
How God Protected Ellen White's Writings

The manner in which God has protected His Inspired Writings is incredible. In spite of repeated attacks by the enemy down through the centuries, and even in modern times,— we, today, have the Word of God!

In this study, we will not cover the broad sweep of the centuries of preservation of God's Word, for that is available elsewhere. Instead, **we will focus on the protection our kind Father has given to the Spirit of Prophecy writings.**

Moses wrote the books of Job and Genesis while shepherding sheep in the wilderness, which was followed by the turbulence of forty years with the Israelites. Yet we have his books today.

Nearly all of the Old Testament was imperiled when the Babylonians overran Jerusalem in 606 B.C. and two subsequent invasions, within the next 20 years, which destroyed the nation and reduced its structures to ruins. Yet we now have the entire Old Testament.

The New Testament books underwent "cruel mockings and scourgings," as it were, in the centuries which followed. Yet we have the New Testament books. It is true that, in the intervening centuries, translators and copyists made a few changes (see my serial book, *The King James Bible and the Modern Versions*, currently being released month by month), yet the essential points of salvation may be found in all of them—even in the Roman Catholic Rheims-Douai.

There exists today more ancient manuscripts of the Bible than of any other writing of antiquity. **God has protected His Word, and He will continue to do so to the end. Why has He done this? Because it is His channel of communication with mankind. Contrary to popular belief, that channel is not through priests, rabbis, ministers, or church councils; it is through the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy!**

BEGINNINGS

It was a chilly day in December 1844. Approximately seven weeks had elapsed since the great disappointment of October 22, when a slightly older friend, Mrs. Elizabeth Haines, asked Ellen Harmon, a young girl of 17, to visit her.

Frail Ellen had a damaged heart, was severely weakened by tuberculosis, could only speak in a whisper, and found it difficult to breathe while lying down. She was frequently awakened from sleep by coughing and bleeding in her lungs.

Yet it was at this very time, when the feeble girl was nearing death, that she was called to be a prophet of God. The King of heaven truly uses the weakest of the weak to do His work!

Mrs. Haines lived across the causeway, in South Portland. While at her home, three other young women joined Ellen and Mrs. Haines for morning family worship on the second floor of the house.

While they were kneeling in prayer, Ellen was taken off in vision.

"While I was praying, the power of God came upon me as I had never felt it before. I was wrapped in a vision of God's glory, and seemed to be rising higher and higher from the earth, and was shown something of the travels of the Advent people to the holy City."—*Early Writings*, 13.

About a year later, she recalled the event and the aftermath in these words:

"As God has shown me the travels of the Advent people to the holy City, and the rich reward to be given those who wait the return of their Lord from the wedding, it may be my duty to give you a short sketch of what God has revealed to me. The dear saints have many trials to pass through. But our light afflictions, which are but for a moment, will work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory—while we look not at the things which are seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

"I have tried to bring back a good report and a few grapes from the heavenly Canaan, for which many would stone me, as the congregation bade stone Caleb and Joshua for their report (Num. 14:10). But I declare to you, my brethren and sisters in the Lord, it is a goodly land, and we are well able to go up and possess it."—*Experience and Views*, pp. 9-10 (letter to Enoch Jacobs, editor of the *Day Star*).

At the time of the vision, and for several months thereafter, Ellen could not hold her hand steady enough to write the vision she had been shown. Ellen was young, ill, retiring, and unused to associating with many people. She felt that she could not accept the commission, and she pleaded with God to remove the burden from her.

"I shrank from it. I was young, and I thought they would not receive it from me."—*Letter 3, 1847* (written to Joseph Bates, July 13, 1847). But the call from God was insistent.

"About one week after this the Lord gave me another view, and showed me the trials I must pass through; that I must go and relate to others what He had revealed to me; that I should meet with great opposition, and suffer anguish of spirit. Said the angel, "The grace of God is sufficient for you; He will sustain you."—2 *Spiritual Gifts*, 35.

At this time, Ellen was in constant bodily suffering and tuberculosis ravaged her lungs; her family was without money, and it was midwinter in Maine.

For several days and far into the night Ellen prayed that God would remove the burden from her and place it upon someone more capable.

But the words of the angel sounded constantly in her ears:

"Make known to others what I have revealed to you."—*Early Writings*, 20.

Recalling the experience, she wrote:

"It seemed impossible for me to accomplish this work that was presented before me; to attempt it seemed certain failure. The trials attending it seemed more than I could endure. How could I, a child in years, go forth from place to place unfolding to the people the holy truths of God?"

My heart shrank in terror from the thought.”—*Life Sketches*, 194.

THE PROPHET’S PRIMARY WORK

Yet, with the help and protection of her heavenly Father, Ellen White was enabled to accomplish a great deal.

What is the most important work of a prophet of God? I will suggest that it is the written materials that the prophet produces. What has proven to be more important? the preaching of Matthew to his associates or his 28-chapter Gospel? Down through the centuries, what has helped mankind more? Daniel’s talks with Nebuchadnezzar or the book that he wrote?

God’s messages to all mankind are contained in the holy Scriptures. **Those messages are of urgent importance—for they constitute a primary channel of communication between God and man! It is quite obvious that equally important to the writings of a prophet—is the protection God must give to the writings that prophet produces.**

But, let us take this a step further. There are two items of faith that we must exercise in regard to the Inspired Writings: (1) We must believe that they are God’s messages to us. (2) We must believe that He has protected them.

If we believe the first but reject the second, the writings will be unread or not obeyed. Either type of rejection is an insult to God.

There are men among us today who want us to believe the first but reject the second.

Let us now examine how God has protected the Spirit of Prophecy writings:

HER EARLIER WRITINGS

We will now advance to the year, 1848, when a number of believers (including Ellen and her husband, James White) attended several Sabbath Conferences in the Northeast. In the sixth conference, held in November 1848, Ellen had a vision, instructing her that her husband must begin “to print a little paper.” Articles by Ellen began appearing in those papers.

In July 1851, James published her first pamphlet of 64 pages, entitled *A Sketch of the Christian Experience and Views of Ellen White*. Years later, it was included as Section One in *Early Writings*.

From 1852 to 1855, the Whites carried on their publishing work in a building in Rochester, New York. Then, in 1855, they moved to Battle Creek, Michigan. The move was not difficult to make; for all they had was a handpress and a small amount of other printing equipment, together with a small stock of books and pamphlets. Soon afterward, in obedience to a vision, the group printed the first *Testimony for the Church*. It was 16 pages in length (now in *1 Testimonies*, 113-126).

With the passing of years, more and more publications by Ellen were printed. But they almost entirely consisted of printed editions of her testimonies or letters to individuals and groups. By 1864, ten of these small collections of *Testimonies* had been printed.

Spiritual Gifts, Vols. 1-4 were released in 1858, 1860, and the last two in 1864. That same year, another small book was printed: *Appeal to the Youth* (95 pages, 40 of which were written by Ellen).

Between 1865 and 1876, in addition to 27 thin *Testimonies*, two other small books were printed: *How to Live* (1865; about a third of which was written by Ellen) and *Spirit of Prophecy*, Vol. 1 (1870).

In 1877 and 1878, *Spirit of Prophecy*, Vols. 2 and 3 were issued; and, in 1880, *Life Sketches* (with about half written by Ellen). By 1882, *Testimonies*, Nos. 1-31 had been printed.

And that was about it. By 1878, Ellen had barely gotten started in her book-writing work. Indeed, aside from the collection of personal letters in 31 Testimonies, she had written almost no books. (The first four volumes of our present *Testimonies for the Church*, issued in 1885, contains *Testimonies 1 to 30*.)

How did God protect Ellen’s writings from 1848 to 1878? He primarily did it through her husband, James White. As head of the entire publishing work, he proofed her work and oversaw the printing of her writings. However, due to the difficulties under which they worked and the limitations of the times, some typographical errors had crept in; just as, down through the centuries, some crept into the Bible manuscripts.

NEARING A TRANSITION

The years 1878 to 1884 were extremely important in the history of Ellen White’s published writings. This is due to the fact that a transition, which Ellen was not at first aware, was about to take place. In 1881, James would die and she, at last, would begin writing and publishing at a much faster pace.

Ellen White’s literary output during her lifetime would eventually total approximately 25 million words or 10,000 printed pages. This would include letters, diaries, periodical articles, and books. **Yet, significantly, the great majority of it was produced after 1881.**

There are those, among us today, who tell us we should not use hardly any of her writings produced after 1878; for they are “uninspired” or have been “corrupted.” If we would obey that dictum, it would be necessary for us to toss the great majority of her articles and books in the garbage can. Yet the individuals who make this charge seem only able to vaguely hint at evidence supporting their claim. What is the truth of the matter?

We are going to learn that the God of heaven carefully protected these sacred writings—not only in earlier years, but all through the years which followed! Here is how He did it:

“Both in the [Battle Creek] Tabernacle and in the college the subject of inspiration has been taught, and finite men have taken it upon themselves to say that some things in the Scriptures were inspired and some were not. I was shown that the Lord did not inspire the articles on

inspiration published in the *Review*, neither did He approve their endorsement before our youth in the college.

“When men venture to criticize the Word of God, they venture on sacred, holy ground, and had better fear and tremble and hide their wisdom as foolishness. God sets no man to pronounce judgment on His Word, selecting some things as inspired and discrediting others as uninspired. The testimonies have been treated in the same way; but God is not in this.”—*Letter 22, 1889; 1 Selected Messages, 23.* [*The article, “Differences in Degrees,” was in the January 15, 1884 issue of the Review.*]

On New Year’s Day, 1878, Miss Marian Davis joined the Whites, to assist them in their work; at the time, the Whites were in Texas. Marian had an unusual ability for proofreading, plus a remarkable memory. Over a period of time, Marian gained the ability to locate everything Ellen had earlier written on a given subject. **She also followed the progress of Ellen’s writings, from proofreading, all the way through to final publication. If any problems developed, she immediately reported back to Ellen.**

In addition, as she had for years, Ellen herself checked over everything that was done with her writings. After she wrote a manuscript in longhand, before it could be sent to the person for whom it was intended or to the publishing house, a copy had to be made by hand (there were no typewriters or xerox machines back then). Ellen would check the copied manuscript. She would also personally check the galley proofs, sent her by the publishing house, prior to printing. **But, from 1878 onward, Ellen had the help of Marian in her work. This had an effect of doubling the safeguard.** And it came at a time when James was beginning to be rather feeble in health.

“Marian is just what we need. She is splendid help.”—*Letter 4, 1879.*

This close working relationship continued for the next 25 years, until Marian’s death in 1904. And how did Marian die? She had journeyed from Elmshaven, in the Napa Valley of northern California, down to Oakland in order to check on the final printing proofs of one of Ellen’s books (*Ministry of Healing*) which needed to be published by Pacific Press. (Pacific Press did not move to Mountain View, 38 miles south of San Francisco, until 1904.) **To the very end, Marian was helping to guard the trustworthiness of the manuscripts.**

When you stop to think about it, it is prior to publication that problems can occur. As soon as a book is printed, everybody can obtain a copy, and the message is in many hands. The task of Ellen and Marian was to make sure the message was printed properly.

At this point, someone will say that perhaps Marian was not honest or that this or that was a problem. I can assure you that there is a God in heaven, and He still exists! And He cares for His written Word! From time to time, down through the years, a faulty helper did connect with Ellen. But each time God gave her clear warning, and she discharged the helper.

Do you imagine that Ellen White would, in vision, be given warnings about distant problems in the work, sometimes halfway around the world,—and yet God would not warn her when someone was tampering with her manuscripts?

Such a possibility would mean that God does not care about His Written Word. And we know that is not so.

To doubt God’s Word is to doubt God Himself. To doubt God’s care for His Word is also to doubt Him. It is an insult to His care. He cares not only for people, but for His Inspired Writings.

JAMES UNWILLING TO RETIRE

By 1879, Ellen’s husband, James, knew he needed to retire. Yet he hesitated to do so, for he had accustomed himself to being a workhorse and hardly knew how to stop.

By that year, James, worn out from overwork, was becoming increasingly irritable with fellow workers in the *Review* office and at the General Conference. Both Dr. John Harvey Kellogg, head of (what later became known as) the Battle Creek Sanitarium, and Uriah Smith, second to James in the *Review* editorial office, were upset with James. Deep mutual resentments had developed.

But Ellen was not involved in those arguments; and the church, as a whole, deeply valued her writings. We see clear evidence of the fact throughout these, and later, years.

Hence, on November 20, 1879, the 18th Annual General Conference Session enacted a resolution calling on Ellen and James to visit every conference yearly (of course, this was not physically possible); and, a few days later on November 25, they appointed a committee to consider ways to more extensively circulate the writings of Ellen.

It is quite obvious that the majority of our leaders at the time were not opposed to the Spirit of Prophecy writings. Here is the resolution: “*Whereas*, Our past experience has fully proved that our prosperity as a people is always in proportion to the degree of confidence we cherish in the work of the Spirit of Prophecy in our midst; and . . .

“*Whereas*, We have found that the most effectual way to meet and disarm this opposition is either to secure the personal labors of the one through whom we believe that the Lord has spoken, or to freely circulate her writings, and

“*Whereas*, Great light has shone upon us through this channel, which not only our own people greatly need, but which would be a blessing to the world, remove prejudice, and break the force of the bitter attacks of the enemies of the truth, therefore

“*Resolved*, That we urge upon our ministers and tract societies the importance of making earnest efforts to extend the circulation of the volumes of the Spirit of Prophecy and the *Testimonies for the Church* among our own people, till these shall be in every family of believers.

“*Resolved*, That we recommend the [SDA] Publishing Association to issue in attractive form such of her writings as would be of general interest to the reading public who are not of our faith, to be placed in public libraries, reading rooms, on shipboard, et cetera, by canvassers and Tract and Missionary Society workers where they, as well as our other standard works, may be accessible to the people.”—*General Conference Session, Resolution dated November 25, 1879.*

Yet, as generous as this encouragement seemed, a change was going to occur at the Review office within a few years. Neither Ellen White nor her associates, nor the leaders in the General Conference and Review office recognized all that was about to happen. But God, who knows the future, would carefully guide in years ahead.

A ministerial institute was held at about the same time as the above-mentioned General Conference Session. Beginning in mid-November, it continued until December 3.

While it was in progress, Ellen was taken off in vision and given warnings and guidance which provided the basis for more than 70 pages of counsel. Coming as it did during the meetings, it formed the basis for several talks she presented to the ministers and institutional workers. Those messages led to a general work of reformation and revival among the workers, and they enacted the following resolution at the last meeting on December 11:

“Whereas, God has again most mercifully and graciously spoken to us as ministers, in words of admonition and reproof through the gift of the Spirit of Prophecy; and

“Whereas, These instructions are just and timely, and of the utmost importance in their relation to our future labors and usefulness; therefore
“Resolved, That we hereby express our sincere and devout thanksgiving to God that He has not left us in our blindness, as He might justly have done, but has given us another opportunity to overcome, by faithfully pointing out our sins and errors, and teaching us how we may please God and become useful in His cause.

“Resolved, That while it is right and proper that we express our thankfulness to God and His servants in this manner, yet the best manner of expressing our gratitude is to faithfully heed the testimony that has been borne to us; and we hereby pledge ourselves to make a most earnest effort to reform on those points wherein we have been shown to be deficient, and to be obedient to the will of God thus graciously made known to us.”—*Ministerial Institute Resolution, December 11, 1879.*

The Annual Session of the Tract and Missionary Society also met on November 11; and, upon hearing the thrilling vision of the Judgment, presented to Ellen on October 23 (see *4 Testimonies, 384*), they wanted our people everywhere to have a copy of it. On December 18, the following notice appeared on the back page of the *Review*:

“*Testimony for the Church No. 29* will contain about two hundred pages of the most important matter for our people at this time, including the recent wonderful description of the Judgment.”

That special edition was printed during the first week in January 1880.

That same month, the 200-page *Testimony No. 29* came from the *Review* presses. You will find it in *4 Testimonies, 384-522*. Many important principles and reproofs were presented, yet the *Review* faithfully printed it.

Ellen then headed west on a trip to Oakland, California, while James pushed ahead on the publication of the book, *Life Sketches*, and the republication of some of Ellen’s earliest pamphlets and books. **The recently ended General Conference Session had been anxious that these Spirit of Prophecy writings be published.**

As the time for the 1880 General Conference Session neared, James White felt exhausted and decided to quit all his offices except headship of the *Review*. Ellen, still in California, wrote to their children:

“Father has already sent in his resignation of every office except his connection with the publishing work.”—*Letter 42, 1880.*

Ellen returned to Battle Creek and the Session opened on October 6. As president of the General Conference, James chaired it. On the 11th, the nominating committee presented the following names: George I. Butler as president; Uriah Smith as secretary; Mrs. M.J. Chapman as treasurer; and, on the General Conference Committee, G.I. Butler; Steven N. Haskell; and H.W. Kellogg. The vote was unanimous. **James only retained the position of head of the Publishing Association.**

James and Ellen decided to spend the winter and following summer in the preparation of books. As usual, her articles were regularly printed in the *Review*. That same year, *Life Sketches* was printed.

Ellen urged James to totally retire from the work at Battle Creek, so they could move west and spend their time in quietude, in the writing work. So much needed to be written.

James came close to agreeing to this; but he felt that, if he left the publishing house, those who would take it over were not properly qualified for the task. He stated in this decision:

“Where are the men to do this work? Where are those who will have an unselfish interest in our institutions, and who will stand for the right, unaffected by any influence with which they may come in contact?”

“My life has been given to the upbuilding of these institutions. It seems like death to leave them. They are as my children, and I cannot separate my interest from them. These institutions are the Lord’s instrumentalities to do a specific work. Satan seeks to hinder and defeat every means by which the Lord is working for the salvation of men. If the great adversary can mold these institutions according to the world’s standard, his object is gained.

“It is my greatest anxiety to have the right men in the right place. If those who stand in responsible positions are weak in moral power, and vacillating in principle, inclined to lead toward the world, there are enough who will be led. **Evil influences must not prevail. I would rather die than live to see these institutions mismanaged, or turned aside from the purpose for which they were brought into existence.**”—*In Memoriam, p. 45.*

James knew what was going to happen within a few years after he left the publishing work. Yet, because of the burdens and responsibilities that she bore while there, Ellen could not really tackle the bookwork as long as James remained in Michigan.

So James decided to remain in Battle Creek as head of the publishing work—even though, amid the ongoing confusion of activities there and the various personality conflicts, it would be impossible for Ellen to begin the bookwork.

Remember that the year was now 1881; and, so far, Ellen had not produced one major book! God knew that a change must be made.

On Sabbath, July 30, James and Ellen walked in the grove together and a strange foreboding came over James. Three times, he asked that they might stop and pray together. Each time he prayed fervently that he might be right with every man.

On Monday, he had a severe chill and became ill. The following Sabbath, August 6, James White died. On August 22, Ellen left for Colorado where she expected to rest for a few weeks. She questioned whether she should return to Battle Creek or go to California. **The Lord impressed her that it was time to permanently move to California, so she could begin the bookwork. This was to lead to the turning point in her writing career.** Prior to this time, she had written very little, other than personal letters to people.

THE BRETHREN MAKE A DISCOVERY

In Boulder, Colorado, on the weekend of September 24 and 25, Ellen wrote a 13-page testimony to be read at the Michigan camp meeting, which would be attended by all the church leaders.

In this letter, she gave warning that Battle Creek College would fail if it did not fulfill God's plan for it.

“Much that has no part in Christ is allowed a place among us. Unconsecrated ministers, professors, and teachers assist Satan to plant his banner in our very strongholds.

“The design of our college has been stated again and again, yet many are so blinded by the god of this world that its real object is not understood . . . Some of the teachers have been scattering from Christ instead of gathering with Him. By their own example they lead those under their charge to adopt the customs and habits of worldlings. They link the hands of the students with fashionable, amusement-loving unbelievers, and carry them an advance step toward the world and away from Christ.”—*5 Testimonies, 12.*

She also said that her testimonies would be just as pointed in the future as in the past.

“Let none entertain the thought that I regret or take back any plain testimony I have borne to individuals or to the people. If I have erred anywhere, it is in not rebuking sin more decidedly and firmly. Some of the brethren have taken the responsibility of criticizing my work and proposing an easier way to correct wrongs. To these persons I would say: I take God's way and not yours. What I have said or written in testimony or reproof has not been too plainly expressed. God has given me my work, and I must meet it at the Judgment . . .

“Within a few weeks past, standing face to face with death, I have had a near look into eternity. If the Lord is pleased to raise me from my present state of feebleness, I hope, in the grace and strength that comes from above, to speak with fidelity the words which He gives me to speak. All through my life it has been terribly hard for me to hurt the feelings of any, or disturb their self-deception, as I deliver the testimonies given me of God. It is contrary to my nature. It costs me great pain and many sleepless nights . . . I will walk in humility before God, doing my work for time and for eternity.”—*5 Testimonies, 19-20.*

You can read the entire testimony for yourself (*5 Testimonies, 9-21*). **Ellen White had not changed! Some of the leading brethren made a discovery. All this time, they had imagined that her pointed testimonies were prompted by James. But now that he was gone,—the pointed testimonies were even stronger than before! The terrible truth was before them: Ellen was writing her own testimonies!**

A year later, George I. Butler, chairman of the board of Battle Creek College, announced, in the *Review*, that the school was being closed.

“When the matter of opening the college the present year came before the board for consideration, we were thrown into great perplexity. We could see little ground of hope for such a school as the Lord had shown we ought to have, while the present state of things existed.”—*Review, September 12, 1882.*

Once again, Ellen's statements were found to be correct. The college had collapsed under its own weight of frivolity and worldliness.

THE TURNING POINT IN HER WORK

After staying temporarily in Oakland, in February 1882, Ellen moved to a home on the outskirts of the small town of Healdsburg, California. If you have ever been there (as the present author has), you know it to be a very quiet place.

In late August, Ellen became chilled and entered a period of extended sickness from which it appeared she would never recover. Although at death's door, she said she wanted to be taken to the early October camp meeting in Healdsburg. A sofa was arranged on the broad speaker's platform and she was carried into the big tent and placed upon it. The tent was jammed with people.

After J.H. Waggoner, editor of the *Signs*, finished his talk, Ellen whispered hoarsely to her son, William C. White, and to Mrs. Ings, who were seated near her, to help her to the speaker's stand.

For five minutes she stood there, ghastly white and trembling slightly, clinging to the pulpit, unable to say a word. The immense audience said not a word. It was expected that she would crumple to the floor at any moment.

“For five minutes I stood there, trying to speak, and thinking that it was the last speech I should ever make—my farewell message.

“All at once I felt a power come upon me, like a shock of electricity. It passed through my body and up to my head. The people said that they plainly saw the blood mounting to my lips, my ears, my cheeks, my forehead.”—*Letter 82, 1906.*

God permitted this miracle to happen, to confirm to everyone that this was His messenger!

Everyone was stunned speechless as they watched the astounding change that came over her. Mr. Montrose, a businessman from the town, stood to his feet and exclaimed, “We are seeing a miracle performed before our eyes; Mrs. White is healed!”

Her voice strengthened, her sentences came clear and full, and she bore a testimony such as the audience had never before heard.

“Her voice and appearance changed, and she spoke for some time with clearness and energy. She then invited those who wished to make a start in the service of God, and those who were far backslidden, to come forward, and a goodly number answered to the call.”—*E.J. Waggoner, Signs, October 26, 1882.*

In the providence of God, Uriah Smith was present; and he was convicted anew that Ellen was a protected prophet of God.

“She was able to attend meetings . . . as usual, and spoke six times with her ordinary strength of voice and clearness of thought.”—*Uriah Smith, Review, October 31, 1882.*

This was a turning point in Ellen’s health; and, for a number of years thereafter, she worked intensely at speaking appointments and a busy writing program. In the early summer of 1882, Ellen began the bookwork in earnest.

But Ellen had an added incentive to begin the bookwork. Immediately after that remarkable healing occurred, God gave her special counsel—that she was to henceforth devote herself vigorously to the bookwork, and that God Himself would provide her with faithful helpers who would correct spelling and grammar mistakes, faithfully prepare duplicate copies, and prepare manuscripts for publication.

“About a year after the death of my husband, I was very feeble, and it was feared that I might live but a short time. At the Healdsburg camp meeting, I was taken into the tent where there was a large gathering of our people. I asked to be raised up from the lounge on which I was lying, and assisted to the speaker’s platform, that I might say a few words of farewell to the people. As I tried to speak, the power of God came upon me, and thrilled me through and through. Many in the congregation observed that I was weak, and that my face and hands seemed bloodless; but as I began speaking they saw the color coming into my lips and face, and knew that a miracle was being wrought in my behalf. I stood before the people healed, and spoke with freedom.

“After this experience, light was given me that the Lord had raised me up to bear testimony for Him in many countries, and that He would give me grace and strength for the work. It was also shown me that my son, W.C. White, should be my helper and counselor, and that the Lord would place on him the spirit of wisdom and of a sound mind. I was shown that the Lord would guide him, and that he would not be led away, because he would recognize the leadings and guidance of the Holy Spirit.

“The assurance was given me: ‘You are not alone in the work the Lord has chosen you to do. You will be taught of God how to bring the truth in its simplicity before the people. The God of truth will sustain you, and convincing proof will be given that He is leading you. God will give you of His Holy Spirit, and His grace and wisdom and keeping power will be with you . . .

“ ‘The Lord will be your instructor. You will meet with deceptive influences; they will come in many forms, in pantheism and other forms of infidelity; but follow where I shall guide you, and you will be safe. I will put My Spirit upon your son, and will strengthen him to do his work. He has the grace of humility. The Lord has selected him to act an important part in His work. For this purpose was he born.’

“This word was given me in 1882, and since that time I have been assured that the grace of wisdom was given to him. More recently, in a time of perplexity, the Lord said: ‘I have given you My servant, W.C. White, and I will give him judgment to be your helper. I will give him skill and understanding to manage wisely.’

“The Lord has given me other faithful helpers in my work. Many of my discourses have been reported, and have been put before the people in printed form. Through nearly the whole of my long experience I have endeavored, day by day, to write out that which was revealed to me in visions of the night. Many messages of counsel and reproof and encouragement have been sent out to individuals, and much of the instruction that I have received for the church has been published in periodicals and books, and circulated in many lands . . .

“The work is constantly moving forward. We are making earnest efforts to place my writings before the people. We hope that several new books will go to press shortly. If I am incapacitated for labor, my faithful workers are prepared to carry forward the work.

“Abundant light has been given to our people in these last days. Whether or not my life is spared, my writings will constantly speak, and their work will go forward as long as time shall last. My writings are kept on file in the office, and even though I should not live, these words that have been given to me by the Lord will still have life and will speak to the people.”—*I Selected Messages, 54-55.*

As the above quotation clearly shows, the Lord does not leave His work to halfway measures. He not only cares for His faithful children, He cares for His Written Word also. He provided Ellen with faithful helpers.

Very likely, God gave similar counsel to Jeremiah, instructing him to use Baruch as his literary assistant. Jeremiah had been speaking publicly in Jerusalem for years. But it was at the time of the event recorded in Jeremiah 36:1-4, during the fourth year of Jehoiakim’s reign, that Jeremiah called Baruch, a scribe, to begin writing out those messages. Baruch is also mentioned chronologically in Jeremiah 45:1-5 during the fourth year of Jehoiakim’s reign. Chronologically, Baruch later helped Jeremiah during the reign of Zedekiah (recorded in chapter 32:12-13). He remained with Jeremiah as a helper thereafter, remaining close to him even after the captivity, and went with him to Egypt, where Jeremiah wrote yet more material (chapter 43:3-7). Baruch is called “Jeremiah’s secretary” (*Prophets and Kings, 469*).

“It was about this time that the Lord commanded Jeremiah to commit to writing the messages He desired to bear to those for whose salvation His heart of pity was continually yearning. ‘Take thee a roll of a book,’ the Lord bade His servant, ‘and write therein all the words that I have

spoken unto thee against Israel, and against Judah, and against all the nations, from the day I spake unto thee, from the days of Josiah, even unto this day. It may be that the house of Judah will hear all the evil which I purpose to do unto them; that they may return every man from his evil way; that I may forgive their iniquity and their sin.' Jeremiah 36:2-3.

"In obedience to this command, Jeremiah called to his aid a faithful friend, Baruch the scribe, and dictated 'all the words of the Lord, which He had spoken unto him.' Verse 4. These were carefully written out on a roll of parchment and constituted a solemn reproof for sin, a warning of the sure result of continual apostasy, and an earnest appeal for the renunciation of all evil."—*Prophets and Kings*, 432-433.

[CONTINUE PART 2](#)

How God Protected Ellen White's Writings Part 2

TESTIMONY 31 AND EARLY WRITINGS

Some of Ellen's most dynamic and hard-hitting testimonies were sent to the Review for publication as a small *Testimony* book. **Severe rebukes were in the letters it contained. Yet the brethren printed it.** This was *Testimony 31*. Read it for yourself; it is powerful (now in *5 Testimonies* 9-248).

It is charged that a name was omitted from one of the testimonies. But names were routinely omitted from all printed testimonies. It is also said that the title of one testimony was later changed from "*Testimonies Rejected*" to "*Testimonies Slighted*." But two facts should be kept in mind:

First, Ellen generally did not write the titles for the testimonies she sent out. That was generally done at the press. So the press changed the title it had earlier assigned to that printed letter.

Second, "slighted" and "rejected" mean essentially the same thing. If I give you a message and you slight it, you have ignored and rejected it. That is what the word, "slight," means.

"Slight, *verb*, 1. To treat with disrespect or indifference or with a marked lack of consideration. 2. To treat as unimportant."—*Macmillan Dictionary*.

If they had wanted to change the meaning, they would have entitled it, "*Another Testimony*," "*An Interesting Testimony*," or something similar.

Our current edition of *Early Writings* was also printed in 1882. Church leaders, in attendance at the 1879 General Conference Session, had requested that the book be printed.

This new *Early Writings* was a reprint of James White's earlier printing of three publications: *Experience and Views; Supplement*; and *Spiritual Gifts, Vol. 1*. Several copies of those earlier booklets had been made, and copies were scarce. When James had earlier reprinted *Experience and Views*, several sentences had been inadvertently omitted. The Review, in 1882, did not realize this and reprinted James' earlier edition.

WILLIAM C. WHITE AS HER HELPER

The Lord communicated continually with Ellen; and, in making the changeover in her writing work after James' death, He told her two things:

(1) She could trust her son, William C. White (W.C. White). She would be able to give him assignments which he could capably handle. He would be entirely trustworthy, and would be a good counselor and helper.

"While my husband lived, he acted as a helper and counselor in the sending out of the messages that were given to me. We traveled extensively. Sometimes light would be given to me in the night season, sometimes in the daytime before large congregations. The instruction I received in vision was faithfully written out by me, as I had time and strength for the work. Afterward we examined the matter together, my husband correcting grammatical errors and eliminating needless repetition. Then it was carefully copied for the persons addressed, or for the printer.

"As the work grew, others assisted me in the preparation of matter for publication. After my husband's

death, faithful helpers joined me, who labored untiringly in the work of copying the testimonies and preparing articles for publication.

“But the reports that are circulated, that any of my helpers are permitted to add matter or change the meaning of the messages I write out, are not true.

“While we were in Australia the Lord instructed me that W.C. White should be relieved from the many burdens his brethren would lay upon him, that he might be more free to assist me in the work the Lord has laid upon me. The promise had been given, ‘I will put My Spirit upon him, and give him wisdom.’ Since my return to America I have several times received instruction that the Lord has given me W.C. White to be my helper, and that in this work the Lord will give him of His Spirit.”—*I Selected Messages*, 50.

NEED TO REPRINT THE TESTIMONIES

(2) The Lord also revealed to Ellen that she should get all her earlier testimonies reprinted in larger volumes; and, before publication, they should be carefully checked for typographical errors. This work should be entrusted to Marian Davis; William; and his wife, Mary.

By this date, 31 Testimony pamphlets had been published, each totaling 16 to 240 pages. In the latter part of 1881, the three helpers set to work reading through that material and correcting it.

The critics charge that it was terrible that they did this. Yet if they had done anything wrong, God would immediately have told Ellen.

This whole business of doubting the veracity of the Spirit of Prophecy books is based on an underlying contempt for God’s protecting care of His Word.

The false assumption is that God would surely tell Ellen about something being done wrong across the ocean, but He would not tell her about something others were doing wrong with her writings!

That charge is an insult to God!

When corrections were made on part of the *Testimonies*, one of the three helpers would go down to the Pacific Press, in Oakland, and oversee the setting of it in type, checking of the galley proofs, and the preparation of printing plates. (It is for this reason that Pacific Press now prints most of her books; Ellen was living in California, at that time, and had her helpers see each book through to printing.)

“In late 1881 Marian Davis and Willie and Mary White began giving attention to what might be needed in the way of revising the wording, correcting imperfect grammar, or making clear the meaning intended by Ellen White. As the work was done, type was set and printing plates were made.”—*A.L. White, 3 E.G. White Biography*, 217.

Ellen’s helpers were extremely careful not to make a mistake. By May 1883, Mary was carefully preparing an index to Volume 1 of *Testimonies for the Church*.

The critics will tell you not to use the indexes at the back of Ellen’s books, because they are not inspired!

Earlier, at James’ request, the 1878 General Conference Session had voted that the *Testimonies* should be reprinted in larger volumes. Likewise, now in November 1883, while he and Ellen were attending that year’s Session, William White asked the leaders to issue a resolution which would clearly explain to the believers what Ellen and her helpers had been doing for two years (since the fall of 1881).

“When W.C. White and his mother went to the General Conference session in Battle Creek in November 1883, he took with him a report of the work in preparing the *Testimonies* for publication in convenient permanent form. He called for a resolution of explanation and General Conference support.”—*A.L. White, 3 E.G. White Biography*, 218.

The action taken was done in approval of what Ellen and her three helpers were already doing, and would continue to do until completion. It has been charged that the men appointed to a special committee changed the *Testimonies*. That is not true. Ellen’s own helpers (Marian Davis and William and Mary White) made all the corrections under her direction, in California, and checked the galley proofs prior to printing. Most of the men on that committee were at Battle Creek, busy with other activities. It was just a figurehead committee. The five members of that committee were: W.C. White, S.N. Haskell, J.H. Waggoner, Uriah Smith, and G.I. Butler. **Three of the five committee members (W.C. White, Haskell, and Waggoner) were solid defenders of the Spirit of Prophecy.** Smith and Butler, in later years (especially as a result of the Minneapolis crisis), become more tepid.

Here is the official resolution, made by the 1883 Session, at W.C. White’s request:

“Whereas, Some of the bound volumes of the *Testimonies for the Church* are out of print, so that full sets

cannot be obtained at the office; and—

“Whereas, There is a constant and urgent call for the reprinting of these volumes; therefore—

“Resolved, That we recommend their republication in such a form as to make four volumes of seven or eight hundred pages each.

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

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

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

“Resolved, That this body appoint a committee of five to take charge of the republication of these volumes according to the above preambles and resolutions.”—3 *Selected Messages*, 96.

It is charged that the above resolution entitled men to change all Ellen White’s future books. That is not true; the resolution only lists the first four volumes of the *Testimonies*.

It is charged that the resolution entitled men in Battle Creek to make those changes. That is not true either. We have seen that the changes were all made in California, at Ellen White’s home (at that time in Healdsburg). One of the workers would then take them to the press and oversee the proper typesetting of the new larger-volume editions of the *Testimonies*.

It is charged that none of those changes should have been made because God dictates the words and they cannot afterward be changed. That is not true either.

Two errors are inherent here:

THE ERROR OF WORD INSPIRATION

(1) The error of word inspiration:

Ellen White has carefully explained the truth of this matter. The holy Scriptures—both the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy—were given by thought inspiration, not word inspiration. **God guides the thoughts and concepts of the prophet, who then selects the actual words to be written down. None of God’s creatures are puppets.** Look about you at all of God’s creatures. We are all given free will. A classic example of this is to be found in comparing the four Gospels. Each writer saw the situation a little differently.

“The Bible is not given to us in grand superhuman language. Jesus, in order to reach man where he is, took humanity. The Bible must be given in the language of men. Everything that is human is imperfect. Different meanings are expressed by the same word; there is not one word for each distinct idea. The Bible was given for practical purposes.”—1 *Selected Messages*, 20.

“The Bible is written by inspired men, but it is not God’s mode of thought and expression. It is that of humanity. God, as a writer, is not represented. Men will often say such an expression is not like God. But God has not put Himself in words, in logic, in rhetoric, on trial in the Bible. The writers of the Bible were God’s penmen, not His pen. Look at the different writers.

“It is not the words of the Bible that are inspired, but the men that were inspired. Inspiration acts not on the man’s words or his expressions but on the man himself, who, under the influence of the Holy Ghost, is imbued with thoughts. But the words receive the impress of the individual mind. The divine mind is diffused. The divine mind and will is combined with the human mind and will; thus the utterances of the man are the Word of God.”—*Manuscript 24, 1886; 1 Selected Messages*, 21.

“There is variety in a tree, there are scarcely two leaves just alike. Yet this variety adds to the perfection of the tree as a whole.

“In our Bible, we might ask, Why need Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John in the Gospels, why need the Acts of the Apostles, and the variety of writers in the Epistles, go over the same thing?

“The Lord gave His Word in just the way He wanted it to come. He gave it through different writers, each having his own individuality, though going over the same history. Their testimonies are brought together in one Book, and are like the testimonies in a social meeting. They do not represent things in just the same style. Each has an experience of his own, and this diversity broadens and deepens the knowledge that is brought out to meet the necessities of varied minds. The thoughts expressed have no uniformity, as if cast

in an iron mold, making the very hearing monotonous. In such uniformity there would be a loss of grace and distinctive beauty . . .

“The Creator of all ideas may impress different minds with the same thought, but each may express it in a different way, yet without contradiction. The fact that this difference exists should not perplex or confuse us. It is seldom that two persons will view and express truth in the very same way. Each dwells on particular points which his constitution and education have fitted him to appreciate. The sunlight falling upon the different objects gives those objects a different hue.

“Through the inspiration of His Spirit the Lord gave His apostles truth, to be expressed according to the development of their minds by the Holy Spirit. But the mind is not cramped, as if forced into a certain mold.”—*1 Selected Messages*, 21-22.

See *Great Controversy*, pp. vi-viii for more on thought inspiration. **If Scripture is only word inspired, then no translation of an inspired book is of any value! That would render all our copies of the Bible useless!**

It is an intriguing fact that word inspiration is the basis of the Muslim Koran. The story, devised by Satan, goes that God dictated each word to Mohammed, who wrote each word as spoken, even though he could not read or write. We would expect coercion and force from the devil. God does not operate that way.

THE ONCE-ONLY ERROR

(2) The error that God only writes once on a given subject:

Vern Bates claims that once a prophet writes on a topic, anything he may later write on that topic will not be inspired. Therefore, Ellen’s later writings on a given subject are worthless. **This theory involves two errors: first, the error mentioned above, that of word inspiration—the idea that God directly dictates each word and it cannot later be altered.** (The truth is thought inspiration; God guides the thoughts and the prophet provides the phrasing.) **Bates’ second error is that God only writes once on a given event or topic.**

But we are told, in *Desire of Ages*, that **Christ later repeated His earlier lessons to His disciples.** We know that Paul told his conversion story several times, and **Luke wrote it several times in the book of Acts.** Yet, according to Bates’ theory, only the first narration was inspired.

According to Bates, Ellen wrote a smidgen about the great controversy story in 1858; therefore the 1884, 1888, and 1911 editions are uninspired and not worth reading. **I would not wish to be Vern Bates in the Judgment.** He has turned so many believers against her later books.

Not only is there an immense amount of duplication in the four Gospels, there is a massive amount in 1-2 Samuel, 1-2 Kings, and 1-2 Chronicles! According to Bates’ theory, a lot of that must be discarded.

GREAT CONTROVERSY

By the fall of 1882, Ellen was deeply involved in her work on *Spirit of Prophecy*, Vol. 4, which is our 1884 *Great Controversy*. **It is of highest significance that this, the great controversy story, was her first major book.**

The complete story of the writing of *Great Controversy* spans several decades, and is told in great detail in my 504-page *Editions of Great Controversy* (\$12.95 + \$2.50), the most complete analysis of the book in all its editions ever published.

Here is a brief (very brief) overview of part of that story:

Ellen had received a small portion of the great controversy vision in 1848. Ten years later, at Lovett’s Grove, Michigan, she received the more complete vision. Immediately afterward, as she was headed home to Battle Creek, she was struck with paralysis on part of her body. It was later revealed to her that Satan wanted to kill her, so *Great Controversy* could not be written.

Why did the Lord permit Satan to attack her? Obviously, so we would all realize the importance of *Great Controversy*! However, Satan afterward resorted to other means in order to keep her from writing out the full story. Years passed and troubles piled on top of troubles for poor Ellen.

But, after James’ death and her departure from Battle Creek, she was finally able to complete the first edition of the book. It was *Spirit of Prophecy*, Vol. 4. We refer to it as the 1884 *Great Controversy*. This is the first real edition of that book, the fruition of her 1858 vision.

The 1858 book (*Spiritual Gifts*, Vol. 1) was little more than a brief story of the Old and New

Testaments; it was not a *Great Controversy*. Yet Vern Bates claims that the 1858 book is the only genuine *Great Controversy*, and we should discard the later ones! May God have mercy on his soul, for the many folk he has misled into rejecting that book and a great majority of her other writings.

Bates claims that only certain Spirit of Prophecy books are inspired (primarily those written before 1878) while the rest are almost useless. What does the prophet of the Lord say about this?

“Those who think to make the supposed difficulties of Scripture plain, in measuring by their finite rule that which is inspired and that which is not inspired, had better cover their faces, as Elijah when the still small voice spoke to him; for they are in the presence of God and holy angels, who for ages have communicated to men light and knowledge, telling them what to do and what not to do, unfolding before them scenes of thrilling interest, waymark by waymark in symbols and signs and illustrations.

“And He [God] has not, while presenting the perils clustering about the last days, qualified any finite man to unravel hidden mysteries or inspired one man or any class of men to pronounce judgment as to that which is inspired or is not. When men, in their finite judgment, find it necessary to go into an examination of scriptures to define that which is inspired and that which is not, they have stepped before Jesus to show Him a better way than He has led us.”—*1 Selected Messages*, 17.

“When men venture to criticize the Word of God, they venture on sacred, holy ground, and had better fear and tremble and hide their wisdom as foolishness. God sets no man to pronounce judgment on His Word, selecting some things as inspired and discrediting others as uninspired. The testimonies have been treated in the same way; but God is not in this.”—*Letter 22, 1889; 1 Selected Messages*, 23.

As mentioned earlier, *Spirit of Prophecy, Vol. 4* (our 1884 *Great Controversy*) was Ellen’s first major book. **Aside from her many personal letters (collected in the *Testimonies*), prior to 1884, she had not written much else.** Ellen planned to next work on the other books in, what would eventually be called, the *Conflict Series*. But, **during the 1880s, the Lord instructed her that she must enlarge that initial book! The great controversy story was so important, it needed to be said again in an even larger book.** With this in mind, from 1885 to 1887, Ellen toured through Europe, encouraging our believers there, counseling the brethren, and visiting key Waldensian and German and Swiss Reformation locations.

But something else also happened during the decade of the 1880s. Some of the leaders in Battle Creek had previously been very antagonist toward James White. They did not like his strong-minded attitude, and they suspicioned that Ellen’s vigorous written rebukes were really dictated by James. They thought he told her what to write and, as an obedient wife, she did so.

But, after James’ death in 1881, those leaders made the shocking discovery that Ellen’s letters were just as unflinching as before. The terrible truth began to dawn: that Ellen White was the author of her writings, not James!

Satan was at work, as usual, on Planet Earth. He could not stop Ellen and he could not corrupt her writings; for, if any of her helpers acted out of line, God immediately told her.

Satan could try to stop publication of her books at the Review. And that is what he set out to do next. **When the revised second edition of *Great Controversy* was completed and Ellen White sent it to the Review, they refused to print it.** Their first excuse was that they had other books which needed attention, and they did not want to print *Great Controversy* until the canvassers in the field had an opportunity to first sell the newly released *Bible Readings* for a time. Ellen vigorously objected.

Then they complained that the many authors of *Bible Readings* had agreed to not receive any royalties, and Ellen should also relinquish them. To this, she strongly objected. Doing so would eliminate her ability to carry on her work separate from church financing and control.

After a year of stalling, she mailed them *Patriarchs and Prophets*, which had just been completed. But now they whined because, in their opinion, it would sell better if they printed and sold *Patriarchs and Prophets* before printing the newly enlarged *Great Controversy*. This battle continued for two full years, from late 1887 through late 1890.

Amazingly, a similar stalling tactic was used at Pacific Press.

“When the *Great Controversy* should have been circulated everywhere, it was lying dead in the Review and Herald Office and the Pacific Press.”—*Letter 35, 1899*.

As if that were not enough, when *Great Controversy* was finally printed—the Review refused, for a couple years, to publicize the book and tell the public they had it in stock!

Satan was in an utter frenzy to keep *Great Controversy* from the people! Remember that fact. He was

using half-converted men as his agents, to get rid of the most important book in modern history. (How must he appreciate Vern Bates who, today, says the 1884, 1888, and 1911 editions of that book should be tossed out!)

It is common knowledge that the 1884 edition of *Great Controversy* was printed that year. But did you know that the “1888 edition” was not printed by the Review until 1890? We speak of it as the “1888 edition” because that is the common designation for it. But the men in charge of the Review did not print it until two full years later. Pacific Press did not print it until 1899.

Yet even that crisis tells us something very important: Those men who refused to do what was right—received prompt and repeated sharp replies by Ellen. She was not an ignorant and timid rabbit, as she is caricatured by her critics. Ellen did not compromise. She did not weaken or crawl in a hole. Ellen White vigorously defended her writings! Just so surely, she took action each and every time one of her helpers started veering from the straight line.

You can trust the Spirit of Prophecy writings. God’s concern, to protect His Word, led Him to warn Ellen when things were not being done properly. Ellen’s concern to do what was right caused her to unflinchingly confront every crisis without hesitation.

For a rather complete report on the 1888 *Great Controversy* crisis, read **the A.L. White exposé, *The Circulation of Great Controversy [CE-30]*. It is REPRINTED at the back of this present study.** For a much larger account, read my **504-page *Editions of Great Controversy* (\$12.95 + \$2.50)**. Both are filled with Spirit of Prophecy statements about the three editions.

It is an intriguing fact that Herman Hoehn claimed that Ellen only wrote the 1884 edition and that Uriah Smith wrote the 1888 edition. Yet it was Ellen who fought to get the 1888 published and Smith did not want it printed! As mentioned earlier, after claiming that *Bible Readings* must be printed and distributed first, Smith then tried to stall still longer and say that *Patriarchs and Prophets* must be printed prior to the enlarged edition of *Great Controversy*. You will find an extensive collection of statements, by Ellen, about that crisis at the back of this present study.

What is the truth about the three editions of *Great Controversy*?

The 1884 edition is excellent and fully inspired. It is shorter than the others, and many people like to read shorter books. The cost is also less.

The 1888 edition is a completely new rewriting of the book, and more complete (an important point). She wrote it, so it is also fully inspired. But most of the added material is in the first, historical half of the book (more on Huss and Wycliff; more on the German, Swiss, French, Scandinavian, and English Reformation; all very helpful material). The second, last-days’ section is almost identical in both. Chapter 29 in the 1888 is better than the equivalent chapter in the 1884 (because there is more emphasis on the fact that the great controversy between Christ and Satan is fought over the law of God; read the two chapters together and see for yourself). The 1884 edition was written for our own people; God instructed her to write the enlarged edition for the world. Therefore, she omitted the three-page Satan monologue from it. (You will find it in the back of our 1888 edition.)

The 1911 edition is identical to the 1888, with the exception of the quotations from historians. In order to add source references, in some instances different quotations had to be used when the original statements could not be found. The largest number of quotations were from Merle D’ Aubigné’s *History of the Reformation*; and, in the interim between 1888 and 1911, D’ Aubigné had authorized a different English translation of his book than had been quoted in the 1888 edition. So every one of those quotations had to be changed. Other than that, the 1888 and 1911 editions are essentially identical. The 1911 revision was done by Ellen’s faithful helpers, with her full approval. She afterward gave it her endorsement. Indeed, the publishing houses made her pay all the expenses of having the new edition prepared!

“Recently it was necessary for the book to be reset because the electrotypes plates were badly worn. It has cost me much to have this done, but I do not complain; for whatever the cost may be, I regard the edition with great satisfaction.”—*3 Selected Messages, 123*.

There are a number of Spirit of Prophecy quotations recommending each of those three editions of the book. All three editions are fully inspired of God. You will find those quotations at the back of the study you now have in hand.

STEPS TO CHRIST

In 1891, Ellen moved to Australia and set up housekeeping there with her helpers. Soon after, she

began work on *Steps to Christ*. But she was so incensed at the delaying tactics on *Great Controversy*, that, in 1892, she printed *Steps to Christ* through Fleming H. Revell Co., a non-Adventist publishing house. **That decision produced something of an earthquake at the offices of the Review! It was a terrific embarrassment to them. Ellen White was willing to print her books outside the denomination, if that is what it took to get them printed on time. From that time forward, the publishing brethren never again gave her any more stalling tactics.** She had won that battle. From then on, her books were printed, without delay, on denominational presses. **The distribution of the Word of God was more important to Ellen than a denominational imprimatur on the books. And that is something worth thinking about too.**

DESIRE OF AGES

Desire of Ages was also written while she was in Australia. It is an interesting fact that Ellen was so crippled during part of that time that only her right hand functioned properly. **Her helpers would set her in a chair in her small country home, which she called *Sunnyside*, and she would spend the day writing pages for *Desire of Ages*.** — Yet her critics charge that Ellen was busily working before some kind of imaginary giant desk, stacked with other people's books, as she busily turned pages here and there and copied it all into *Desire of Ages*! **I am happy to tell you that a six-year study of *Desire of Ages*, done in the 1980s, established the fact that there is no essential copying anywhere in that book.** (For much more on this, see my 84-page book, *Ellen White Did not Plagiarize, \$8.00 + \$2.00.*)

The book that the critics charge was "plagiarized" from other authors more than any others is *Great Controversy*. Yet, upon examination, we find that the so-called "plagiarisms" consist of her quotations from historians! When do quotations count as plagiarisms? I have quoted *I Selected Messages* in this present study, yet no one would say that doing so is plagiarism.

In 1896, *Mount of Blessing* was printed. Four years later, in 1900, Ellen returned to the United States and made her home in Elmshaven. It was located in Pratt Valley, close to St. Helena, California. Her faithful assistants continued helping her. *Christ's Object Lessons* was printed in 1900 and *Education* in 1903. Unfortunately, while on a trip to Oakland to see one of her books (*Ministry of Healing*; printed in 1905) through Pacific Press, Marian Davis caught cold and died several weeks later. Fortunately, Ellen White had other helpers who continued to assist her. The years passed, and Ellen grew older. Eventually, on July 16, 1915, she passed to her rest.

AN INDEPENDENT MINISTRY

For several years before her death, Ellen was deeply concerned that the protection God had given her writings, during her lifetime, might continue after she was gone.

It is an intriguing fact that the plan God gave her for the later preservation of the books was essentially the same as that used during her lifetime. And what was that? — an independent ministry conducted by Seventh-day Adventists! While she was alive, she carried on her work separate from the church, in the sense that no congregation, conference, union, or other church entity had control over her work. Only in that way could the production of her writings be safeguarded from undue influence by outside sources. In order to strengthen this safeguard, she arranged that her office expenses and the salaries of her workers would be paid from the royalties of her bookwork.

(At one point, the brethren tried to get her to cancel her reception of royalties, as the authors of *Bible Readings* had agreed to; but she resolutely refused to yield. Not once in her life did Ellen ever compromise on any point!)

So we see that Ellen operated a self-supporting institution. It was not in subservience to church authority. As an added factor in this independence, she held no church office from which she could be fired.

Yet this is quite understandable when we recall that **this is exactly the way the Bible prophets carried on their work. Not one of them was submissive to any earthly organization. They wrote their inspired writings independent of church and civil leaders.**

THE E.G. WHITE ESTATE

The Lord guided Ellen to devise a special plan for the safeguarding of her bookwork, after her death, which was parallel to that which had been so successful while she was alive.

In her last will and testament, she provided for the appointment of five seasoned workers to form an independent committee: W.C. White, F.M. Wilcox, C.H. Jones, C.C. Crisler, and A.G. Daniells. They

were to manage the work, with their expenses paid from royalties from her books. **When one of their number retired or died, the remaining members would appoint a new member. You can see that this is the best possible way to manage an organization! At no time could denominational leaders fire any of the members, transfer them to other positions, or vote its own men into their group.**

The result is known as the Ellen White Estate. It continues to this day as an independent body, theoretically within the church structure. Church leaders do not have a majority control of their board.

It was for this reason that Ellen could die in peace, knowing that her books would be safeguarded in the future.

“I am to trace this testimony on paper, that should I fall asleep in Jesus, the witness to the truth might still be borne.”—*Letter 116, 1905; 3 Selected Messages, 76.*

“Abundant light has been given to our people in these last days. Whether or not my life is spared, my writings will constantly speak, and their work will go forward as long as time shall last. My writings are kept on file in the office; and, even though I should not live, these words that have been given to me by the Lord will still have life and will speak to the people.”—*Letter 371, 1907; 1 Selected Messages, 55.*

“Physically, I have always been as a broken vessel; and yet, in my old age, **the Lord continues to move upon me by His Holy Spirit to write the most important books that have ever come before the churches and the world.** The Lord is evidencing what He can do through weak vessels. The life that He spares I will use to His glory. And, when He may see fit to let me rest, His messages shall be of even more vital force than when the frail instrumentality through whom they were delivered was living.”—*Manuscript 122, 1903; 3 Selected Messages, 76-77.*

GOD PROTECTS HIS WORD

As we overview all that we have learned in this study, it is with awe that we have beheld how God has protected His holy writings!

I would urge you to share copies of this study with friends who need their faith strengthened or who might be in danger of being misled by radicals claiming that Ellen White was little more than a dumb dog who feared to bark at the terrible things being done to her books.

ELLEN WHITE'S HELPERS

Here are additional quotations on Ellen White's use of helpers; the friends who made spelling and grammatical corrections and prepared her materials for publication. **Please remember that Ellen White only had three grades of education. God uses us where we are and helps us in our work. Ellen needed helpers, and the Lord provided them.** She, at first, had James as a helper. In later years, God sent her other helpers.

“This morning I take into candid consideration my writings. My husband is too feeble to help me prepare them for the printer, therefore I shall do no more with them at present. I am not a scholar. I cannot prepare my own writings for the press. Until I can do this I shall write no more. It is not my duty to tax others with my manuscript.”—*Manuscript 3, 1873 (Diary January 10, 1873); 3 Selected Messages, 90.*

“While my husband lived, he acted as a helper and counselor in the sending out of the messages that were given to me. We traveled extensively. Sometimes light would be given to me in the night season, sometimes in the daytime before large congregations. The instruction I received in vision was faithfully written out by me, as I had time and strength for the work. Afterward we examined the matter together, my husband correcting grammatical errors and eliminating needless repetition. Then it was carefully copied for the persons addressed or for the printer.

“As the work grew, others assisted me in the preparation of matter for publication. After my husband's death, faithful helpers joined me, who labored untiringly in the work of copying the testimonies and preparing articles for publication.

“But the reports that are circulated, that any of my helpers are permitted to add matter or change the meaning of the messages I write out, are not true.”—*Letter 225, 1906; 1 Selected Messages, 50.*

“My copyists you have seen. They do not change my language. It stands as I write it . . . My work has been in the field since 1845. Ever since then I have labored with pen and voice. Increased light has come to me as I have imparted the light given me. I have very much more light on the Old and New Testament Scriptures, which I shall present to our people.”—*Letter 61a, 1900; 3 Selected Messages, 90.*

“I am still as active as ever. I am not in the least decrepit. I am able to do much work, writing and speaking as I did years ago.

“I read over all that is copied, to see that everything is as it should be. I read all the book manuscript before it is sent to the printer. So you can see that my time must be fully occupied. Besides writing, I am called upon to speak to the different churches and to attend important meetings. I could not do this work unless the Lord helped me.”—*Letter 133, 1902; 3 Selected Messages, 90-91.*

MARIAN DAVIS

Marian Davis, who untiringly helped Ellen from December 31, 1878, until her death in October 25, 1904, carried on a special work. She would locate everything Ellen had earlier written on a subject and prepare small notebooks with the material. Then Ellen would use that material in writing her later books. That is how PP, DA, MH, COL, AA, and PK were produced. Here are several statements about Marian’s work:

“Marian’s work is of a different order altogether. She is my bookmaker . . . How are my books made?

Marian does not put in her claim for recognition.

“She does her work in this way: She takes my articles which are published in the papers, and pastes them in blank books. She also has a copy of all the letters I write. In preparing a chapter for a book, Marian remembers that I have written something on that special point, which may make the matter more forcible. She begins to search for this, and if when she finds it, she sees that it will make the chapter more clear, she adds it.

“The books are not Marian’s productions, but my own, gathered from all my writings. Marian has a large field from which to draw, and her ability to arrange the matter is of great value to me. It saves my poring over a mass of matter, which I have no time to do.

“So you understand that Marian is a most valuable help to me in bringing out my books.”—*Letter 61a, 1900; 3 Selected Messages, 91.*

“I feel very thankful for the help of Sister Marian Davis in getting out my books. She gathers materials from my diaries, from my letters, and from the articles published in the papers. I greatly prize her faithful service. She has been with me for twenty-five years, and has constantly been gaining increasing ability for the work of classifying and grouping my writings.”—*Letter 9, 1903; 3 Selected Messages, 93.*

While on a trip from Elmshaven to Oakland in September 1904, Marian became chilled one evening while helping see through to production the printing of a new Spirit of Prophecy book at Pacific Press. Marian died on October 25. You will meet her in heaven. **Instead of criticizing the Spirit of Prophecy writings, as some today are doing, Marian did her part to help circulate them. “She hath chosen the better part.” God will bless all who, like her, choose the better part.**

“Marian, my helper, faithful and true as the compass to the pole in her work, is dying . . .

“I am leaving tomorrow for Battle Creek. Yet my soul is drawn to the dying girl who has served me for the last twenty-five years. We have stood side by side in the work, and in perfect harmony in that work. And when she would be gathering up the precious jots and tittles that had come in papers and books and present it to me, ‘Now,’ she would say, ‘there is something wanted [needed]. I cannot supply it [from your earlier writings].’ I would look it over, and in one moment I could trace the line right out.

“We worked together, just worked together in perfect harmony all the time. She is dying. And it is devotion to the work. She takes the intensity of it as though it were a reality, and we both have entered into it with an intensity to have every paragraph that shall stand in its right place, and show its right work.”—*Manuscript 95, 1904, dated September 24, 1904; 3 Selected Messages, 93.*

“Marian had been with me about twenty-five years. She was my chief worker in arranging the matter for my books. She ever appreciated the writings as sacred matter placed in her hands, and would often relate to me what comfort and blessing she received in performing this work, that it was her health and her life to do this work. She ever handled the matters placed in her hands as sacred. I shall miss her so much. Who will fill her place?”—*Manuscript 146, 1904; 3 Selected Messages, 91.*

POSTSCRIPT

When I was in college, I heard about the liberals in the religion departments of Harvard, Yale, the University of Chicago, and Princeton Theological Seminary, who were destroying their students.

Young men who wanted to dedicate their lives as ministers would enter the classes of those men. Although their parents had raised them to love God’s holy Word and trust everything they read in its pages, vultures picked their brains to pieces.

The young men were taught that the Bible could not be trusted. Oh, the liberal professors did not say

it was all garbage, just some of it. “You see,” they would say, “after the initial authors wrote it, it was later changed, edited, and added to. So you really cannot be sure what the original passages were.”

Upon learning that the Bible was no longer trustworthy, the young men should have immediately fled from the place—and left the school. But, instead, they lingered to hear serpents speak.

Their willingness to keep listening to emissaries of the devil was their undoing. The liberals formed them in their own image; and soon the young men, conceited to imagine that they knew advanced light which their parents did not know, began teaching the same falsehoods.

Those so-called learned men in the universities of the world were using *higher criticism* to destroy souls. You surely do not want to attend the religion departments in those institutions!

“*Higher criticism*” is the teaching initiated by German atheist “theologians” in the nineteenth century, that the Bible writers did not write their own books!

But, then, gradually our own colleges and universities were infiltrated by graduates of those universities. And now our own young men are being taught similar errors. They are told that our historic teachings are unreliable and that the Spirit of Prophecy writings are not divinely inspired. Well, you do not want to attend those schools either, even though they are owned and subsidized by the tithes and offerings of our church members.

But Satan was not satisfied to stop there. He had his eye on the little flock who, so far, had resisted his devices. **The devil wanted to destroy the faithful who had stood true to our historic teachings, defended our virtuous standards, and deeply loved and obeyed both the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy.**

What was the best way to undermine their faith, confuse their minds, and gradually separate them from God?

At last, he hit on the best technique of all: Satan decided to use the very same method which worked so well in the worldly colleges and universities under his control, the same teaching preached from week to week in the most sophisticated churches of the land. Satan would use *higher criticism* to destroy confidence in the Spirit of Prophecy—that part of God’s Word which Heaven had appointed as a guardian of the faith of the remnant in these last days. It would be claimed that Ellen White did not write her own books either!

And it is succeeding. In group after group, tapes are being circulated, itinerate preachers are holding meetings, newsletters are being circulated, books are offered for sale. **The vicious falsehoods subtly attack Ellen White, her character, her writings, and God’s very power to protect His Written Word!**

That is what makes the attacks so insidious. For when you buy the package of lies which says that men have changed the Spirit of Prophecy writings, you have bought with it a package which says that God is unreliable,—He does not safeguard His holy books.

The implication is that, if God has not protected the Spirit of Prophecy, which was written only within the past 150 years, then you can have no certainty that the Old and New Testaments are not as corrupt. The temptation is to not stop with rejecting part of it; throw it all out, and go on out and enjoy the world. You might as well; for **you have willingly permitted Satan’s agents to whisper doubts in your mind about the very nature of divine Inspiration. The door to your mind has been opened to the tempter’s devices.**

Rejecting part of what you have known to be Scripture, you have stripped yourself of the angelic wall of defense which was formerly about you. Subtle temptations to let down your standards and think and do things you formerly avoided will inevitably pull you down further.

Amid a raging ocean of worldliness, you once clung to the rock of God’s Word and were safe. But, having abandoned part of it, your hold on the remainder has been weakened. Erelong, you are fighting the waves in your own strength and are gradually drawn toward the final whirlpool.

What was it that destroyed the young men at the universities? They were taught that much of God’s Scriptures are unreliable and that they must learn to pick and choose those parts which are still safe. This reasoning, of course, placed their brains—instead of God’s Word—as the final authority. It may seem to be a subtle difference, yet it involved a bedrock decision: If the wisdom that leads to salvation rests with me, then I can sit in judgment on all Scripture.

Soon I start thinking I can sit in judgment on the very nature and existence of the Godhead! Nothing becomes sacred to me. **Because I am my own authority, I am now a law unto myself. I have become**

my own god.

Get it settled in your mind: You dare not question certain things. You dare not question the Bible. You dare not question the Spirit of Prophecy. You dare not question whether obedience to God's law is necessary. For, I assure you, when you soon stand before the Judgment, you will not question that. It is coming. **What will be your life record? Will you, in that day, have to admit that you spent your time voicing the words of demons—that the Spirit of Prophecy could not be trusted? It is a serious matter. You have only one life to live.** You had better pass through it with your hand in God's hand (which is done through implicit confidence in, and obedience through faith in Christ, to His Word) rather than clinging to the hand of some vagabond inventor of lies.

How God Protected Ellen White's Writings Part 3

“Satan is . . . constantly pressing in the spurious—to lead away from the truth. **The very last deception of Satan will be to make of none effect the testimony of the Spirit of God.** ‘Where there is no vision, the people perish’ (Proverbs 29:18). **Satan will work ingeniously, in different ways and through different agencies, to unsettle the confidence of God’s remnant people in the true testimony.**”—*1 Selected Messages, 48 [see 2 SM 78 for context].*

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

“God is either teaching His church, reproving their wrongs and strengthening their faith, or He is not. **This work is of God, or it is not. God does nothing in partnership with Satan. My work . . . bears the stamp of God or the stamp of the enemy. There is no halfway work in the matter.**”—*5 Testimonies, 671.*

“**If you lose confidence in the Testimonies you will drift away from Bible truth.** I have been fearful that many would take a questioning, doubting position, and in my distress for your souls I would warn you. How many will heed the warning? As you now hold the *Testimonies*, should one be given crossing your track, correcting your errors, would you feel at perfect liberty to accept or reject any part or the whole? **That which you will be least inclined to receive is the very part most needed.**”—*5 Testimonies, 98.*

UNUSUAL STATEMENTS IN THE SPIRIT OF PROPHECY

One of the most remarkable things about the writings of Ellen White is that everything agrees and dovetails so well! A person has to read for years in order to find oddities that appear to disagree with other passages. In comparison, it is not difficult to find anomalies in the Bible which do not agree with other passages. Quite a few could quickly be mentioned. Yet we accept the Bible as fully inspired of God, which is what it is. A comparison of Matthew, Mark, and Luke reveals many of them.

The critics of Ellen White search for the rare oddities, in her writings, and hold them up to us as examples supporting their contention that her writings are not inspired.

It is difficult to find such unusual statements, but here are a few of them:

PORK EATING IN 1858

“Your views concerning swine’s flesh would prove no injury if you have them to yourselves; but in your judgment and opinion **you have made this question a test,** and your actions have plainly shown your faith in this matter. **If God requires His people to abstain from swine’s flesh, He will convict them on the matter.**”—*1 Testimonies, 206-207.*

God gradually gives more and more light to His prophets. The book of Isaiah is an example of this. So is Exodus and Leviticus. It was not until 1848 that Ellen White reproved the use of tobacco. Prior to that time, she said nothing about it.

The above statement was penned on October 21, 1858; but, in His wisdom, the Lord waited until 1863 before giving her the wide-ranging health reform vision. The above statement said that, in 1858, eating of pork was not a test of fellowship, which was true. She also said that God might give more light on this matter later, which was also true.

The overarching lesson from this passage—is that it is printed in our *Testimonies!* It was never expunged. This demonstrates that we can trust those books!

STANDING BESIDE THE ALTAR

Another apparent oddity is the statement that Christ is today standing before the altar of incense, pleading our cases. That altar is in the first apartment.

“Christ might commission the angels of heaven to pour out the vials of His wrath on our world, to destroy those who are filled with hatred of God. He might wipe this dark spot from His universe. But He does not do this. **He is today standing at the altar of incense**, presenting before God the prayers of those who desire His help.

“The souls that turn to Him for refuge, Jesus lifts above the accusing and the strife of tongues. No man or evil angel can impeach these souls. Christ unites them to His own divine-human nature. They stand beside the great Sin Bearer, in the light proceeding from the throne of God.”—*Desire of Ages*, 568.

The context is speaking about Christ’s great love and care for His erring earthly children. Ellen is so filled with feeling that she waxes eloquent with powerful symbolic language to illustrate her meaning: “pour out the vials of His wrath,” “wipe this dark spot,” “standing at the altar of incense,” “turn to Him for refuge,” “strife of tongues,” “impeach these souls.” Notice the final sentence: They stand beside their Mediator, “in the light proceeding from the throne of God.” That light is not now in the first apartment, which is blocked by a veil from God’s glory in the second. So, by faith, they are standing by Him in the second, not the first, apartment.

Metaphorical statements can be doctrinally inaccurate. A few lines down from “standing at the altar” is “They stand by their Mediator.” Both are symbols; neither one is literally true. We are not now standing by our Mediator in heaven. These are metaphors. Here is another example of a metaphor:

“For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before Me, saith the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain.

“And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before Me, saith the Lord.

“And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against Me: for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh.”—*Isaiah 66:22-24*.

Verse 24 is obviously metaphorical, and not a reality. After the wicked have been eliminated, the righteous will not go forth from the holy City and look at dead corpses all over the ground. The wicked were totally burned up in the fire which purified the earth. The metaphor means that the wicked are no longer able to trouble anyone. A fire which no creature can quench will have done its work thoroughly. The wicked are gone.

“While the earth was wrapped in the fire of destruction, the righteous abode safely in the holy City. Upon those that had part in the first resurrection, the second death has no power. While God is to the wicked a consuming fire, He is to His people both a sun and a shield. Revelation 20:6; Psalm 84:11.

“ ‘I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away.’

Revelation 21:1. **The fire that consumes the wicked purifies the earth. Every trace of the curse is swept away. No eternally burning hell** will keep before the ransomed the fearful consequences of sin.

“One reminder alone remains: Our Redeemer will ever bear the marks of His crucifixion. Upon His wounded head, upon His side, His hands and feet, are **the only traces** of the cruel work that sin has wrought.”—*Great Controversy*, 673-674.

(A similar figure of speech is found in Malachi 4:3; cf. 4:1-3, to also indicate the total destruction of the wicked is described.)

“Standing by the altar,” in DA 568, is also a metaphor and not a reality. Christ is pleading for us today; that

is what it means. Ellen has dozens of statements about Christ's work for us in the second apartment after 1844. So we have total clarity, as to her meaning, and the fact that this one passage must be interpreted as a most beautiful metaphor.

STANDING ON THE SUMMIT

Desire of Ages is one of the most glorious books Ellen wrote. Why people would want to pick flaws in it is almost beyond comprehension. Another apparent (apparent) oddity, that they point to, is found near the end of the book.

"Its steeps had echoed the triumphant shouts of the multitude that proclaimed Him king. On its sloping descent He had found a home with Lazarus at Bethany. In the garden of Gethsemane at its foot He had prayed and agonized alone. From this mountain He was to ascend to heaven. Upon its summit His feet will rest when He shall come again. Not as a man of sorrows, but as a glorious and triumphant king He will stand upon Olivet, while Hebrew hallelujahs mingle with Gentile hosannas, and the voices of the redeemed as a mighty host shall swell the acclamation, 'Crown Him Lord of all!'"—*Desire of Ages*, 830.

Frequently, in Bible prophecy, the prophet describes an incident and then skips entire centuries and mentions another. In other prophecies, missing portions are filled in. The Spirit of Prophecy does the same thing. Frequently an inspired source does not give the full picture all at once. Think about it. You do not find the complete picture in Daniel 2, 7, 8, 9, or 10-12. You do not find it anywhere in Revelation. You have to carefully fit them together.

In the above passage, Ellen is very briefly mentioning a future event. Be aware that, in doing so, she may skip over intermediate predicted events, just as the Bible writers do.

The purpose of the above passage is quite obvious: solely to list the times that the Mount of Olives is important in history, from His time to the end of sin.

(1) His stay at Lazarus' home. (2) His agony in Gethsemane. (3) His ascension. (4) His return to the top of the mount. When does the fourth incident occur: at Christ's Second Coming or at His Third? Obviously, His third, for these reasons:

1 - Scripture explains Scripture, and she elsewhere says Christ will not touch down on Olivet till His Third Coming.

2 - As "its steeps . . . echoed the triumphant shouts of the multitude that proclaimed Him king" during His triumphal entry, so, the passage says, when He next touches the top of the mount, everyone—everyone—will praise Him as He once again returns, and proclaim Him King. When does that occur? Not at Christ's Second Advent, for then the righteous are pale with fear and the wicked are crying out in horror (*Great Controversy*, 641-642). It occurs at His Third Advent. He descends from heaven with His people and the holy City, and He is praised by His redeemed, some of whom were Jews and some were Gentiles. Then the dead are raised to life and Jesus and the redeemed enter the holy City.

3 - At the above-described coming, the trump of God does not sound nor do the dead in Christ arise from the dead. That is because it is Christ's Third, not His Second, Advent.

3 - Two pages after *Desire of Ages*, 830, there is a parallel passage (*page 832*). But this one is speaking not about Christ's Third Coming,—but about His Second. He will descend from heaven in a cloud, the trump of God will sound, the dead in Christ will rise, and He receives His faithful ones to Himself that where He is, there they may be also.

THE VERY IMPORTANT A.L. WHITE COMPILATION THE CIRCULATION OF GREAT CONTROVERSY THE STORY OF THE 1888 GREAT CONTROVERSY CRISIS

This study, *The Circulation of Great Controversy*, was prepared in 1938 by its director, Arthur L. White, in the main office of the Ellen White Estate (which at that time was located in Elmhaven, California, prior to its later removal to Washington, D.C.)

A.L. White was Ellen White's grandson. This study was presented, by him, to the Field Missionary Secretaries' Council at Sanitarium, California on September 30, 1938. All of the following material, including subheads, is as originally given by him, with the exception of bracketed items and bold face emphasis, which we have added. Whenever we could locate a quotation in the currently published books,

we placed the reference in brackets. Here is his complete compilation:

Foremost among the reasons for the wide circulation of *Great Controversy* is the fact that the book is of more than human origin. The author in the Introduction points to the Source of her information. She says: **“Through the illumination of the Holy Spirit, the scenes of the long continued conflict between good and evil have been opened to the writer of these pages.** From time to time I have been permitted to behold the workings, in different ages, of the great controversy between Christ, the Prince of life, the author of salvation, and Satan, the author of evil, the first transgressor of God’s holy law” [*Great Controversy*, p. *xiii*].

“As the Spirit of God has opened to my mind the great truths of His Word, and the scenes of the past and the future, **I have been bidden to make known to others that which has thus been revealed—to trace the history of the controversy in past ages, and especially so to present it as to shed a light on the fast-approaching struggle of the future.**”— [*Great Controversy*, pp. *x-xi*].

Speaking of the Source of the information which was presented in 1888 in a little volume [*2 Spiritual Gifts*, 1858], touching the high points of the conflict story, the last part was enlarged and became the *Great Controversy*:

“In this vision at Lovett’s Grove, much of the material of the great controversy which I had seen ten years before was repeated, and **I was shown that I must write it out; that I should have to contend with the powers of darkness, for Satan would make strong efforts to hinder me,** but angels of God would not leave me in the conflict, that in God must I put my trust.”— *2 Spiritual Gifts*, 270 [*Life Sketches*, 162, is almost identical. For the full story, read pp. 162-163 (1880)].

This statement brings to view that, along with the revelation the of scenes of the great controversy, Mrs. White was shown that, in writing these out, she would be opposed by Satan. This is readily understood; for if the Lord’s humble servant could be hindered from exposing his work and methods of attack, there would be less interference with his work.

The great adversary was not slow in bringing his attacks. Before Mrs. White reached her home a few days after the vision at Lovett’s Grove, she was stricken with paralysis and despaired even of her life. Healed through prayer, but not completely restored at first, Mrs. White wrote out the story in a very brief form as now found in the last pages of *Early Writings* [*1 Spiritual Gifts*, 1858, now in *Early Writings*, 133-295].

When the work was about completed she was shown—

“In the sudden attack at Jackson, Satan designed to take my life to hinder the work I was about to write; but angels of God were sent to my rescue, to raise me above the effects of Satan’s attack.”— [*2 Spiritual Gifts*, 272; *Life Sketches*, 163 is almost identical (1880)].

In 1884 there came, from the press, the first edition of [what was later enlarged to become] our present *Great Controversy* [*Spirit of Prophecy*, Volume 4; released in the autumn of 1884]. It was popular from the first; and ten editions were printed and sold within the first four years of the life of the book. It was enlarged in 1888. Mrs. White frequently spoke of the special value of this book and of the Source of its inspiration. A few brief quotations follow:

“I was moved by the Spirit of the Lord to write that book, and while working upon it I felt a great burden upon my soul. I knew that time was short, that the scenes which are soon to crowd upon us would at the last come very suddenly and swiftly, as represented in the words of Scripture: ‘The day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night’ [*Colporteur Ministry*, 127; *Letter 1*, 1890].

“The Lord has set before me matters which are of urgent importance for the present time, and which reach into the future. These words have been spoken in a charge to me, ‘**Write in a book the things thou hast seen and heard, and let it go to all people, for the time is at hand when past history will be repeated.**’ I have been aroused at one, two, or three o’clock in the morning with some point forcibly impressed upon my mind, as if spoken by the voice of God . . . [*Colporteur Ministry*, 128; *Letter 1*, 1890].

“I was shown . . . that I should devote myself to writing out the important matters for volume four [*the 1888 edition was also called Volume 4*]; and that **the warning must go where the living messenger could not go, and that it would call the attention of many to the important events to occur in the closing scenes of this world’s history.**”— *Letter 1*, 1890 [*Colporteur Ministry*, 127].

“God gave me the light contained in *Great Controversy* and *Patriarchs and Prophets*; and this light was needed to arouse the people to prepare for the great day of God, which is just before us. These

books contain God's direct appeal to the people. Thus He is speaking to the people in stirring words, urging them to make ready for His coming. **The light God has given in these books should not be concealed.**"—*Manuscript 23, 1890 [Colporteur Ministry, 129].*

WITHHOLDING LIGHT

When the new enlarged edition of 1888 *Great Controversy* came from the press, there was every hope that the book would have a wide sale and accomplish much good. Certain conditions in our publishing work, however, thwarted these hopes; for the management of the Review and Herald had passed from the hands of men who had long experience in the work to the hands of businessmen—a banker, a title lawyer, and later a sea captain.

A strong effort was made to have Mrs. White release all royalties on *Great Controversy*. The banker-manager, being a good financier, objected to paying royalties on books that he supposed would have only limited circulation. Mrs. White stated positively that she had been instructed otherwise and could not relinquish the royalty.

When she returned from Europe, it was found that the manager and some of his associates were determined to bring out books that were free from royalty. *Bible Readings* was brought out by a variety of authors who donated their work, so the book could be put on the market without royalty. This book was a great success. When the enlarged editions of *Great Controversy* and *Patriarchs and Prophets* came out, the canvassing business was in the hands of men who were advocating, "One book; everybody on one book; all agents on one book." *Bible Readings* was pushed to the front and *Great Controversy* and *Patriarchs and Prophets* lay idle on the shelves and had only a limited sale.

When Mrs. White protested against this, she was promised that, after running *Bible Readings* a year, they would take up *Great Controversy* and concentrate on it. When the year was done, those in charge of the publishing and canvassing work did not fulfill their promise and *Bible Readings* was majored for several years, to the neglect of other books. Then in later years, when the book passed to other hands in the canvassing work, *Great Controversy* and *Patriarchs and Prophets* were brought to the front and had a good sale.

With this brief recital of the circumstances surrounding the neglect of *Great Controversy*, the following extracts will be understood and appreciated:

"About this time when the new edition of Volume Four [1888 *Great Controversy*], came from the press, the new book, *Bible Readings*, was introduced. This book had a great sale, and has been permitted to swallow up every other interest. Canvassers found it an easy book to handle, and **Volume Four was kept out of the field. I felt that this was not right. I knew that it was not right, because it was not in harmony with the light which God had given me.**"—*B.L. 1890.*

"As soon as *Great Controversy* came from the press it should have been pushed forward above every other book. I have been shown this. **Had it been circulated at the time it was lying idle, there would have been a very different order of things among our workers. The impressions made would have brought decided changes.** But instead of this the book was suppressed, although the promise was made me that it should go forward if I would take the lowest royalty. **The book that should have gone did not go; and the men who should have worked to carry it forward discouraged the canvassers from handling it.** Thus saith the Lord, 'I will judge for this false, dishonest work.'"—*B.L. 1899.*

"Just at this point his satanic majesty was in the management of the books at the Review and Herald office. Those at the head of the publishing work there would handle neither *Great Controversy* nor *Patriarchs and Prophets*, **the books God has specified the people must have at once.** They promised me faithfully that after certain months they would handle these books, but they failed to keep their word. **When *Great Controversy* should have been circulated everywhere, it was lying dead in the Review and Herald Office and the Pacific Press.**"—*Letter 35, 1899.*

"My mind has been so fully occupied with the burden upon me of getting before the people the light having especial reference to these last days, and the crisis before us. **The world is to be warned, and I have felt so deeply over *Volume Four* standing still as it has done . . .**

"I do not demerit *Bible Readings*. It is a book which will do a great amount of good, but it can never take the place the Lord designed that *Volume Four* should have in the world and among our people. **I have spread before them the light given me of heaven in that book.**"—*E25a 1889.*

"**This sale of *Bible Readings*, had it been preceded by the sale of *Great Controversy*, would have had**

far more weight than it had in going first. The Lord knew all about this. He knew that principles were violated. He knew the falsehoods told and reiterated, that the books bearing the vital truth to the people would not sell. He knew that ministers and presidents were advised to recommend that all handle the one book; and that **the keeping of *Great Controversy* from the field has done a work that men will have to answer for in the Judgment.**—*Manuscript 64, 1894.*

“This book has to a great degree been misplaced by another book, which has kept from the world **the light God has given.**”—*Manuscript 24, 1891.*

“I know that the statement made, that these books cannot be sold, is not true. I know; for the Lord has instructed me that this is said because human devising has blocked the way for their sale. **It cannot be denied that these works were not the product of any human mind, they are the voice of God speaking to the people, and they will have an influence upon minds that other books do not have.**”—*Manuscript 23, 1890. [Colporteur Ministry, 129].*

“For nearly two years the book containing warnings and instructions from the Lord, given especially for this time, has been lying in our publishing houses, and **no one feels the necessity or importance of bringing it before the people. Brethren, how long am I to wait for you to get the burden?** Now *Volume One*, or *Patriarchs and Prophets*, is ready for circulation; but, even for this book, I would not allow *Volume Four* to remain longer as a light under a bushel. **I am in sore distress of mind, but who of my brethren cares for this?**

“Has the Lord moved upon my mind to prepare this work to be sent everywhere, and is He moving upon my brethren to devise plans which shall bar the way so that the light which He has given me shall be hid in our publishing houses instead of shining forth to all who will receive it?

“It is now urged that only one book at a time shall have a place in the field—that all the canvassers shall work for the same book. I do not see the force or propriety of this. **If the Lord has light for His people, who shall venture to put up barriers so that the light shall not reach them?** One book is published at little expense, and it is therefore sold cheaply; other books that present truths essential at this time, have involved greater expense; shall they therefore be kept from the people? *Bible Readings* is a good book to occupy its own place, but should not be permitted to crowd out other important works which the people need. **The presidents of our conferences have a duty to do; our board of directors should have something to say in this matter,** that the different branches of God’s work may receive equal attention.

“If our canvassers are controlled by the prospect of financial gain; if they circulate books on which they can make the most money, to the neglect of others that the people need, I ask, in what sense is theirs a missionary work? Where is the missionary spirit? the spirit of self-sacrifice?

“The work of the intelligent, God-fearing canvasser has been represented as equal to that of the gospel ministry. Then should the canvasser, any more than the minister, feel at liberty to act from selfish motives? **Should he turn his back on all the principles of missionary work, and handle the books—placed before him, shall I say, as a temptation—on which he can make the most money?** Should he have no interest to circulate any book but that which brings him the greatest financial gain? How is the missionary spirit revealed here? Has not the canvassing work ceased to be what it ought to be? How is it that no voice is raised to correct this state of things?”—*[E.G. White 1888 Materials, 654-655].*

“I speak to you who are engaged in the canvassing work. **Have you read *Volume Four*? Do you know what it contains? Have you any appreciation for the subject matter? Do you not see that the people need the light therein given?** If you have not already done so, I entreat you to read carefully these solemn warnings and appeals. I am sure that **the Lord would have this work carried into all the highways and byways, where there are souls to be warned of the dangers so soon to come.**”—*B.L. 1890 [Colporteur Ministry, 127. Letter I, 1890].*

When there came a change of attitude toward her books, Mrs. White recognized it and rejoiced over their wide circulation; for thus the words of truth which had been given her were passed on to the people. A recognition of this change is noted in the two following extracts, written in 1894 and 1907 respectively: **“Light was in that book which came from Heaven; but what account will those men have to give to God for the little faith and confidence manifested in that book that the warnings should not come to the people when they should have had them.** I am so glad the people can have them now. **The delay was Satan’s devising.** He was working diligently and had brought about a condition of things that **the work cannot go as it would have gone.**”—*Letter O-55, 1894.*

“Years ago when I was in Battle Creek I was much distressed that *Great Controversy* should lie idle on the shelf. **For two years it was held back** that *Bible Readings* might have more attention. All that I could say did not change the course of those who had control of the canvassing work . . . There is not now a studied, determined effort to hold back those books that are of the most importance. We are planning to bring out many books.”—*H-70, 1907 [Letter 70, 1907]*.

In 1899 Mrs. White was led to speak of the experience in which *Great Controversy* was neglected, giving as a reason the danger of a repetition of that experience. She said:

“The rights of brethren are to be respected; there should not be a multiplication of books, when it is well understood one will interfere with the sale of the one just preceding it. This was the way with *Great Controversy*. This book was not left to have a fair chance in being handled with *Bible Readings*. The *Bible Readings* was brought in before the books of great importance—*Great Controversy* and *Daniel and Revelation*, which relate to the vital interests before us. **Through the instruction to the canvassing agents, *Great Controversy* had little opportunity to be circulated, and was nearly eclipsed. There is danger that the same course will be followed**, therefore it is necessary to refer to the light given on this subject. It was presented to me that one book was crossing the track of another. This is not righteous judgment. I have now to say, that selfishness be uprooted. Let the precious plants of God’s own garden of the heart live and flourish.”—*J-91, 1899 [Letter 91, 1899]*.

REASONS FOR WIDE CIRCULATION

The reasons for Mrs. White’s burden for the wide circulation of *Great Controversy* have been set forth many times, and they should constitute a sound basis for a continued impetus:

“***Great Controversy* should be very widely circulated. It contains the story of the past, the present, and the future. In its outline of the closing scenes of this earth’s history, it bears a powerful testimony in behalf of the truth. I am more anxious to see a wide circulation for this book than for any others I have written; for in the *Great Controversy*, the last message of warning to the world is given more distinctly than in any of my other books.**”—*K-281 1905 [Colporteur Ministry, 127, Letter 281, 1905]*.

“Let there be an interest awakened in the sale of these books. **Their sale is essential, for they contain timely instruction from the Lord. They should be appreciated as books that bring to the people light that is especially needed just now. Therefore these books should be widely distributed. Those who make a careful study of the instruction contained in them, and will receive it as from the Lord, will be kept from receiving many of the errors that are being introduced. Those who accept the truth contained in these books will not be led into false paths.**”—*[Colporteur Ministry, 130]*.

“Many will depart from the faith and give heed to seducing spirits. ***Patriarchs and Prophets* and *Great Controversy* are books that are especially adapted to those who have newly come to the faith, that they may be established in the truth. The dangers are pointed out that should be avoided by the church. Those who become thoroughly acquainted with the lessons in these books will see the dangers before them**, and will be able to discern the plain, straight path marked out for them. They will be kept from strange paths. They will make straight paths for their feet, lest the lame be turned out of the way.”—*[Colporteur Ministry, 129-130; Evangelism, 366]*.

“In *Desire of Ages*, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, *Great Controversy*, and in *Daniel and 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.”—*[Colporteur Ministry, p. 123]*.

“**We are warned to avoid the mistakes the Israelites made in stubbornly refusing to receive the warnings that came to them from God.**”—*W-229, 1903 [Letter 229, 1903; 2 Manuscript Releases]*.

GREATEST RESULTS IN THE FUTURE

“**The results of the circulation of this book [*Great Controversy*] are not to be judged by what now appears. By reading it some souls will be aroused and will have courage to unite themselves at once with those who keep the commandments of God. But a much larger number who read it will not take their position until they see the very events taking place that are foretold in it.** The fulfillment of some of the predictions will inspire faith that others will also come to pass, and when the earth is lightened with the glory of the Lord, in the closing work, many souls will take their position on the commandments of God as the result of this agency.”—*Manuscript 31, 1890 [Colporteur Ministry, 128-129]*.

**LET NOTHING HINDER THEIR SALE
OUR DUTY IS TO SPREAD THE LIGHT THESE BOOKS CONTAIN**

“The larger books, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, *The Great Controversy*, and *The Desire of Ages*, should be sold everywhere. **These books contain truth for this time—truth that is to be proclaimed in all parts of the world.** Nothing is to hinder their sale.”—*Colporteur Evangelist*, 35 [*Colporteur Ministry*, 124; *Review*, January 20, 1903].

“It is a duty we owe to our people and to God, to send every ray of light given me of God, demanded at this time for every tongue and nation.”—*E-25a* 1889.

“The light given was that *Thoughts on Daniel and Revelation*, *The Great Controversy*, and *Patriarchs and Prophets* would make their way. **They contain the very message the people must have, the special light God had given His people. The angels of God would prepare the way for these books in the hearts of the people.**”—[*Colporteur Ministry*, 123-124].

CIRCULATION OF GREAT CONTROVERSY

“The work which the church has failed to do in a time of peace and prosperity she will have to do in a terrible crisis under most discouraging, forbidding circumstances. The warnings that worldly conformity has silenced or withheld must be given under the fiercest opposition from enemies of the faith.”—[*5 Testimonies*, 463].

“Instruction has been given me that **the important books containing the light that God has given regarding Satan’s apostasy in heaven should be given a wide circulation just now; for through them the truth will reach many minds.** *Patriarchs and Prophets*, *Daniel and Revelation*, and *The Great Controversy* are needed now as never before. **They should be widely circulated because the truths they emphasize will open many blind eyes . . . Many of our people have been blind to the importance of the very books that were most needed. Had tact and skill then been shown in the sale of these books, the Sunday-law movement would not be where it is today.**”—*Colporteur Evangelist* 21 [*Colporteur Ministry*, 123; *Review*, February 16, 1905].

BOOKS A SILENT WITNESS

“Sister White is not the originator of these books. They contain the instruction that during her lifework God has been giving her. They contain the precious, comforting light that God has graciously given His servants to be given to the world. From their pages this light is to shine into the hearts of men and women, leading them to the Saviour. **The Lord has declared that these books are to be scattered throughout the world.** There is in them truth which to the receiver is a savor life unto life. **They are silent witnesses for God.** In the past they have been the means in His hands of convicting and converting many souls. Many have read them with eager expectation and, by reading them, have been led to see the efficacy of Christ’s atonement and to trust in its power. They have been led to commit the keeping of their souls to their Creator, waiting and hoping for the coming of the Saviour to take His loved ones to their eternal home. In the future these books are to make the Gospel plain to many others, revealing to them the way of salvation.”—[*Colporteur Ministry*, 125; *Review*, January 20, 1903].

“The Lord has sent His people much instruction, line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little, there a little. Little heed has been given to the Bible, and the Lord has given a lesser light to lead men and women to the greater light. **Oh, how much good would be accomplished if the books containing this light were read with a determination to carry out the principles they contain! There would be a thousandfold greater vigilance, a thousandfold more self-denial and resolute effort. And many more would now be rejoicing in the light of present truth.**”—[*Colporteur Ministry*, 125-126; *Review*, January 20, 1903].

“My brethren and sisters, work earnestly to circulate these books. Put your hearts into this work, and the blessing of God will be with you. Go forth in faith, praying that God will prepare hearts to receive the light.”—*Colporteur Evangelist*, 36-37 [*Colporteur Ministry*, 126; *Review*, January 20, 1903].

Mrs. White’s last recorded statement, relative to the book *Great Controversy*, was made after a careful study of the revised edition published in 1911. She wrote as follows:

“A few days ago I received a copy of the new edition of the book *Great Controversy*, recently printed at Mountain View, and also a similar copy printed at Washington. **The book pleases me. I have spent many hours looking through its pages, and I see that the publishers have done good work.**

“The book, *Great Controversy*, I appreciate above silver or gold; and I greatly desire that it shall come before the people. While writing the manuscript of *Great Controversy*, I was often conscious of the presence of the angels of God. And many times the scenes about which I was writing were presented to me anew in visions of the night, so that they were fresh and vivid in my mind.”—[*Colporteur Ministry*, 128].

“Recently it was necessary for the book to be reset because the electrotype plates were badly worn. It has cost me much to have this done, but I do not complain; for whatever the cost may be, **I regard the edition with great satisfaction.**”—*W-55, 1911 [Letter 56, 1911; cf. Colporteur Ministry, p. 128].*

The objective of the author, in presenting *Great Controversy* to the world, might well be taken as the objective of those who take part in its circulation:

“To unfold the scenes of the great controversy between truth and error; to reveal the wiles of Satan and the means by which he may be successfully resisted; to present a satisfactory solution of the great problem of evil, shedding such light on the origin and the final disposition of sin as to make fully manifest the justice and benevolence of God in all His dealing with His creatures; and to show the holy, unchanging nature of the law is the object of the book. That through its influence souls may be delivered from the powers of darkness and become ‘partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light’; to the praise of Him who loves us, and gave Himself for us, is the earnest prayer of the writer.”—*Great Controversy, p. xii].*

The above concludes the Arthur L. White compilation, The Circulation of Great Controversy. The remainder of this tract will be composed of additional quotations that are relevant to this subject.

“I write from fifteen to twenty pages each day. It is now eleven o’clock, and I have written fourteen pages of manuscript for *Volume Four [1888 Great Controversy]* . . . As I write upon my book, **I feel intensely moved. I want to get it out as soon as possible, for our people need it so much.** I shall complete it next month if the Lord gives me health as He has done. I have been unable to sleep nights, for thinking of the important things to take place. Three hours and sometimes five is the most sleep I get. **My mind is stirred so deeply I cannot rest. Write, write, write, I feel that I must, and not delay . . .**”—*Letter 11, 1884, (February 19, 1884). E.G. White Brochures: Messenger to the Remnant, p. 57.*

“When the storm of God’s wrath breaks upon the world, it will be a terrible revelation for souls to find that their house is being swept away because it is built upon the sand. **Let the warning be given them before it is too late. We should now feel the responsibility of laboring with intense earnestness to impart to others the truths that God has given for this time. We cannot be too much in earnest.”**—[*6 Testimonies, 16].*

“I have been repeatedly shown that **our presses should now be constantly employed in publishing light and truth.** This is a time of spiritual darkness in the churches of the world. Ignorance of divine things has hidden God and the truth from view . . . I seemed to be in a council meeting where our bookwork was being discussed. There were a number of our brethren present, leaders in our work, and Elder Haskell and his wife were there consulting together and with the brethren about the circulation of our books, tracts, and periodicals.

“Elder Haskell was presenting **strong reasons why the books which contain the knowledge that has been communicated to Sister White—the books containing the special message to come to the world at this present time—should be more freely circulated.**

“ ‘Why, he inquired, **do not our people appreciate and circulate more widely the books bearing the divine credentials? Why is not a specialty made of the books containing the warnings regarding Satan’s work? Why do we not give greater effort to circulating the books that point out Satan’s plans to counterwork the work of God, that uncover his plans and point out his deceptions?** The moral evils of his deceptions are to be removed by opening the eyes of the people so that they shall discern the situation and the dangers of our times; so that they shall make diligent effort to lay hold by faith upon Christ and His righteousness.’

“ . . . [Another scene later in this same vision:] **Because books were being sold at low prices,** some being especially reduced for the occasion, many were purchased, and some by persons not of our faith. **They said: ‘It must be that these books contain a message for us. These people are willing to make sacrifices in order that we may have them, and we will secure them for ourselves and our friends.’**

“But dissatisfaction was expressed by some of our own people. One said: ‘A stop must be put to this work, or our business will be spoiled’ . . . Then I heard a voice of our Counselor saying: ‘Forbid them not. This is a work that should be done. The end is near. Already much time has been lost, when these books should have been in circulation. Sell them far and near. Scatter them like the leaves of autumn. This work is to continue without the forbiddings of anyone . . .’

“Some of the workers continued to appear much cast down. One was weeping and said: **These are doing the publishing work an injustice** by purchasing these books at so low a price; besides, **this work is depriving us of some of the revenue** by which our work is sustained.’ The Voice replied: ‘**You are meeting with no loss.** These workers who take the books at reduced prices could not obtain so ready sale for them except it be at this so-called sacrifice.’”—*9 Testimonies, 65-67, 72-73.*

May God help us each one to be faithful. Time is short, and there is much to do. We must believe these inspired books, we must read and obey these inspired books, we must share these inspired books. — Vance Ferrell

THE THREE EDITIONS OF GREAT CONTROVERSY

Three editions of the large book, *Great Controversy*, were published: the 1884, 1888, and 1911. For more information on them, see our ONLINE book, *Editions of Great Controversy*. **Let Ellen White speak:**

“Great Controversy should be very widely circulated. It contains the story of the past, the present, and the future. In its outline of the closing scenes of this earth’s history, it bears a powerful testimony in behalf of the truth. I am more anxious to see a wide circulation for this book than for any others I have written; for in Great Controversy, the last message of warning to the world is given more distinctly than in any of my other books.”—Letter 281, 1905 (*Colporteur Ministry, 127*).

THE 1858 VISION

“In this vision at Lovett’s Grove, much of the material of the great controversy which I had seen ten years before was repeated, and I was shown that I must write it out; that I should have to contend with the powers of darkness, for Satan would make strong efforts to hinder me, but angels of God would not leave me in the conflict, that in God must I put my trust.”—*2 Spiritual Gifts, 270 (Life Sketches, 162 is almost identical. For the full story, read 162-163).*

“In the sudden attack at Jackson [Michigan], Satan designed to take my life to hinder the work I was about to write; but angels of God were sent to raise me above the effect of Satan’s attack.”—*2 Spiritual Gifts, 270 (Life Sketches, 163 is almost identical).*

THE 1884 EDITION

“I was shown . . . that I should devote myself to writing out the important matters for *Volume Four* [*Spirit of Prophecy, Volume 4* was the 1884 Edition of *Great Controversy*]; and that **the warning must go where the living messenger could not go, and that it would call the attention of many to the important events to occur in the closing scenes of the world’s history.**”—*Letter 1, 1890 (Colporteur Ministry, p. 128).*

“I was moved by the Spirit of God to write that book, and while working upon it I felt a great burden upon my soul. I knew that time was short, that the scenes which are soon to crowd upon us would at the last come very suddenly and swiftly.”—*Letter 1, 1890 (Colporteur Ministry, p. 127).*

“I write from fifteen to twenty pages each day. It is now eleven o’clock, and I have written 14 pages of manuscript for *Volume Four* . . . As I write upon my book, I feel intensely moved. **I want to get it out as soon as possible,** for our people need it so much. I shall complete it next month if the Lord gives me health as He has done.

I have been unable to sleep nights, for thinking of the important things to take place. Three hours and sometimes five is the most sleep I get. My mind is stirred so deeply I cannot rest. Write, write, write, I feel that I must, and not delay."—*Letter 11, 1884 (February 19, 1984).*

THE 1888 EDITION

"About this time when the new [second] edition of *Volume Four* [the 1888 *Great Controversy*] came from the press, the new book, *Bible Readings*, was introduced. This book had a great sale, and has been permitted to swallow up every other interest. Canvassers found it an easy book to handle, and **Volume Four was kept out of the field.** I felt that this was not right. I knew that it was not right, because it was not in harmony with the light which God had given me."—*B.L., 1890.*

"I do not demerit *Bible Reading*. It is a book which will do a great amount of good, but it can never take the place the Lord designed that *Volume Four* should have in the world and among our people. **I have spread before them the light of heaven in that book.**"—*E-25a, 1889.*

"The keeping of *Great Controversy* from the field has done a work that men will have to answer for in the judgment."—*Manuscript 64, 1894.*

"For nearly two years the book [*Great Controversy*] containing warnings and instructions from the Lord, given especially for this time, has been lying in our publishing houses, and **no one feels the necessity or the importance of bringing it to the people. Brethren, how long am I to wait for you to get the burden?** Now *Volume One*, or *Patriarchs and Prophets*, is ready for circulation, but even for this book I would not allow *Volume Four* to remain longer as a light under a bushel. I am in sore distress of mind, but who of my brethren cares for this?

"Has the Lord moved upon my mind to prepare this work to be sent everywhere, and is He moving upon my brethren to devise plans which shall bar the way so that the light which He has given me shall be hid in our publishing houses instead of shining forth to all who will receive it? . . . If the Lord has light for His people, who shall put up barriers so that the light shall not reach them?"—*B.L., 1890.*

"Light was in that book which came from Heaven; but what account will those men have to give to God for the little faith and confidence manifested in that book that the warnings should not come to the people when they should have had them."—*O-55, 1894.*

THE 1911 EDITION

"A few day ago I received a copy of the new edition of the book, *Great Controversy*, recently printed at Mountain View, and also a similar copy printed at Washington. The book pleases me. I have spent many hours looking through its pages, and I see that the publishers have done good work.

"The book, *Great Controversy*, I appreciate above silver or gold, and I greatly desire that it shall come before the people. While writing the manuscript of *Great Controversy* I was often conscious of the presence of the angels of God. And many times the scenes about which I was writing were presented to me anew in visions of the night, so that they were fresh and vivid in my mind."—*W-55, 1911 (Letter 56, 1911, the second of the above two paragraphs is in Colporteur Ministry, p.*

128).

“Recently it was necessary for the book to be reset because the electrotype plates were badly worn. It has cost me much to have this done, but I do not complain, for whatever the cost may be, I regard the edition with great satisfaction.”—*W-56, 1911 (Letter 56, 1911)*.

Several facts stand out: (1) *Great Controversy* is the most important book for these last days, (2) Satan hates it more than any other book. (3) It has been the most reviled and slandered of any of the Spirit of Prophecy books. Why?

Here are more facts: (1) All editions of *Great Controversy* are equally inspired. (2) Give the book to the people, in whichever edition you prefer—but give it to them. (3) The book provides the reader with the issues and warnings he needs just now. The deceptions and events of the future are unveiled, and—before he lays down the book at its last page—the book brings him personally to the brink of eternity to make his own life decision.

CONCLUSION

“The results of the circulation of this book [*Great Controversy*] are not to be judged by what now appears. By reading it some souls will be aroused and will have courage to unite themselves at once with those who keep the commandments of God. But **a much larger number of those who read it will not take their position until they see the very events taking place that are foretold in it.** The fulfillment of some of the predictions will inspire faith that others will also come to pass, and **when the earth is lightened with the glory of the Lord in the closing work, many souls will take their position on the commandments of God as the result of this agency.**”—*Manuscript 31, 1890 (Colporteur Ministry, pp. 128-129)*.

“As the spirit of God has opened to my mind the great truths of His word, and the scenes of the past and the future, I have been bidden to make known to others that which has thus been revealed—**to trace the history of the controversy in past ages, and especially so to shed a light on the fast-approaching struggle of the future.**”—*Great Controversy, 10-11*.

BOOKS DEFENDING ELLEN WHITE

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