

## Newsletter: #4

### Ellen White and 1844

If you have read the previous three newsletters about Daniel 8:19, 13, 14 and “The Time of Jesus’ Ministry” you have seen how the core of Daniel 8 refers to Daniel’s Messiah. Daniel 8 focuses on Jesus’ first coming just like Daniel 9 does.

#### **A Testimony**

You may be wondering saying: Why is it so different from what I have been taught before? Yes, it is different. I shared it with you because God asked me to. He opened my eyes to see the beautiful and simple message in this prophecy that we rate as “difficult.” Let me share with you how it all happened.

In August of 1997 I opened my Bible to Daniel 12 and cried out in a serious prayer to the Lord. I told God in my prayer that I had read 10 books on Daniel 10-12 and that the 10 authors all portrayed the “bad guy” in Daniel 11 differently. The last book I read made me feel really disillusioned.

The author of that book believed that the evil emperor in Daniel 11 was Communism. But in a foot note I read a different explanation. There it said that communism just fell so therefore the author changed his mind to believe it was Saddam Hussein.

The problem is that just a few years later, Saddam Hussein is also gone! What do we do? Well, many go to the news media to try to find somebody else who fits the description. Personally I believe that is exactly how we should NOT interpret prophecy.

#### **God’s Answer to My Prayer**

God surprised me by answering my prayer. He spoke three very short sentences to me. The first was: “Write it down!” What should I write? How would I find time to write? I had a fulltime job as a cardiologist at Loma Linda University Medical Center. I also had a wife and two young sons. I said “Yes” to God, if He would promise that my relationship with my wife and my boys would not suffer. God kept His promise. During this time our family enjoyed special blessings.

Three months later my book on Daniel and the Visions was completed. This was the most inspiring time of my life. Before I sat down to write I had no clue as to what would come. No thoughts or concepts were in my head. No new understanding had come to me. But as soon as I put my hands on the keyboard it was there. I couldn’t write fast enough. This happened every time.

The journey started with Daniel 12:1 and God took me through the chapter verse by verse. Most of the time, I was given full understanding as I wrote. Sometimes I had to read several verses before the concept that God gave me became clear. When I came to the end of the chapter I asked the Lord where to go next. The answer was Daniel 9:1.

Soon Daniel 9, 10 and 11 were finished and with tears in my eyes and incredible joy I saw that the last verse of Daniel 11 fit perfectly into Daniel 12:1. After that I continued with Daniel 8 and lastly the rest of the prophecies in the Aramaic portion of Daniel, i.e. chapters 2, 4 and 7.

#### **God’s Word**

Back to the beginning of my testimony: God had asked me to write. The second thing He said was to “Forget all that you have learned.” That was easy. I didn’t know much. That is why I had prayed in the first place. I

realized that God needed me to start with a “clean” slate. The house He was going to build needed a new foundation. Jesus says that new wine needs to be put into new wineskins. Otherwise both the new wine and the old wineskin will be destroyed. Afterwards I can see that not everything that I had been taught on these matters was wrong but it was extremely important that I leave all preconceived ideas and predetermined thoughts behind to ONLY listen to God.

The third thing God said was to “Always give Him the glory and honor.” That is what I am doing by telling you the story of how this all came about. God gave it to me! It is not my product. Now, I am not telling you to blindly believe everything I say. I am encouraging you to be a Berean and to prayerfully study the Word for yourself. The Holy Spirit of God will lead you into all Truth. Thank you for bearing with me through this rather lengthy introduction. I felt it necessary to give you my testimony.

### **What about Ellen White?**

But now you say: What should I do with this new message? God does not change! The understanding that He gave to Ellen White cannot be ignored or wrong! You are right. God does not change. The rest of this newsletter will focus on what E.G. White has written on the topic of 1844. I would like to show you what I have found and then let you decide what you want to do with it.

I have a CD with all E. G. White’s published writings. I have studied it carefully. If you also have, I’m sure you have noticed the following: If Mrs. White used a certain word or phrase, let’s say 100 times in all her writings, this word does not occur in 100 different circumstances with different expressions. No, usually we find a handful of examples that are repeated over and over again. In reality you may find one expression used let’s say 25 times, the second maybe 20, the third 15 times and so on. The reason for this is obvious. Once she had understood something that she wanted to convey, she repeated it over and over again in different books and letters.

Quite often Ellen White used phrases like “I was shown,” “I saw,” “the Lord showed me,” etc. Because of the understanding God had given me regarding the 2,300 evening-and-morning-prophecy, I was especially interested in finding out, if Ellen White had used any of the phrases I just mentioned in conjunction with the year 1844. I made some interesting observations. The year “1844” is found 610 times on the CD with E. G. White’s writings. Only 66 of these 610 are in conjunction with the phrases “I was shown,” etc. It gets more interesting:

- 55 of these 66 have nothing to do with the interpretation of Daniel 8.
- 7 of the 66 proclaim the 1844 “Shut-Door-Message.”

Our pioneers held on to the “Shut-Door-Message” for a couple of years until they realized that God continued to save people. Our church has since officially disregarded the “Shut-Door-Message” in spite of the fact that Mrs. White used the words “I was shown,” etc. The door of salvation is still open! Praise God!

- 4 quotations deal with the understanding of the Daniel 8 prophecy.

Thus, Mrs. White uses the phrase “I was shown” or “I saw,” etc. only in 4 instances out of 610 when speaking about 1844. That is remarkable! Furthermore, most of the time when she mentions 1844 she writes in the third person, like: *They* understood, *It* was understood, *they* believed, etc. It appears that Ellen White put herself outside *their* understanding of 1844 many times.

## Editing

As you have seen in the previous newsletters, it is Jesus Christ and the cross that fulfill the prophecy of Daniel 8. (Not the Advent movement!). I want to show you something very interesting that I found in one of the “1844 quotes” on my E. G. White CD. Before we read it I want to make you aware of how beautifully she describes what took place at the cross. Let’s read:

*“As Jesus died on Calvary, He cried, "It is finished," and the veil of the temple was rent in twain, from the top to the bottom. This was to show that the services of the earthly sanctuary were forever finished, and that God would no more meet with the priests in their earthly temple, to accept their sacrifices. The blood of Jesus was then shed, which was to be offered by Himself in the heavenly sanctuary. **As the priest entered the most holy once a year to cleanse the earthly sanctuary, so Jesus entered the most holy of the heavenly, at the end of the 2300 days of Daniel 8, in 1844, to make a final atonement for all who could be benefited by His mediation, and thus to cleanse the sanctuary.**” {EW 253.1} (Bold print is mine)*

All fits to the cross – except the phrase “in 1844” which to me looks like an edited insert. I was intrigued by this and decided to contact the White Estate to ask if anything had been edited in this particular paragraph. They kindly responded that yes, editing takes place, but they did not answer specifically regarding this quotation. I leave it to you, dear reader, to decide if this is the normal way of writing or if this is an example of editing by someone else at a later point. (Usually the White Estate clearly shows its comments by adding capitalized text within brackets.)

I personally am convinced that it is an edited paragraph and I will believe so until proven wrong. Without “in 1844” it makes perfect sense and clearly refers to what Christ accomplished at the cross. Below is another quotation with the year 1844 where the same editing issue seems probable, actually quite obvious.

*“In the ministration of the earthly tabernacle, which served "unto the example and shadow of heavenly things," the holy of holies was opened only upon the great day of atonement, the typical day of judgment, set apart for the cleansing of the sanctuary. Therefore the announcement, "The temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament," points to the opening of the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary, **at the end of the twenty-three hundred days,--in 1844,--as Christ entered there to perform the closing work** of the atonement. Those who by faith followed their great High Priest, as he entered upon his ministry in the most holy place, beheld the ark of the testament.” {RH, November 9, 1905 par. 10} (Bold print is mine)*

The way of writing “,--in 1844,--“ is certainly not commonly used by Ellen White. I will be brave to say that no one writes that way. The use of both comma and hyphen around “1844” is therefore a strong indication of editing done by someone else at a later time. Without this insert, the sentence makes perfect sense.

## The 1843 Chart

When it comes to the 1843 chart there are more interesting things to discover. There are a total of 152 quotations from the CD with Ellen White referring to 1843. Of these 152 quotations:

- 121 have nothing to do with the 2,300-day prophecy.
- 25 refer to the 2,300-day prophecy
- 1 uses the phrase “I saw”.
- 6 quotations are in capitalized letters indicating that they are written by the White Estate.

In 2 instances of 152 Mrs. White says that God had “provided” the 1843 chart. In another one, quoted below, she says that “God was in” the proclamation of 1843. Thus I found 4 quotations where she wants us to see the “stamp of God.” Let’s read this one:

*“I saw that God was in the proclamation of the time in 1843. It was His design to arouse the people and bring them to a testing point, where they should decide for or against the truth. {EW 232.2}(Bold print is mine)*

Here she “saw” something that no Adventist believes in any longer. Let’s read one more statement and immediately you will find that we have more problems.

*“The Lord showed me that the 1843 chart was directed by his hand, and that no part of it should be altered; that the figures were as he wanted them. That his hand was over and hid a mistake in some of the figures, so that none could see it, until his hand was removed.” {RH, November 1, 1850 par. 10} (Bold print is mine)*

Firstly she says that the Lord had shown her that the 1843 chart was directed by God’s hand. With this statement she gives the chart her approval and uses God as the proof. Secondly, “no part of it should be altered.” If the “figures were as he wanted them,” it is to say that the figures were correct and that nothing should be changed.

This stands in sharp contrast to the next sentence where God used His hand to hide “a mistake in some of the figures.” Please notice, figures in plural! Up to this point I have not found any instance in which Ellen White tells us what this mistake was. Furthermore, she was not the one who realized the mistake in the 1843 chart:

*“Jesus and all the heavenly host looked with sympathy and love upon those who had with sweet expectation longed to see Him whom their souls loved. Angels were hovering around them, to sustain them in the hour of their trial. Those who had neglected to receive the heavenly message were left in darkness, and God’s anger was kindled against them, because they would not receive the light, which He had sent them from heaven. Those faithful, disappointed ones, who could not understand why their Lord did not come, were not left in darkness. Again **they** were led to their Bibles to search the prophetic periods. **The hand of the Lord was removed from the figures, and the mistake was explained. They saw that the prophetic periods reached to 1844, and that the same evidence which they had presented to show that the prophetic periods closed in 1843, proved that they would terminate in 1844. Light from the Word of God shone upon their position, and they discovered a tarrying time — ‘Though it [the vision] tarry, wait for it.’ In their love for Christ’s immediate coming, they had overlooked the tarrying of the vision, which was calculated to manifest the true waiting ones. Again they had a point of time. Yet I saw that many of them could not rise above their severe disappointment to possess that degree of zeal and energy, which had marked their faith in 1843.” {EW 236.1} (Bold print and under linings are mine)***

## Summary

- I find no proof in Ellen White’s writings that our understanding of 1844 is a message from God!
- Mrs. White claimed divine support both for the 1843 chart (4 times) and for 1844 (4 times)!
- The same phrases (about “God showing” her) are used when she proclaimed the “Shut-Door-Message (7 times).” Today our church has understood that this message was NOT from God.
- The 1844-interpretation appears to have come from the pioneers and not from Ellen White!

I want to conclude by saying that I TRULY believe that Ellen White was a prophet of God. BUT I cannot emphasize strongly enough that we need to test everything that we read with the Bible. That is true for Ellen

White's writings as well as for anyone's writings. Ellen White herself very clearly emphasized how important this is:

*“God will have a people upon the earth to maintain the Bible, and the Bible only, as the standard of all doctrines, and the basis of all reform.” {GC 595.2}*

We should be thankful for the many things that Ellen White understood, but we should never belittle the Word of God! Jesus Christ Himself IS the WORD OF GOD and He was very hard on human tradition, Mark 7:6-13. Everything THAT IS IN HARMONY with the Word of God IS FROM GOD. Anything that is NOT IN HARMONY with the Word of God is NOT OF GOD. This is a very simple rule that fits in all circumstances.

***“Test all things; hold fast what is good” (1 Thess.5:21)***

Toby Joretteg, MD, PhD  
Loma Linda  
[www.TobyJoretteg.com](http://www.TobyJoretteg.com)