “You know that the new versions of the Bible that came out in the late 19th century to the present were based on a new stream of manuscripts that are corrupt. (Due to space, we will not prove this point in this book. Please refer to the footnote below for more info. ⁴¹⁴) The new versions have proved a real threat to Christianity, leaving out many important texts and changing the Bible in subtle but important ways.”

“Yes, I know all that,” said Lily. “But what does that have to do with anything?”

“Well, just this,” said John. “Ellen White claims to be a true prophetess of God. She claims that God put her in God’s last-day

⁴¹⁴ We refer you to the Trinitarian Bible Societies web site for more info. on Bible versions: <https://www.tbsbibles.org/page/articles>

Then the articles at Dr. Waite’s web site:

http://www.biblefortoday.org/idx_Pages/idx_articles.html

Also you can get Dr. B.G. Wilkinson’s book *Our Authorized Version Vindicated* at:

www.amazon.com/s?k=our+authorized+version+vindicated&ref=nb_sb_noss

In addition, Pastor David Cloud has done extensive research into primary sources for almost forty years on the subject and has written books on it. Some of them are for free download on his website at: <https://www.wayoflife.org/>

remnant church to prepare and warn God's people of last-day deceptions and prepare them for the very end. Also, she was acting in this capacity when the Adventist church and the Christian world was buzzing with the news that the first real revision was taking place of the King James Version and soon would come out with this new version of the Bible. The Review ran articles preparing the laity for the new version and keeping them informed. It is hard for us to realize what a buzz this was in those days. For now, we are so used to a new version coming out that we hardly take notice. But it was a novelty in those days. This revision and the work of the revisers Westcott and Hort would lead to the biggest and most subtle attack on the Bible and on Protestantism that we have ever seen.

"Who, according to Ellen White, was the church that was supposed to carry on the Protestant Reformation and the only ones with all the truth?"

"Why, the Adventist Church," said Lily. "Everyone knows that."

"Yes, that is true," said John. "And since the Adventist church is supposed to be, according to her, the only true Protestants carrying on the Reformation as it should be, would not the greatest attack on true Protestantism be a great attack on Adventism? Would not God warn His people of such a big threat to them through the Spirit of Prophecy (her writings) when this was like a tidal wave coming on the Adventist church and the world? While it is true that, for the most part, the King James Version continued to be the main version for years to come, one looking at the *Review and Herald* magazine and literature of Adventism at that time can see that the new versions were being promoted, embraced, and used. Yet, the funny thing is that in this emergency the last-day prophetess was not only silent but seemed to, if anything, endorse the new versions. Yet there were non-Adventists such as the Trinitarian Bible Society and Dean Burgon who did try to sound a warning among non-Adventists and seemed to have more light on the subject than Ellen White, even though they were supposed to be part of Babylon. You probably remember the story of how Mrs. White couldn't find a hairnet of hers and how God showed her in a vision that one of the girls in her house had stolen it. So, the question is this: Is God more concerned with hairnets than He is with one of the biggest attacks on Adventism by having its Bible stripped from it? Her actions and lack of action on this topic caused B. G. Wilkinson's warning to Adventism of the errors in the new versions, given in his 1930 book *Our Authorized Version Vindicated*, to be rejected by the church.



“It was critical that she not promote error in this case and that she warn God’s people if they were to come through it unscathed. History has proven this. But she failed! Had she even been neutral on the subject, Wilkinson’s book very well might have been accepted. But for some

reason, the spirit that gave her visions seems, if anything, to have told her or at least allowed her to promote the new versions. One wonders how this could be. Let’s look at the facts of the case:

“‘Before the Revised Version was published, there leaked out from the committee statements regarding changes which they intended to make. Some of these I brought to Mother’s attention, and she gave me very surprising information regarding these Scriptures. This led me to believe that the revision, when it came to hand, would be a matter of great service to us.’⁴¹⁵

“Does not this above statement regarding Mrs. White show an endorsement of the new version and at least some of the changes? One should remember that many of the changes were corruptions to the Word of God. We notice in the next two quotes that she used several versions of the Bible and not just the two big new ones. She seems to have pulled every new version she could, even resorting to two small insignificant versions in her writings at a time when many writers were only using the K. J. V.

“‘*Patriarchs and Prophets* (1890) also contains two renderings from the Bernard translation, and at least one from the Boothroyd Version. *Education* (1903) contains at least one rendering from the Rotherham translation.’⁴¹⁶

“‘In the publication of *The Ministry of Healing* (1905), Mrs. White employed eight texts from the English Revised Version, 55 from the American Revised Version, two from Leeser, and four from Noyes, in addition to seven marginal renderings.’⁴¹⁷

⁴¹⁵ W. C. White, DF 579 (1931); *Ministry*, April, 1947, p. 17

⁴¹⁶ W. C. White, DF 579 (1931); *Ministry*, April, 1947, p. 17

⁴¹⁷ W. C. White, DF 579 (1931); *Ministry*, April, 1947, p. 17, 18

“As to Mrs. White’s attitude toward the revisions of 1885 and 1901, and as to her own use of these in preaching and writing, her son, W. C. White, who was closely associated with her in her public ministry and in the preparation and publication of her books, wrote in 1931:

I do not know of anything in the E. G. White writings, nor can I remember of anything in Sister White’s conversations, that would intimate that she felt that there was any evil in the use of the Revised Version.... When the first revision was published, I purchased a good copy and gave it to Mother. She referred to it occasionally, but never used it in her preaching. Later on, as manuscripts were prepared for her new books and for revised editions of books already in print, Sister White’s attention was called from time to time by myself and Sister Marian Davis to the fact that she was using texts which were much more clearly translated in the Revised Version. Sister White studied each one carefully, and in some cases, she instructed us to use the Revised Version. In other cases, she instructed us to adhere to the Authorized Version.

When *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 8, was printed and it seemed desirable to make some lengthy quotations from the Psalms, it was pointed out to Sister White that the Revised Version of these Psalms was preferable, and that by using the form of blank verse the passages were more readable. Sister White gave the matter deliberate consideration and instructed us to use the Revised Version. When you study these passages, you will find that in a number of places where the Revised Version is largely used, the Authorized Version is used where translation seems to be better.

We cannot find in any of Sister White’s writings, nor do I find in my memory, any condemnation of the American Revised Version of the Holy Scriptures. Sister White’s reasons for not using the A. R. V. in the pulpit are as follows:

“There are many persons in the congregation who remember the words of the texts we might use as they are presented in the Authorized Version, and to read from the Revised Version would introduce perplexing questions in their minds as to why the wording of the text had been changed by the revisers and as to why it was being used by the speaker.”

She did not advise me in a positive way not to use the A. R. V., but she intimated to me quite clearly that it would be better not to do so, as the use of the different wording brought

perplexity to the older members of the congregation. –
White Estate DF 579; *Ministry*, April 1947, pp. 17, 18.

“One should notice that she only tells her son that it was better not to use the new version because it might confuse some of the older members. It was not because she considered it inferior in any way. In fact, from the first quote mentioned above, she had been given special information from the spirit that inspired her that supported the changes that the translators of the new version had made, thus indicating that this new translation would be superior to the King James. She also had no problems using this new version in print, knowing that to do so without any comment would naturally be considered by the people as an endorsement. Let’s look at another quote that was written not long after the new version came out. She was very much aware of this new version of the Bible and that it was being used. Yet look at the blanket statement she makes regarding the Bible not differentiating between the versions, thus making her statement apply to both:

“‘Some look to us gravely and say, 'Don't you think there might have been some mistake in the copyist or in the translators?' This is all probable, and the mind that is so narrow that it will hesitate and stumble over this possibility or probability would be just as ready to stumble over the mysteries of the inspired Word, because their feeble minds cannot see through the purposes of God. Yes, they would just as easily stumble over plain facts that the common mind will accept, and discern the Divine, and to which God's utterance is plain and beautiful, full of marrow and fatness. All the mistakes will not cause trouble to one soul, or cause any feet to stumble, that would not manufacture difficulties from the plainest revealed truth.’⁴¹⁸

“We notice in the above that she says, in other words, that if there are any mistakes in the translation of the Bible (referring to the Bibles of her day that would include the King James and presumably the new versions), they would be of such a nature as to not be of any importance. But is that true? Those who have any knowledge of this issue and understand the nature of these versions know that the mistakes are far from unimportant. The mistakes are glaring and of great import in the new versions.

⁴¹⁸ E. G. White; MS. 16, 1888, published in *Testimony of Jesus*, p. 12

“Getting back to B. G. Wilkinson and his book *Our Authorized Version Vindicated*, we note once again that it was 1930 when his book came out. It was in the early 1930s that his book was rejected by the church. Notice that the date of all this information that Willie wrote was in 1931, right in the midst of the controversy over Wilkinson’s book. It is obvious that the brethren were probably asking him for more detailed information in regard to any light Ellen White had on the subject. The answer to that question is what, no doubt, helped influence the church to reject Wilkinson’s warning and his book. Evidently, I am not the only one who has noticed Ellen White’s influence in deciding this question. Notice what the Journal of the Adventist Theological Society has to say:

“‘Noteworthy also is the fact that Ellen White made use of different versions of the Bible in her writings. The use of different versions was also supported by other contemporary Seventh-day Adventists. **This is a significant point because** later on the issue of the reliability of certain English translations of the Bible would be raised in Seventh-day Adventist circles.’⁴¹⁹

“This quote states that many contemporary Seventh-day Adventists in Mrs. White’s day supported the use of new versions. **This was an issue in her time.** It also states: ‘This is a significant point [her using different versions] because later on the issue of the reliability of certain English translations of the Bible would be raised in Seventh-day Adventist circles.’ This happened when Wilkinson’s book *Our Authorized Version* came out in 1930. It was at the heart of a controversy over the new versions in Adventism. So, Ellen White’s role was significant in the outcome of that controversy. But the above journal is not the only paper to state the fact that among Adventists the controversy of Bible versions was decided to a great degree by Ellen White’s attitude and conduct towards them. Notice what the *Ministry Magazine* of 1947 had to say on the matter:

“‘The fact that Mrs. White consistently quoted from various versions of the Scriptures from the time they were available to the close of her ministry, indicates clearly that she saw an advantage to using these versions where their rendering better expressed the thought. Any intimation that she was influenced in the use, or in the discontinuance of the use, of the various versions by leaders of the church is entirely without foundation. While some have intimated that there may be a

⁴¹⁹ *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society*, 10/1-2 (1999): 486-514

hidden danger in quoting from the two well-known revised versions, it would seem logical that were this so, Mrs. White would not have herself drawn from these versions, nor would she have been silent in regard to their use.'⁴²⁰

"If it indeed was God who inspired Ellen White, would He, knowing that her actions and statements would lead the church into accepting false Bible versions and rejecting their pure Bible, have remained silent? I personally have experienced the negative fruit of Ellen White's position regarding the versions of the Bible. Upon showing a man, who was conservative, sincere, had been through pastoral training, and was a firm believer in Ellen White, a glaring error in one of the new versions, his first reaction was shock and an expression of how dreadful it was. Then, about five minutes later, he decided that in spite of the problem it really didn't matter that much, for Ellen White used the new versions and seemed to condone them, so it really can't matter that much. After all, she is God's Prophetess and would have warned us if it was really that big of a deal. Now I ask those of you who have studied the subject of the corrupt New Age Bibles, is this fruit of Ellen White's ministry good or bad? You decide."

John looked at his wife as he said, "Well, what do you think?"

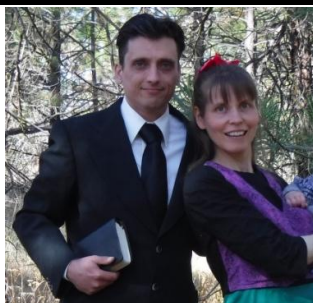
"I think you really have a point," she said. "I always wondered why she never came out against those versions, but I just always rationalized it away. But now I can see what was really happening."

John looked into his wife's shining eyes looking up at him and said, "Aren't we thankful that God has led us out of error and into His truth?"

"Oh yes, John, God has been so merciful and good to have led us out of such a deception! My only prayer is that He will lead all sincere seekers after truth into His glorious light like He has us," she said, smiling up at him.

"Amen, sweetheart, amen," John quietly said.

⁴²⁰ *Ministry*, April, 1947, p. 17



***Light Through the Storm* is the story of Ian (John) and Susan (Lily). They are fourth and sixth generation Adventists respectively, determined to follow God wherever He leads, living the Country Living Message, and firm believers in Ellen White when an unexpected disaster hits their home, sending them into a storm. Their minds swirling in anguish and full of unanswered questions, they learn to turn to God and His Word for their anchor as never before. Through their struggle, they sense God's leading as slowly but surely they are led by His light through the storm and find surprising answers to the disaster that has swept upon them.**

It is the hope of the author that you will be inspired, challenged, and strengthened in Christ Jesus as you read this story.

