

**Hidden Treasures/
Living Truth
Bible Studies**

**MESSENGER
OF THE END**

Introduction: The nineteenth and twentieth century have seen many claiming the gift of prophecy. Some say that they receive their revelation from God; others assure their followers that their messages come from spirit beings; still others claim that the revelations are the result of a natural power within themselves. But do their lives confirm their words?

1. What did Jesus say would be one of the tests of a true prophet? Matthew 7:15, 16

When we look at the Scriptural definition of a prophet, Ellen G. White stands apart from others claiming supernatural gifts. Who was this woman? What was the tenor of her life? Did she really fulfill the tests of a prophet?

Unquestionably, Ellen G. White was the best known of all Seventh-day Adventists, not only because she was endowed with the gift of prophecy, but also because her influence was so strong in building a dynamic world movement.

Mrs. White was born Ellen Harmon on November 26, 1827. At the age of nine, she was dealt a cruel blow to the head when a classmate threw a stone at her resulting in serious injury. This injury left her an invalid for many years, and because of this, only finished three years of school.

She was a young, sickly woman in her teens when she participated in the Millerite movement of the 1840's (founded by the preaching of William Miller concerning 1844 and the second coming of Jesus). Like thousands of others, she was deeply disappointed when Christ did not come, but her faith never wavered. She joined with the original pioneers of what is now known as the Seventh-day Adventist church, men like Joseph Bates, James White (who later became her husband); and others. In the process, she was called of God to be His prophet and was very instrumental in the establishment of the remnant church.

Shortly after her first vision in 1844, Ellen Harmon was instructed by the angel of the Lord to write what was shown to her. She said, 'Early in my public labors, I was bidden by the Lord, 'Write, write the things that are revealed to you.' At the time this message came to me, I could not hold my pen steady. My physical condition made it impossible for me to write. That's how bad her physical condition was, even at the age of 17. But she went on to say, 'But again came the word, 'Write the things that are revealed to you.' I obeyed; and as a result it was not long before I could write page after page with comparative ease. Who told

me what to write? Who steadied my right hand and made it possible for me to use a pen? – It was the Lord.” Review and Herald, June 14, 1906.

Her first prophetic revelation was followed by about 2,000 others – in the form of prophetic dreams of the night or visions of the day. The last known vision concerned the spiritual welfare of the young people – the date: March 3, 1915. During the seventy years of her public ministry between 1844 and 1915, she wrote approximately 25 million words of 100,000 pages of handwritten material, making her the most prolific woman writer in history.

Mrs. White’s writings were not an addition to the Bible, but were to direct the people to the Bible. All through her life she exalted the Bible. ‘I commend to you, dear reader, the Word of God as the rule of your faith and practice. By that Word we are to be judged. God has, in that Word, promised to give visions in the ‘LAST DAYS’; not for a new rule of faith but for the comfort of His people, and to correct those who err from Bible truth.” Early Writings, p. 78

Many were given the freedom to examine Ellen White while she was in a vision. Those who personally witnessed the visions carefully observed what took place. George I. Butler described a vision of 1874: “The time Mrs. White is in this condition has varied from fifteen minutes to one hundred and eighty, During this time the heart and pulse continue to beat, the eyes are always wide open, and seem to be gazing at some far-distant object, and are never fixed on any person or thing in the room...While she is in vision, her breathing entirely ceases. No breath ever escapes her nostrils or lips when in this condition...

“Peculiar circumstances in the lives of individuals, whom she never before had seen in the flesh, and secrets hidden from the nearest acquaintances, have been made known by her when she had no personal knowledge of the parties other than by vision. Often she has been in an audience where she was wholly unacquainted with the individuals composing it, when she would get up and point out person after person whom she never had seen before, in the flesh, and tell them what they had done, and reprove their sins.” G. I. Butler, Review and Herald, June 9, 1874

Over the years, many physicians carefully examined her while in vision. One was Dr. Brown of Parkville, Michigan, a medical doctor who was also a spiritualist. Hearing of her visions, he declared that they were from spiritualism, and that if he could examine her in vision, he could control her through her spirit guide. “Before he had half completed his examination, he turned deathly pale, and shook like an aspen leaf. Elder (James) White said, ‘Will the doctor report her condition?’ He replied, ‘She does not breathe,’ and rapidly made his way to the door. Those at the door who knew of his boasting said, ‘Go back, and do as you said you would, bring that woman out of the vision.’ In great agitation he grasped the knob of the door, but was not permitted to open it until inquiry was made by those near the door, ‘Doctor, what is it?’ He replied, “God only knows; let me out of this house!” Statement by J. N. Loughborough

Mrs. White’s early counsels in the area of church organization and administration, and in the health and medical evangelism fields, the educational and publishing work, are well known. Her many books preserve those messages for us today. Her writings are not outmoded but up-to-date. Where her counsels have been implemented, the results have confirmed their divine origin.

In 1959, Dr. Florence Stratemeyer, a leading educator and faculty member of the Department of Education at Teacher's College, Columbia University, said: "Recently the book Education by Ellen G. White has been brought to my attention. Written at the turn of the century, this volume was more than fifty years ahead of its times. And I was surprised to learn that it was written by a woman with but three years of schooling.

"The breadth and depth of its philosophy amazed me. Its concept of balanced education, harmonious development, and of thinking and acting on principle are advanced education concepts." Dr. Florence Stratemeyer, Review and Herald, August 6, 1959

Mrs. White's husband died August 6, 1881. For nearly 34 years she was a widow. She labored two years in Europe, from the summer of 1885 to the summer of 1887. She did pioneer work in Australia from 1891 to 1900. She was truly a woman who belonged to the world and not just simply to a small group. Though she was an American, she conceived that her mission was to the world.

Dudley M. Canright, a prominent speaker in the Seventh-day Adventist Church, said the following about Ellen G. White: "As to the Christian character of Sister White, I beg leave to say that I think I know something about it. I have been acquainted with Sister White for eighteen years, more than half the history of our people...I know Sister White to be an unassuming, modest, kindhearted, noble woman. These traits in her character are not simply put on and cultivated, but they spring gracefully and easily from her natural disposition...She is ever looking after the needy, the destitute, and the suffering, providing for them, and pleading their cause. I have never formed an acquaintance with any persons who so constantly have the fear of God before them. Nothing is undertaken without earnest prayer to God...

"One thing I have remarked, and that is, that the most bitter opponents of the visions of Sister White admit that she is a Christian...They are not able to put their finger upon a single stain in all her life, nor an immoral sentence in all her writings. They have to admit that much of her writings are excellent, and whoever would live out all she says would be a good Christian, sure of heaven. This is passing strange if she is a tool of the devil, inspired by Satan, or if her writings are immoral or the vagaries of her own mind." D. M. Canright, Review and Herald, April 26, 1877.

Two years later, D. M. Canright turned against her when she rebuked him for pride and wrong ambition. He wrote articles attacking her as a vicious person and was her most fervent enemy for many years. But at the end, even he admitted the authenticity of her life. The following tells of Canright at her funeral on July 24, 1915, 28 years after he first declared her to be of the devil. "even the bitterest critic – one who had left the movement and turned to write many attacks upon the work of his former associates, and especially upon the Spirit of Prophecy in the church – paid tribute to a noble Christian life. He came to Mrs. White's funeral. His brother...told us of D. M. Canright's emotion as they walked together by the casket, and others of the congregation, at the close of the funeral service. They came back to their pew, and stood while the great congregation was still filing past. 'Then...my brother (D. M. Canright) suggested that we go down again, to take one more look. We joined the passing throng, and again stood by the bier. My brother rested his hand upon the side of the casket, and with tears rolling down his cheeks, he said brokenly,

“There is a noble Christian woman gone!” W. A. Spicer, quoted in Spirit of Prophecy Treasure Chest, p. 186

We have seen a most remarkable revelation of the life of Ellen G. White. Several biographies have been written about her, all attesting to the same thing: that she met every possible test of being a true prophet with flying colors and without any doubt or reservation. She served God with all of her heart, mind and strength. She wavered not under the most cruel adversity and stayed strong even in the midst of outright apostasy. God was her source, and truth was her life and what flowed from her pen under inspiration needs to be carefully listened to and applied in the lives of every believer. We would suggest you read Steps to Christ as written by her. If you apply the instructions given by her in that book, you will never be the same and will have no issue with Ellen G. White as the prophet of God in these last days for the remnant church. Will you start today?

MY RESPONSE TO CHRIST IS

YES

UNDECIDED

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