

AS IT WAS IN THE DAYS...

A LOOK AT HOW GOD'S PROPHETS ARE REJECTED



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As it was in the days...

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“In every age and in every land, God's messengers have been called upon to meet bitter opposition from those who deliberately chose to reject the light of heaven. Often, by misrepresentation and falsehood, the enemies of the gospel have seemingly triumphed, closing the doors by which God's messengers might gain access to the people. But these doors cannot remain forever closed, and often, as God's servants have returned after a time to resume their labors, the Lord has wrought mightily in their behalf, enabling them to establish memorials to the glory of His name.” *Acts of the Apostles*, p. 179.2

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Introduction

“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!” - Matthew 23:37¹

The history of the Jewish nation is a sad one. How many times did the people of God turn away from Him? How many times did God send faithful prophets to call His erring children back to Him only for them to be killed or rejected? Even as Jesus wept over the beloved city Jerusalem because of its coming destruction, the church leaders were planning to kill their Redeemer, the one they had waited so long for!

God has always had His messengers to speak warning, comfort and rebuke to mankind. However, as we study the lives of some of these messengers, we learn their messages were rejected by the majority.

Paul writes “Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.”² When we read of the many instances where the Jews rejected God’s prophets, we need to ask ourselves, do we want to make the same mistake they made? How many of us want to stand at the last day and be found guilty of rejecting Jesus like the Jews rejected Him?

If we are going to stand when everyone else falls, then we are going to have to listen to the voice of Jesus. So hard can our hearts become, that we are told:

“Then I saw that the judgments of the Almighty were speedily coming, and I begged of the angel to speak in his language to the people. Said he, ‘All the thunders and lightnings of Mount Sinai would not move those who will not be moved by the plain truths of the Word of God, **neither would an angel’s message awake them.**” - *Early Writings*, p. 50.3

Sadly, this prediction is being fulfilled today! Just as the Jews were hardened in their opinions and were lacking in faith, so many of us today are guilty of the same sin.

¹ All Bible quotations are from the King James Version (KJV) unless stated otherwise

² 1 Corinthians 10:11

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This book was written to reveal some of the different ways God's prophets have been rejected, particularly by His professed people. It is our hope that it will serve as a warning to us so that we do not follow in the path of the Jews in rejecting one of His more recent messengers.

PART I - How God's prophets were treated in the past

1. As it was in the days of Noah

“And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all.” - Luke 17:26, 27

Often preachers use this verse to bring to our mind the condition of the world when Jesus returns. The first thing we think of is the complete corruption of mankind as the Bible tells us:

“And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them.” - Genesis 6:5-7

How incredibly wicked the world must have been for God to have said He regretted He made man. God had originally created mankind righteous and innocent. He created us to love and serve Him because He is a God of love and mercy, but not long after Adam sinned, mankind was so corrupted that God had no choice but to destroy all that were living on the earth.

According to what Jesus said, the world in the last days will be in the same condition. Even now we can see the evidences of this. How many people are there earnestly seeking a relationship with God? Although Jesus probably had this thought uppermost in his mind when He predicted the condition of the world at His Second Coming, there is another important parallel that we often miss in our study of Noah's day which is relevant to this study.

Noah was a righteous man who loved his Lord. In a generation that was so wicked and perverse, God had someone who was not only faithful, but someone He could use as a spokesperson to the wicked world. We are told concerning Noah:

“Many cast aside the fear of God and trampled upon His commandments. But there were a few that did righteousness, who feared

and honored their Creator. Noah and his family were among the righteous few.” - *Conflict and Courage*, p. 36.4

“Noah preached to the people of his time that God would give them one hundred and twenty years in which to repent of their sins and find refuge in the ark, but they refused the gracious invitation. Abundant time was given them to turn from their sins, overcome their bad habits, and develop righteous characters. But inclination to sin, though weak at first with many, strengthened through repeated indulgence and hurried them on to irretrievable ruin. The merciful warning of God was rejected with sneers, with mockery and derision; and they were left in darkness to follow the course that their sinful hearts had chosen. But their unbelief did not hinder the predicted event. It came, and great was the wrath of God which was seen in the general ruin.” - *Lift Him Up*, p. 365.2

Prevailing sins before the flood

Before we get to this important point alluded to in the previous section, let us first review some of the most prevailing sins that brought about the destruction of the world in Noah’s day:

1. Sexual sins including homosexuality

“Polygamy was practiced at an early date. It was one of the sins that brought the wrath of God upon the antediluvian world. . . . It was Satan’s studied effort to pervert the marriage institution, to weaken its obligations and lessen its sacredness; for in no surer way could he deface the image of God in man and open the door to misery and vice.” - *Conflict and Courage*, p. 36.5

“Is there not enough transpiring about us to show us the dangers that beset our path? Everywhere are seen wrecks of humanity, broken-down family altars, broken-up families. There is a strange abandonment of principle, the standard of morality is lowered, and the earth is fast becoming a Sodom. **The Sodomitish practices which brought the judgment of God upon the world, and caused it to be deluged with water**, and which caused Sodom to be destroyed by fire, are fast increasing. We are nearing the end. God has borne long with the perversity of mankind, but their punishment is no less certain. Let those who profess to be the light of the world, depart from all iniquity.--RH Nov. 10, 1884.

Impurity is today widespread, even among the professed followers of Christ. Passion is unrestrained; the animal propensities are gaining strength by indulgence, while the moral powers are constantly becoming weaker. . . . The sins that destroyed the antediluvians and the cities of the plain exist today--not merely in heathen lands, not only among popular professors of Christianity, **but with some who profess to be looking for the coming of the Son of man.** If God should present these sins before you as they appear in His sight, you would be filled with shame and terror.--5T 218." - *Testimonies on Sexual Behavior, Adultery, and Divorce*, p. 121.1

"We have the history of the antediluvians and of the [inhabitants of the] cities of the plains, whose course of conduct degenerated from lightness and frivolity to debasing sins which called forth the wrath of God in a most dreadful destruction, in order to rid the earth of the curse of their contaminating influence. Inclination and passion bore sway over reason. Self was their god, and the knowledge of the Most High was nearly obliterated through a selfish indulgence of corrupt passions.--Letter 6a, 1888." - *Testimonies on Sexual Behavior, Adultery, and Divorce*, p. 147.1

2. Drunkenness

"The evils that are so apparent at the present time, are the same that brought destruction to the antediluvian world. 'In the days that were before the Flood' one of the prevailing sins was drunkenness. From the record in Genesis we learn that 'the earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence.' Crime reigned supreme; life itself was unsafe. Men whose reason was dethroned by intoxicating drink, thought little of taking the life of a human being." - *Temperance*, p. 25.2

3. Love of money and self

"God bestowed upon these antediluvians many and rich gifts; but they used His bounties to glorify themselves, and turned them into a curse by fixing their affections upon the gifts instead of the Giver. They employed the gold and silver, the precious stones and the choice wood, in the construction of habitations for themselves, and endeavored to excel one another in beautifying their dwellings with the most skillful workmanship. They sought only to gratify the desires of their own proud hearts, and reveled in scenes of pleasure and wickedness. Not desiring to retain God in their knowledge, they soon came to deny His existence. They adored

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nature in place of the God of nature. They glorified human genius, worshiped the works of their own hands, and taught their children to bow down to graven images.” - *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 90.3

“These antediluvians had received many and rich gifts from God; but they used the bounties granted them by Divine Providence to minister to their own selfish desires, and turned them into a curse by fixing their thoughts and affections upon the gifts instead of the Giver. They had goodly trees of great variety and almost without limit; but of these they made temples, where they reveled in scenes of pleasure and wickedness. Gold, silver, and precious stones were in abundance; but they used these also to gratify the desires of their own proud hearts.” - *Bible Echo and Signs of the Times*, July 1, 1887 par. 5

4. God’s professed people joining with the world

“The Scriptures briefly state the reason for the prevailing iniquity in Noah’s day. The sons of God married the daughters of men. **Those who still cherished the knowledge of God united themselves with the ungodly and corrupt, and as a result became assimilated to them in character.** The message of warning would have been received by a larger number, had it **not been for their connection and association with those who despised and derided the word of God.**” - *The Signs of the Times*, February 16, 1882 par. 8

“Many are eagerly participating in worldly, demoralizing amusements which God’s word forbids. Thus they sever their connection with God and rank themselves with the pleasure lovers of the world. The sins that destroyed the antediluvians and the cities of the plain exist today--not merely in heathen lands, not only among popular professors of Christianity, **but with some who profess to be looking for the coming of the Son of man.** If God should present these sins before you as they appear in His sight, you would be filled with shame and terror.” - *The Adventist Home*, p. 522.2

Every one of those sins listed above is prevalent in our society today and probably more so than in previous generations. There are so many signs in the world that tell us Jesus is coming soon, but sadly the world doesn’t want to know. Even more sad is the reality that those ‘who profess to be looking for the coming of the Son of man’ are uniting with the world. Think about it, at a time when we as Christians should be submitting ourselves in earnest to God,

repenting of our sins and walking in His ways, we are uniting with the world in the way they eat, dress, speak and conduct their lives!

Noah's message rejected

It was a tragedy that God had to destroy the world with the flood because man was so wicked. It was an even greater tragedy that no one accepted Noah's message and were saved from the coming destruction apart from his own family!

The Bible tells us that Noah was a "preacher of righteousness."³ God in his great love to man raised up Noah to warn the people of his time that He would destroy the world with a flood. Noah faithfully preached this message for 120 years. One would think that after preaching for so long he would have had some who accepted his message and entered the ark with him. But the record states that only Noah and his immediate family were saved. If there was anyone that has ever lived whose labors did not achieve anything it was Noah's. We can only imagine how he must have felt as he preached day after day without any lasting results. It is interesting to note, and we will look at this point again in more detail later in this book, that as Noah preached:

"Many at first appeared to receive the warning; yet they did not turn to God with true repentance. They were unwilling to renounce their sins. During the time that elapsed before the coming of the Flood, their faith was tested, and they failed to endure the trial. Overcome by the prevailing unbelief, they finally joined their former associates in rejecting the solemn message. **Some were deeply convicted, and would have heeded the words of warning; but there were so many to jest and ridicule, that they partook of the same spirit, resisted the invitations of mercy, and were soon among the boldest and most defiant scoffers;** for none are so reckless and go to such lengths in sin as do those who have once had light, but have resisted the convicting Spirit of God." - *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 95.2

Please remember that quote, because it is very relevant for us today. Just as Noah's message was rejected in his time, so it will be rejected in our day.

"Of the vast population of the earth before the Flood, only eight souls believed and obeyed God's word through Noah. For a hundred and twenty

³ 2 Peter 2:5

years the preacher of righteousness warned the world of the coming destruction, but his message was rejected and despised. **So it will be now.** Before the Lawgiver shall come to punish the disobedient, transgressors are warned to repent, and return to their allegiance; but with the majority these warnings will be in vain.” - *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 102.2

“The power of God that wrought with His servant was felt by those who heard. Some gave heed to the warning, and renounced their sins; but the multitudes mocked at the solemn message, and went on more boldly in their evil ways. The servants of God are to bear a similar message to the world in the last days, and it will also be received with unbelief and mockery. **The antediluvian world rejected the warning words of him who walked with God. So will the last generation make light of the warnings of the Lord’s messengers.**” - *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 86.3

How was Noah and his message treated?

Remember Jesus said, “And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man.”⁴ Inspiration reveals just how Noah’s message was rejected, and we can see the same thing happening today, even among God’s own professed people!

1. Called a fanatic

“When great and wise men had proved to their satisfaction that it was impossible for the world to be destroyed by water, when the fears of the people were quieted, **when all regarded Noah’s prophecy as a delusion, and looked upon him as a fanatic**--then it was that God’s time had come. ‘The fountains of the great deep’ were ‘broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened,’ and the scoffers were overwhelmed in the waters of the Flood. With all their boasted philosophy, men found too late that their wisdom was foolishness, that the Lawgiver is greater than the laws of nature, and that Omnipotence is at no loss for means to accomplish His purposes. ‘As it was in the days of Noah,’ even thus shall it be in the days when the Son of man is revealed.’ Luke 17:26, 30.” - *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 103.3

“For one hundred twenty years He sent them warnings through His servant Noah. But they used the probation so graciously granted them in

⁴ Luke 17:26

ridiculing Noah. They caricatured him and criticized him. They laughed at him for his peculiar earnestness and intense feeling in regard to the judgments which he declared God would surely fulfill. They talked of science and of the laws controlling nature. Then they held a carnival over the words of Noah, **calling him a crazy fanatic**. God's patience was exhausted. He said to Noah, "The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them, and, behold, I will destroy them from the earth (MS 29, 1890)." - *S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, Vol. 1, p. 1090.7

2. Scorned the message and messenger

"Thus it was that the wise men of this world talked of science and the fixed laws of nature, and declared that there could be no variation in these laws, and that this message of Noah could not possibly be true. The talented men of Noah's time set themselves in league against God's will and purpose and **scorned the message and the messenger that He had sent**. . . . Noah could not controvert their philosophies, or refute the claims of science so called; but he could proclaim the word of God; for he knew it contained the infinite wisdom of the Creator, and, as he sounded it everywhere, it lost none of its force and reality because men of the world treated him with ridicule and contempt." - *Reflecting Christ*, p. 323.4

3. Disregarded and mocked the message

"Many who hear the message--by far the greatest number--will not credit the solemn warning. Many will be found disloyal to the commandments of God, which are a test of character. The Lord's servants will be called enthusiasts. **Ministers will warn the people not to listen to them. Noah received the same treatment** while the Spirit of God was urging him to give the message, whether men would hear or whether they would forbear.--TM 233 (1895)." - *Last Day Events*, p. 210.2

"The inhabitants of the antediluvian world had the warning given them prior to their overthrow; but the warning was not heeded. **They refused to listen to the words of Noah; they mocked at his message.** (Review and Herald, Nov. 1, 1906)." - *Lift Him Up*, p. 371.3

4. Rejected with sneers, mockery and derision

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“Noah preached to the people of his time that God would give them one hundred and twenty years in which to repent of their sins and find refuge in the ark, but they refused the gracious invitation. Abundant time was given them to turn from their sins, overcome their bad habits, and develop righteous characters. But inclination to sin, though weak at first with many, strengthened through repeated indulgence and hurried them on to irretrievable ruin. The merciful warning of God **was rejected with sneers, with mockery and derision**; and they were left in darkness to follow the course that their sinful hearts had chosen. But their unbelief did not hinder the predicted event. It came, and great was the wrath of God which was seen in the general ruin.” - *Lift Him Up*, p. 365.2

5. Was jested and scoffed at

“The message of Noah was to him a reality. **Amid the scoffs and jeers of the world**, he was an unbending witness for God. His meekness and righteousness were in bright contrast to the revolting crimes, intrigue, and violence continually practiced around him. A power attended his words; **for it was the voice of God to man through His servant**.--Signs of the Times, April 1, 1886.” - *Reflecting Christ*, p. 322.4

“Noah had faithfully followed the instructions which he had received from God. The ark was finished in every part as the Lord had directed, and was stored with food for man and beast. And now the servant of God made his last solemn appeal to the people. With an agony of desire that words cannot express, he entreated them to seek a refuge while it might be found. Again they **rejected his words, and raised their voices in jest and scoffing**.” - *Conflict and Courage*, p. 39.2

6. Prevented others from believing

“All the men of that generation were not in the fullest sense of the term heathen idolaters. Many had a knowledge of God and His law; but they not only rejected the message of the faithful preacher of righteousness themselves, **but used all their influence to prevent others from being obedient to God**. --Signs of the Times, April 1, 1886.” - *Reflecting Christ*, p. 321.4

Noah endured a heavy burden in his faithless generation. However his faith clung to God for he knew God's voice. When the scientists and philosophers of the day accused him of being a false prophet because his message

contradicted the laws of nature, Noah stood fast. When he was mocked and derided, he set his eyes on the promise of God. When he was called a fanatic, he could look at the way in which God had directed his life and have confidence as he was preparing the ark.

God never removes all the hooks for us to hang our doubts on.⁵ Before the flood it had never rained.⁶ Can you imagine what was said about Noah's message? Just imagine if we lived back then. How would we have reacted? Would we be among the unbelieving class who scoffed at Noah and rejected his message because it had never rained before? What would we have thought after one hundred and nineteen years of listening to Noah preach? Would we have believed he was a false prophet because the world continued on like it had always done? We are sure the devil had many arguments like these to deceive the people. How sad everyone apart from Noah's family was lost in the flood. How will it be with us today?

A warning to us

At a time when the world and a large part of the Christian church scoffs at the record of the flood, we need to not only remember it did happen, but realize it is a warning that we too could end up being like those who rejected God's last warning before He destroyed the world with a flood. As we progress through this book, we will see that the same spirit which led the antediluvians to reject God's message of warning has continued on down through the ages and prevails in our time. How careful we need to be when God sends a messenger to warn His people that we don't repeat the sin of the antediluvians. In fact, God in His mercy has given us the following warning:

“Those who perished in the waters of the flood had an opportunity to escape. All were urged to find refuge in the ark; but the multitudes refused to heed the warning. So when the first angel's message was given, all who heard were invited to receive it, and share the blessing to follow its acceptance; but many scorned and rejected the call. One turned to his farm, another to his merchandise, and they cared for none of these things. Inspiration declares that **when the antediluvians rejected Noah's words, the Spirit of God ceased to strive with them. So when men now despise the warnings which God in mercy sends them, his Spirit after a time ceases to arouse conviction in their hearts. God gives light to be**

⁵ Mind, Character, and Personality, Vol. 2, p. 672.1

⁶ See Genesis 2:5

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cherished and obeyed, not to be despised and rejected. The light which he sends becomes darkness to those who disregard it. When the Spirit of God ceases to impress the truth upon the hearts of men, all hearing is vain, and all preaching also is vain." - *The Spirit of Prophecy* Vol. 4, p. 231.3

Points to remember

1. Jesus said the world will be in the same condition as it was before the flood.
2. The world before the flood was full of wickedness.
3. God's people were joining with the world.
4. God's messenger was rejected by the world and God's people.
5. The message God gave Noah was not an easy one to preach. It had never rained before, so many believed Noah had a false message.
6. Believers in God used their influence to prevent others from accepting Noah's message.

2. The exodus

Few stories in the Bible compare to the mighty works of God in the exodus. The thought of God coming to His people that were held as slaves in captivity and rescuing them with His mighty hand has been a source of inspiration to many throughout the ages. Yet buried in this amazing account are some very pertinent parallels to our day.

Moses was afraid he would be rejected

“And Moses answered and said, But, behold, they will not believe me, nor hearken unto my voice: for they will say, The LORD hath not appeared unto thee.” - Exodus 4:1

How prophetic was Moses' answer to God, not only in his own experience but in many of the prophets lives and also in our own day. When God chooses someone to be His messenger, the devil always raises up opposition against them. We saw this in the previous chapter when the entire the world rejected Noah's message. If a messenger claiming to be from God doesn't have opposition, then they are not from God, because the devil will not allow God's message to be given without fighting against it.

If God had not performed the miracles of the rod turning into a serpent and Moses' hand turning leprous, the children of Israel would not have believed him. Why do we say that? Because in Exodus 4:8 God indicates that if they didn't believe what He said, they would believe after He showed the second sign. What measures God has to take to convince His people He is leading them! Later we will find that Satan had hardened God's people so much to the working of miracles that even when people were raised from the dead they still would not believe.

“And Moses and Aaron went and gathered together all the elders of the children of Israel: And Aaron spake all the words which the LORD had spoken unto Moses, and did the signs in the sight of the people. And the people believed: and when they heard that the LORD had visited the children of Israel, and that he had looked upon their affliction, then they bowed their heads and worshipped.” - Exodus 4:29 - 31

If only the people had continued to believe. But after Pharaoh increased their burdens and punished them, they were ready to reject Moses as God's messenger.

Moses rejected by Israel

“And the officers of the children of Israel did see that they were in evil case, after it was said, Ye shall not minish ought from your bricks of your daily task. And they met Moses and Aaron, who stood in the way, as they came forth from Pharaoh: And they said unto them, The LORD look upon you, and judge; because ye have made our savour to be abhorred in the eyes of Pharaoh, and in the eyes of his servants, to put a sword in their hand to slay us.” - Exodus 5:19-21

This response deeply troubled Moses. He sought the Lord and questioned why He allowed such terrible things to happen to His people. He asked why he was sent and why God didn't deliver His people like He said he would.⁷ You can imagine what the devil was suggesting in their minds. He would have been suggesting Moses was not a prophet of God, because instead of being delivered they were being punished. God then spoke to Moses and told him:

“Wherefore say unto the children of Israel, I am the LORD, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will rid you out of their bondage, and I will redeem you with a stretched out arm, and with great judgments: And I will take you to me for a people, and I will be to you a God: and ye shall know that I am the LORD your God, which bringeth you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. And I will bring you in unto the land, concerning the which I did swear to give it to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob; and I will give it you for an heritage: I am the LORD. And Moses spake so unto the children of Israel: **but they hearkened not unto Moses** for anguish of spirit, and for cruel bondage.” - Exodus 6:6-9

You would think with a message like this, that God's people would be encouraged and comforted. But sadly the Bible tells us the children of Israel did not believe Moses. At a time when God was testing their faith and they had an opportunity to trust in Him, they rejected His messenger. This rejection set the stage for still further rejection of Moses as God brought His people to

⁷ See Exodus 5:22-23

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the borders of Canaan. Surely God was looking upon His people and asking, "Will I find faith in my people?" and sadly the answer was no.

God's messengers are a special people. God chooses them not because they are better than others, but because they believe what God reveals to them even when the evidence around them says the opposite. We need to be very careful when we reject someone who claims God has given them messages to share with His people. The Bible tells us:

"Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!"
- Isaiah 5:20

After the people had rejected Moses, God told him to go to Pharaoh again and tell him to let the children of Israel go. However this time Moses' faith is tested and he says:

"And Moses spake before the LORD, saying, Behold, the children of Israel have not hearkened unto me; how then shall Pharaoh hear me, who am of uncircumcised lips?" - Exodus 6:12

Obviously by the response he gave to God, Moses was feeling quite discouraged. This discouragement shows just how those he was sent to free from captivity were treating him. Yet he still believed God, and the record shows that he continued to go into Pharaoh and declared that God would send plague after plague. How he must have suffered anguish of heart when the people he was sent to lead out of Egypt chose not to believe!

How would we treat a messenger from God today if what they predicted wasn't fulfilled the way we thought it should be fulfilled? Would we like the Jews reject the messenger? The sad truth is that many are guilty of this very sin today.

Points to remember

1. God called Moses to be His messenger and lead His people out of Egypt.
2. Moses was afraid the people would not believe him.
3. The children of Israel first accepted Moses because of the signs.
4. When Pharaoh increased their burdens, the people were ready to blame and reject Moses and would not listen to him anymore.

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5. Moses continued to be God's messenger despite what the people believed and continued to work on behalf of them.

3. A test of faith

“And it came to pass the selfsame day, that the LORD did bring the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt by their armies.” - Exodus 12:51

The mighty works God performed to bring His people out of captivity was a testimony to those who would not listen to Moses. By the time of the tenth plague, the people were obviously listening to Moses as they kept the first Passover and their firstborn were spared. Imagine, what would have happened if they still refused to listen to Moses? When God sends warning of coming disaster and we choose not to listen to it, we suffer the consequences even if we profess to be God’s people.

The Bible tells us that as Israel was led out of Egypt, God went before them in a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night.⁸ This alone should have given encouragement to the children of Israel when they faced trials, but as we will see, they failed to exercise faith in God even with such visible evidences of His presence before them.

Crossing the Red Sea

It was not long before they came to a place where they were trapped with the Red Sea before them and mountains on either side of them. The pillar of cloud and fire was still with them so the children of Israel should have felt safe from all harm. However, the Bible records:

“And when Pharaoh drew nigh, the children of Israel lifted up their eyes, and, behold, the Egyptians marched after them; and they were sore afraid: and the children of Israel cried out unto the LORD. And they said unto Moses, Because there were no graves in Egypt, hast thou taken us away to die in the wilderness? wherefore hast thou dealt thus with us, to carry us forth out of Egypt? **Is not this the word that we did tell thee in Egypt,** saying, Let us alone, that we may serve the Egyptians? For it had been better for us to serve the Egyptians, than that we should die in the wilderness.” - Exodus 14:10-12

⁸ Exodus 13:21

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We can only wonder in amazement at how God's chosen people could have reacted like this. Their response reveals a number of points that are important to our study at hand. These include:

1. They accused Moses of leading them out to the wilderness to die. Essentially they were accusing him of being a false prophet.
2. They regretted listening to Moses.
3. Their original thoughts are revealed when they first rejected Moses in Egypt by saying "Is not this the word that we did tell thee in Egypt...?"
4. Their response revealed their true character. They preferred to be slaves in Egypt where life was more comfortable.
5. Their faith in God was nonexistent, even after they had witnessed all that God had done for them.

We have probably read the story many times and wondered how Israel could have responded the way they did. One would think that after witnessing the ten plagues in Egypt they would have been fully convinced that Moses was God's messenger and God would deliver them.

Notice point three in the list above. When did the Israelites tell Moses they wanted to remain in Egypt and serve their masters? Was it when they were about to leave after the tenth plague? No. It wasn't during any of the plagues that they requested this. It was after Moses first visited Pharaoh and their daily tasks were increased. Right from the beginning Moses was rejected, and this rejection only continued as the children of Israel wandered in the wilderness.

Instead of being led by God, Israel preferred to serve the Egyptians. Already they had forgotten their daily cries to God for deliverance when in captivity. The exodus is a foreshadowing of God leading His people out of sin to live a life of trust and obedience. But how many people in our time, in God's church, want to remain in Egypt? God has raised up messengers to lead His people as Moses led Israel, but how many of God's people are listening? How many are rejecting these messengers even as Moses was rejected?

Points to remember

1. When the children of Israel saw there was no escape from the Egyptian armies, they were ready to put the blame on Moses. Essentially they were rejecting him as God's messenger.
2. The children of Israel admitted that their rejection in Egypt was valid and they should never have listened to Moses.

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3. Not only did they reject Moses, but they rejected God who had led them so far with so many miracles.
4. They preferred to go back to Egypt and remain in bondage.

4. Rebellion at the borders

Can you imagine the excitement of the children of Israel as they reached the borders of Canaan and prepared to take possession of their new home? They had been through a lot since they left Egypt, and now the promise was about to be fulfilled.

God spoke to Moses and instructed him to send a representative from each tribe to search out the land He was about to give them. The spies were in the land forty days before they returned. Upon their arrival, they recounted the wonders they had seen and then ten of the twelve proceeded to explain the difficulties.

“Nevertheless the people be strong that dwell in the land, and the cities are walled, and very great: and moreover we saw the children of Anak there. The Amalekites dwell in the land of the south: and the Hittites, and the Jebusites, and the Amorites, dwell in the mountains: and the Canaanites dwell by the sea, and by the coast of Jordan. And Caleb stilled the people before Moses, and said, Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it. But the men that went up with him said, We be not able to go up against the people; for they are stronger than we. And they brought up an evil report of the land which they had searched unto the children of Israel, saying, The land, through which we have gone to search it, is a land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof; and all the people that we saw in it are men of a great stature.” - Numbers 13:28-32

It was impossible for the Israelites to take possession of the land, but “all things are possible to him that believeth.”⁹ This lesson the Israelites had not yet learned. After hearing the negative report, they responded:

“And all the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron: and the whole congregation said unto them, Would God that we had died in the land of Egypt! or would God we had died in this wilderness! And wherefore hath the LORD brought us unto this land, to fall by the sword, that our wives and our children should be a prey? were it not better for us to return into Egypt? And they said one to another, Let us make a captain, and let us return into Egypt.” - Numbers 14:2-4

⁹ Mark 19:23

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Let's look more closely at these verses for there are some important parallels for us today:

1. By murmuring against Moses they were rejecting him as God's prophet and ultimately they were rejecting God.
2. As in previous occasions, the Israelites had no faith in God.
3. They forgot how they had cried unto God while in bondage and now concluded it would be better to go back to Egypt.
4. They wanted to get rid of Moses once and for all and appoint their own leader, someone who would lead them back to Egypt.

We have already noted in this study that captivity in Egypt is symbolic for us as slaves to sin. If we wanted to go back to our life of sin, who would the leader be that would get us back there? Yes, you guessed it correctly. Satan is ever trying to lead us to sin. Satan had so blinded God's special people that they believed their life in Egypt was something to be desired. They would prefer Satan as their leader!

Many in our day are in a similar situation. Instead of following on by faith to know the Lord and His ways, they would prefer to live a life of ease. When God raises up a messenger with messages of rebuke, repentance and reformation, many think the messenger is too critical and doesn't reveal the love of God. Instead of accepting God's messenger and the cutting truths they bring, many would prefer to listen instead to popular people and in a way, set up their own captain who eventually leads them to ruin.

Not willing to stand by without standing up for the truth, Joshua and Caleb rose to defend God's messenger.

“And Joshua the son of Nun, and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, which were of them that searched the land, rent their clothes: And they spake unto all the company of the children of Israel, saying, The land, which we passed through to search it, is an exceeding good land. If the LORD delight in us, then he will bring us into this land, and give it us; a land which floweth with milk and honey. Only rebel not ye against the LORD, neither fear ye the people of the land; for they are bread for us: their defence is departed from them, and the LORD is with us: fear them not. But all the congregation bade stone them with stones. And the glory of the LORD appeared in the tabernacle of the congregation before all the children of Israel.” - Numbers 14:6-10

When one stands on the side of unpopular truth they can expect to attract the devil's attacks. We are told:

“Let us not feel that we have heavy trials to bear, severe conflicts to endure, in representing unpopular truth. Think of Jesus and what He has suffered for you, and be silent. Even when abused and falsely accused, make no complaint; speak no word of murmuring; let no thought of reproach or discontent enter your mind. Take a straightforward course, ‘having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evil-doers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.’ [1 Peter 2:12.]...” - *Gospel Workers*, p. 372.3

Joshua and Caleb risked their lives for believing God's revealed word through His servant Moses, and they were the only ones of their generation who made it into the Promised Land. What a lesson to us, especially to those who claim they do not have to accept God's modern-day messengers.

Once God's messengers are rejected by the majority, those who continue to believe them are often persecuted. It might be with their life or their reputation. Either way, these faithful people suffer because they know the voice of their Saviour when He speaks. Jesus once said:

“Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also.” - John 15:20

Before finishing this chapter, it's worth mentioning a very important spiritual truth. When the Israelites murmured against Moses, they said it would have been better for them to have died in the wilderness. We should be very careful what we ask for because in verses 26-30 we read:

“And the LORD spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying, How long shall I bear with this evil congregation, which murmur against me? I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel, which they murmur against me. Say unto them, As truly as I live, saith the LORD, as ye have spoken in mine ears, so will I do to you: Your carcasses shall fall in this wilderness; and all that were numbered of you, according to your whole number, from twenty years old and upward, which have murmured against me, Doubtless ye shall not come into the land, concerning which I swear

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to make you dwell therein, save Caleb the son of Jephunneh, and Joshua the son of Nun.” - Numbers 14:26-30

God is leading His people now, but how many of us are like the children of Israel? How many of us are ready to reject God’s messenger and messages? How many are willing to reject the voice of our God and listen to others?

Points to remember

1. God instructed Moses to send twelve spies into the land of Canaan.
2. Ten of the twelve spies brought a negative report back and said they could not take possession of the land.
3. All of Israel began to blame Moses for bringing them out of Egypt to perish in the wilderness. They could not believe Moses was God’s messenger while in this state.
4. The people wanted to appoint themselves a new leader to lead them back to Egypt.
5. Only two faithful men were willing to stand up for Moses and God. These men risked their lives, but by doing so were blessed to be the only ones from their generation to enter the Promised Land.
6. We need to be careful what we ask for. The rebellious people of God thought it would be better to die in the wilderness so that is what God gave them. They never entered the Promised Land.

5. Leadership challenge

Israel's wandering in the wilderness was a long and sad journey, but it need not have been. If they had trusted in God and followed His leading through His messenger, Moses, the journey would have been a lot shorter and easier.

It wasn't long after God had said they would wander in the wilderness forty years because of their rebellion that there arose the question of leadership. We have already seen in the previous chapter that the children of Israel wanted to appoint their own leader. Now arose Korah, Dathan and Abiram to challenge the leadership of Moses and Aaron.

“The former rebellions had been mere popular tumults, arising from the sudden impulse of the excited multitude; but now a deep-laid conspiracy was formed, the result of a **determined purpose to overthrow the authority of the leaders appointed by God Himself.**” - *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p.395.1

“The bestowal upon Aaron and his house of the priestly office, which had formerly devolved upon the first-born son of every family, had given rise to jealousy and dissatisfaction, and for some time Korah had been secretly **opposing the authority of Moses and Aaron**, though he had not ventured upon any open act of rebellion. He finally conceived the bold design of overthrowing both the civil and the religious authority.” - *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p.395.2

The attempt of Korah closely resembled the way Satan tried to overthrow God's government. When Korah eventually revealed his true motives and confronted Moses, we are told:

“They accused Moses of being the cause of their not entering the Promised Land. **They said that God had not dealt with them thus, and that He had not said that they should die in the wilderness, and they would never believe that He had said so; it was Moses who had said this, not the Lord; and it was all arranged by Moses never to bring them to the land of Canaan.** They spoke of his leading them from a land that flowed with milk and honey. In their blind rebellion they forgot their sufferings in Egypt and the desolating plagues brought upon the land. And they now accuse Moses of bringing them from a good land to kill them in the wilderness, that he might be made rich with their possessions.

They inquire of Moses, in an insolent manner, if he thought that none of all the host of Israel were wise enough to understand his motives and discover his imposture, or if he thought they would all submit to have him lead them about like blind men as he pleased, sometimes toward Canaan, then back again toward the Red Sea and Egypt. These words they spoke before the congregation, and they utterly refused any longer to acknowledge the **authority of Moses and Aaron.**” - *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 3, p. 348.1

It is amazing how blinded man can become! They not only blamed Moses for all their troubles, but they accused him of a wicked plot to lead them into the wilderness so that he could become rich from their possessions! They forgot that while they were in Egypt they were slaves and possessed nothing. This is an important point we should not skip over. Satan had so deceived these people that they thought it was better in Egypt! Many today who are rejecting God’s messengers are deluded as much as Korah was. When God rebukes their sins and encourages them to repent, they reject the messages and claim it is not God speaking.

So who was Korah and his fellow rebels?

“Korah and his fellow conspirators were men who had been **favored with special manifestations of God’s power and greatness.** They were of the number who went up with Moses into the mount and beheld the divine glory. But since that time a change had come. A temptation, slight at first, had been harbored, and had strengthened as it was encouraged, until their minds were controlled by Satan, and they ventured upon their work of disaffection. **Professing great interest in the prosperity of the people,** they first whispered their discontent to one another and then to leading men of Israel. Their insinuations were so readily received that they ventured still further, and at last they **really believed themselves to be actuated by zeal for God.**” - *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 396.4

Notice these men were favored with a special manifestation of God’s power. These people at one time in their life had been great men for God. However that slowly changed until they were under the full control of Satan. So full was that control, that in their deceived state of mind, they actually believed they were acting on behalf of God. This is a warning to us. Many today who are rejecting God’s messengers and who hold important positions within the church actually believe they are being led by God’s Spirit while they publicly

denounce these messengers. They are repeating the same sin as Korah, Dathan and Abiram.

Many people were ready to believe these men because of what they had achieved and experienced. This should teach us that we should not put our trust in man. We are told “Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help.”¹⁰ It doesn’t matter how popular a person may be in the church or how great a work they have done, we are not to put our trust in them.

If Korah had opposed Moses by himself, the issue may have blown over without any record. But the situation was worsened by the amount of influence he had gathered on his side.

“And they rose up before Moses, with certain of the children of Israel, two hundred and fifty princes of the assembly, famous in the congregation, men of renown.” - Numbers 16:2

“They were successful in alienating two hundred and fifty princes, men of renown in the congregation. With these strong and influential supporters they felt confident of making a radical change in the government and greatly improving upon the administration of Moses and Aaron.” - *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 397.1

Nothing works better than to use popular people within the church to oppose God’s messengers and messages. Instead of studying for themselves to know if a messenger is from God or not, many like the children of Israel rely upon the opinion of popular people within the church to tell them what they should believe. This is very dangerous. We all need to know for ourselves why we believe or reject a messenger claiming to be from God. When God asks us in the judgment why we didn’t listen to His messenger, we will not be able to say because so and so said he was from Satan.

In the story of Korah, Dathan and Abiram we find another important point that is applicable for us today. After God judged the three rebels and the two hundred and fifty princes, the children of Israel had still not learned their lesson. We are told:

“After this terrible exhibition of God’s judgment the people returned to their tents. They were terrified, but not humbled. They had been deeply

¹⁰ Psalms 146:3

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influenced by the spirit of rebellion and had been flattered by Korah and his company to believe that they were a very good people and that they had been **wronged and abused by Moses**. Their minds were so thoroughly imbued with the spirit of those who had perished that it was difficult to free themselves from their blind prejudice. If they should admit that Korah and his company were all wicked and Moses righteous, then they would be compelled to receive as the word of God that which they were unwilling to believe, that they should certainly all die in the wilderness. They were not willing to submit to this and tried to believe that it was all an imposture, that Moses had deceived them. The men who had perished had **spoken pleasant words to them and had manifested special interest and love for them**, and they thought Moses a designing man. **They decided that they could not be wrong; that, after all, those men who had perished were good men, and Moses had by some means been the cause of their destruction.**" - *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 3, p. 351.1

Let's examine more closely what this paragraph reveals:

1. God's judgments did not humble His people. Their hearts were still rebellious.
2. They believed they were a good people whereas Moses, God's messenger, was telling them they were not good.
3. They believed Moses had abused them.
4. They did not want to believe the word of God through His messenger that they would die in the wilderness.
5. They believed that Moses had deceived them.
6. They believed Korah and those who perished spoke pleasant words to them and loved them.
7. They believed Korah and those who perished could not have been wrong because they were good men.

Many of these points are being repeated today. God's messengers have received opposition from popular people in the church who are loved and respected. Some of these opponents have even been rebuked by God through the messenger and as a result, multitudes in the church are willing to reject the messenger because they want to believe those who have rebelled against God. Let us not make the same mistakes as Israel did, but instead test everything by the Word of God for ourselves.

Points to remember

1. Korah and his friends rose up against God's appointed leader.
2. These men had been greatly blessed by God and were highly respected among the people.
3. Before making his position known, Korah enlisted the aid of two hundred and fifty princes of the assembly who were men of renown to side with him.
4. These rebellious men thought that by their influence they could get rid of Moses, God's appointed messenger.
5. They thought that Moses had deceived them and had secretly planned to lead them into the wilderness so that they might die and he become rich with their possessions.
6. The people's hearts had been so affected by Korah and those who sided with him that even after God had destroyed them, the people were unwilling to believe in God.

6. A prophet with a warning

Elijah was a faithful messenger of God. In a time when God's people had departed so far from Him, God raised up Elijah to turn the hearts of the people back to Him. However Elijah's ministry was not one of ease.

God had revealed to Elijah that He was going to bring a drought upon the land for three and half years. Up until this time, the land of Israel had prospered, and to predict a drought seemed far from happening. We are told:

"It was only by the exercise of strong faith in the unfailing power of God's word that Elijah delivered his message. Had he not possessed implicit confidence in the One whom he served, he would never have appeared before Ahab. On his way to Samaria, Elijah had passed by ever-flowing streams, hills covered with verdure, and stately forests that seemed beyond the reach of drought. **Everything on which the eye rested was clothed with beauty. The prophet might have wondered how the streams that had never ceased their flow could become dry**, or how those hills and valleys could be burned with drought. **But he gave no place to unbelief.** He fully believed that God would humble apostate Israel, and that through judgments they would be brought to repentance. The fiat of Heaven had gone forth; God's word could not fail; and at the peril of his life Elijah fearlessly fulfilled his commission." - *Prophets and Kings*, p. 121.2

When the word of God comes to a messenger, how the devil must tempt them. How he must suggest that what they have been shown could not possibly come to pass. Elijah faced this same temptation, but he fully believed God. Not only should the prophet fully believe, but those who hear the prophet's words need to fully believe as well. Sometimes it may seem impossible for it to be fulfilled, but God's word is sure.

Elijah's warnings rejected by God's people

Elijah's warning of coming judgments should have stirred God's people to reform their lives, but the record sadly states:

"Tidings of Elijah's denunciation of the sins of Israel, and of his prophecy of swift-coming punishment, quickly spread throughout the land. **The fears of some were aroused, but in general the heavenly message was received with scorn and ridicule.**" - *Prophets and Kings*, p. 123.1

Just as Noah's message was received with scorn and ridicule, so was Elijah's. So fully had they rejected God in their daily lives that they treated Elijah's message with humor. This should be a warning to us that we do not fall into the same sin. Notice only the fears of a small number were aroused. God still had some faithful servants among His people.

When the rains didn't come and the dew failed to fall, the people began to wonder if Elijah was sent from God. Of course the devil would not allow the majority to believe this so he increased his attacks on the faithful prophet.

"The prophet's words went into immediate effect. Those who were at first inclined to scoff at the thought of calamity, **soon had occasion for serious reflection**; for after a few months the earth, unrefreshed by dew or rain, became dry, and vegetation withered. As time passed, streams that had never been known to fail began to decrease, and brooks began to dry up. **Yet the people were urged by their leaders to have confidence in the power of Baal and to set aside as idle words the prophecy of Elijah.** The priests still insisted that it was through the power of Baal that the showers of rain fell. Fear not the God of Elijah, nor tremble at His word, they urged, it is Baal that brings forth the harvest in its season and provides for man and beast." - *Prophets and Kings*, p. 123.2

Has anything changed? The devil uses the same tactics today to sow doubt in God's messages as he used in Elijah's time. The leaders in the church back then convinced the people to listen to the voice of Baal, the enemy, instead of God's voice. Today, as we will see later in this study, leaders and popular people in God's church are urging His people to turn away from the voice of God. When we are not listening to the voice of God, we will automatically listen to the enemy.

The devil hates God's messages of warning and love and will do anything he can to turn people away from it. Even after two years of drought, Israel still refused to listen to God.

"The second year of famine passed, and still the pitiless heavens gave no sign of rain. Drought and famine continued their devastation throughout the kingdom. Fathers and mothers, powerless to relieve the sufferings of their children, were forced to see them die. Yet still apostate Israel **refused to humble their hearts before God and continued to murmur against the man by whose word these terrible judgments had been brought**

upon them. They seemed unable to discern in their suffering and distress a call to repentance, a divine interposition to save them from taking the fatal step beyond the boundary of Heaven's forgiveness." - *Prophets and Kings*, p. 127.1

How strong was the devil's hold on God's people! They were so deceived that even after watching their children die, they still refused to humble their hearts and turn to God, but instead blamed God's messenger. It reminds us of Pharaoh's hard heart. Is there a lesson here for us? Can we be so blinded that we too would refuse to accept God's messages?

Elijah wasn't the first messenger God had sent with a message of warning. We are told:

"God had **sent messengers to Israel**, with appeals to return to their allegiance. Had they heeded these appeals, had they turned from Baal to the living God, Elijah's message of judgment would never have been given. But the warnings that might have been a savor of life unto life had proved to them a savor of death unto death. **Their pride had been wounded, their anger had been aroused against the messengers, and now they regarded with intense hatred the prophet Elijah.** If only he should fall into their hands, gladly they would deliver him to Jezebel--as if by silencing his voice they could stay the fulfillment of his words! In the face of calamity they continued to stand firm in their idolatry. Thus they were adding to the guilt that had brought the judgments of Heaven upon the land." - *Prophets and Kings*, p. 127.4

Sadly this is happening even in our day. When God rebukes an individual for not only rejecting His messages, but turning others from that message, their pride is wounded and their anger is aroused against the messenger. Those who have put their trust in these people also fall into the same condition. Often they will say that God does not condemn people and they reject the messages. Elijah's ministry is a warning to us. Let us heed that warning and trust not in man, but in God.

Elijah accepted by a heathen woman

There were very few people in Israel that accepted Elijah as a messenger of God. However the Bible tells us there was a heathen woman, a widow whose name is not revealed, that believed his word. The drought was so bad that it had

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reached even to the land of Sidon in Phoenicia, and this poor widow was preparing her last meal for her son and herself.

“This woman was not an Israelite. She had never had the privileges and blessings that the chosen people of God had enjoyed; but she was a believer in the true God and had walked in all the light that was shining on her pathway. And now, when there was no safety for Elijah in the land of Israel, God sent him to this woman to find an asylum in her home.” - *Prophets and Kings*, p. 129.2

What a testimony against Israel. God had to send Elijah to a heathen woman who was living up to the light she had about the true God. It makes you wonder how many people who now profess to be part of God’s remnant church are faithfully serving God and how many are really serving Baal? Perhaps the majority of God’s people have not yet joined His Church and are still out in the world living up to what little light is shining on their pathway.

This special woman whom God had not forsaken was very hospitable, even when she was about to die.

“In the days of Elijah, Israel had departed from God. They clung to their sins, and rejected the warnings of the Spirit through the Lord’s messengers. Thus they cut themselves off from the channel by which God’s blessing could come to them. The Lord passed by the homes of Israel, and found a refuge for His servant in a heathen land, with a woman who did not belong to the chosen people. But this woman was favored because she had followed the light she had received, and her heart was open to the greater light that God sent her through His prophet.” - *The Desire of Ages*, p. 238.4

When Elijah entered the woman’s city and found her, he asked her for something to eat. Although she only had enough food for one last meal, he assured her that the little food she did have would not diminish until God sent rain upon the earth. We are told:

“No greater test of faith than this could have been required. The widow had hitherto treated all strangers with kindness and liberality. Now, regardless of the suffering that might result to herself and child, and **trusting in the God of Israel to supply her every need**, she met this supreme test of hospitality by doing ‘according to the saying of Elijah.’” - *Prophets and Kings*, p. 130.3

At a time when God's very people did not trust His messenger, a Phoenician woman who was considered an outcast believed the word of the prophet. This is the type of faith God wants His people to have. The woman could have refused Elijah's request. After all, she did not know him. He could have been lying to her. She could have reasoned that he was under the control of Satan. She could have said she needed to wait awhile to prove if he was a true prophet. She could have used any number of excuses not to feed Elijah, but she didn't. She trusted in God to supply her needs and as a result, God provided for her and her son.

There are so many parallels we can learn from the ministry of Elijah. Elijah represents those who will not see death but will be translated when Jesus comes. He prophesied coming judgments because Israel was not faithful to God. His warnings were rejected and as a result many suffered hunger and death. Even when many were convicted the message was from God, the leaders in the church influenced them to reject the message. God has raised up a messenger for our day with a message of repentance and a warning of coming destruction, but as in Elijah's time, the masses are being influenced to reject it. Will the messages have to go to the heathen because God's professed people will not listen?

Points to remember

1. God sent Elijah to warn His people of coming disaster.
2. Elijah had to trust in faith what God had predicted, since the land of Canaan was very fertile.
3. Almost everyone rejected Elijah's message and ridiculed him. Only the fears of some were awakened by his message.
4. After it hadn't rained for awhile, many began to question whether Elijah's message was from God. However they were urged by the leaders to trust in the power of Baal to send rain.
5. After the second year of drought, parents watched their children die, but they still refused to repent and blamed God's messenger for their problems.
6. God watched over His faithful prophet and led him to a heathen woman who was living up to the light she had.
7. This unknown woman trusted Elijah as God's prophet and God rewarded her faith by preserving her and her son's life.

7. Unto us a child is born

We have seen so far in our study how God's people have continually rejected His messengers and preferred to listen to the enemy. Surely it would be different if God Himself came to His people. Surely they would accept Him and treat Him with the love and respect He deserves. Sadly the Bible tells us this didn't happen. In a brief sentence the Bible says:

“He came unto his own, and his own received him not.” - John 1:11

The devil made sure Jesus was rejected from His very birth. When Joseph and Mary looked for a place to stay in Bethlehem, Satan made sure all the inns were full. Jesus, the royal King of heaven suffered Himself to be born in a humble stable. Just think of this for a moment. How degrading for the Creator to subject Himself to such a lowly birth! No kings or great men came to honor Him at His birth. The only ones that welcomed Him were the humble shepherds.

The wise men

The wise men did not greet Jesus on the night of His birth like we are led to believe. The Bible tells us that on the night of Jesus' birth the angels appeared to the shepherds.¹¹ We are further told in the book *Desire of Ages*:

“The wise men had seen a mysterious light in the heavens upon that night when the glory of God flooded the hills of Bethlehem. As the light faded, a luminous star appeared, and lingered in the sky. It was not a fixed star nor a planet, and the phenomenon excited the keenest interest. That star was a distant company of shining angels, but of this the wise men were ignorant. Yet they were impressed that the star was of special import to them. They consulted priests and philosophers, and searched the scrolls of the ancient records. The prophecy of Balaam had declared, ‘There shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Scepter shall rise out of Israel.’ Num. 24:17. Could this strange star have been sent as a harbinger of the Promised One? The magi had welcomed the light of heaven-sent truth; now it was shed upon them in brighter rays. Through dreams they were instructed to go in search of the newborn Prince.” - *The Desire of Ages*, p. 60.1

¹¹ Luke 2:8-14

The wise men were from the east, probably from Babylon. They didn't see the star in the sky until the night Jesus was born, so it would have been impossible for them to meet Jesus on the night of His birth. After studying the scrolls of ancient records they were then instructed through dreams to search out the newborn Prince. This would have taken time, and their journey to Bethlehem was a great distance.

When the wise men reached Jerusalem, they inquired of the newborn King. Herod, being jealous of a rival, demanded of the Jewish teachers where the expected King would be born. To this they answered the King would be born in Bethlehem. It is interesting what the book *Desire of Ages* says at this point:

“The priests and elders of Jerusalem were not as ignorant concerning the birth of Christ as they pretended. The **report of the angels' visit to the shepherds had been brought to Jerusalem, but the rabbis had treated it as unworthy of their notice.** They themselves might have found Jesus, and might have been ready to lead the magi to His birthplace; but instead of this, the wise men came to call their attention to the birth of the Messiah. ‘Where is He that is born King of the Jews?’ they said; ‘for we have seen His star in the East, and are come to worship Him.’” - *The Desire of Ages*, p. 62.3

The next paragraph is highly significant for our study:

“**Now pride and envy closed the door against the light.** If the reports brought by the shepherds and the wise men were credited, they would place the priests and rabbis in a most unenviable position, disproving their claim to be the exponents of the truth of God. **These learned teachers would not stoop to be instructed by those whom they termed heathen.** It could not be, they said, that **God had passed them by, to communicate with ignorant shepherds or uncircumcised Gentiles.** They determined to show their contempt for the reports that were exciting King Herod and all Jerusalem. **They would not even go to Bethlehem to see whether these things were so. And they led the people to regard the interest in Jesus as a fanatical excitement. Here began the rejection of Christ by the priests and rabbis.** From this point their pride and stubbornness grew into a settled hatred of the Saviour. While God was opening the door to the Gentiles, the Jewish leaders were closing the door to themselves.” - *The Desire of Ages*, p. 62.4

Let us look a little more closely at the last paragraph:

1. The Jewish rulers who were the leaders in God's church, closed their eyes to light because of pride.
2. They could not accept the fact that God would pass them by and communicate with ignorant shepherds or uncircumcised Gentiles.
3. They would not even verify whether the reports were true.
4. They used their position of influence to turn the people away from finding out if the reports were true.
5. This was the beginning of their rejection of Christ.

Notice how Satan first uses pride to turn our eyes from the light and then the downward path to ruin begins. Point number three is very significant. These proud rulers would not even dare verify if what the shepherds had said was true. Many today are guilty of the same sin. When God raises up a messenger, many refuse to even search out whether they are of God or not. Some of the excuses we have come across are:

1. They don't have enough time.
2. They believe the devil is out to deceive us (which he is) and consider anyone claiming to have a message from God as being from the devil.
3. They are skeptical of such things.

None of these excuses are valid reasons for rejecting God's messenger. When God sends a message to His people, that message is not meant as an optional extra.

Rejected at Nazareth

Jesus had started His ministry and had been preaching the kingdom of God was at hand. One Sabbath day He was worshipping as His custom was at Nazareth, the place where He grew up. On this Sabbath He was invited to give the scripture reading. After reading from Isaiah 61 we are told:

"Jesus stood before the people as a living expositor of the prophecies concerning Himself. Explaining the words He had read, He spoke of the Messiah as a reliever of the oppressed, a liberator of captives, a healer of the afflicted, restoring sight to the blind, and revealing to the world the light of truth. His impressive manner and the wonderful import of His words **thrilled the hearers with a power they had never felt before. The tide of divine influence broke every barrier down;** like Moses, they

beheld the Invisible. **As their hearts were moved upon by the Holy Spirit, they responded with fervent amens and praises to the Lord.**" - *The Desire of Ages*, p. 237.2

Jesus then proclaimed to all present that that very day were the words He read fulfilled. This offended the proud Jews because they didn't want to believe their true condition. Like the Jewish leaders at the time of His birth, their pride turned them away from the source of life.

"As they opened the door to doubt, their hearts became so much the harder for having been momentarily softened. Satan was determined that blind eyes should not that day be opened, nor souls bound in slavery be set at liberty. With intense energy he worked to fasten them in unbelief. **They made no account of the sign already given, when they had been stirred by the conviction that it was their Redeemer who addressed them.**" - *The Desire of Ages*, p. 238.2

If only they had continued to believe. Many today after reading what God's messenger has written, freely admit how they were drawn closer to God, how their hearts thrilled with the thought that Jesus was coming very soon, only to turn around and reject the message once Satan had caused them to doubt.

Jesus knew the hearts of His hearers and told them what they were thinking. He said:

"And he said unto them, Ye will surely say unto me this proverb, Physician, heal thyself: whatsoever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in thy country. And he said, Verily I say unto you, No prophet is accepted in his own country. But I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land; But unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow." - Luke 4:23-26

So much had their hatred been stirred by Christ's words that they were filled with wrath:

"And rose up, and thrust him out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong." - Luke 4:29

Rejected by the people of Gergesa

Jesus practiced what He had just preached when He came to Gergesa and healed the demoniacs. He set them free from the bondage of Satan and restored them to their right mind. One would think this would have been a great testimony to the power of God and the mission of Jesus, but the people who lived in that area rejected Him.

“The people of Gergesa had before them the living evidence of Christ’s power and mercy. They saw the men who had been restored to reason; **but they were so fearful of endangering their earthly interests that He who had vanquished the prince of darkness before their eyes was treated as an intruder**, and the Gift of heaven was turned from their doors. We have not the opportunity of turning from the person of Christ as had the Gergesenes; but still there are many who refuse to obey His word, because obedience would involve the sacrifice of some worldly interest. Lest His presence shall cause them pecuniary loss, many reject His grace, and drive His Spirit from them.” - *The Desire of Ages*, p. 339.2

There are many reasons why people reject God’s messengers and ultimately God Himself. Sometimes it is because of pride, other times it is because they would rather remain in darkness. Still, as in this case, people wonder how they will fare in this world if they accept the messages. Many of God’s people make a confession that Jesus is returning soon, but sadly their daily lives tell a different story. They are often too busy striving for what this world has to offer. Some are guilty of living for the pleasures of the world, while others who have been in the message for a long time are saving for their retirement, and the thought of Jesus coming so soon is an unwelcome one.

When God raises a messenger with an urgent message that He is coming very soon, many say we should not be stirring people up with such a message, just in case it doesn’t happen! If we take this position, we will never believe Jesus is coming soon and we will never be ready when He does return.

Where has our vision gone? Have we like the church of Ephesus lost our first love? Are we living a lukewarm experience, yet believing we are going through to the kingdom of heaven? Jesus calls for us to surrender everything--our pride, our time, our wealth and our possessions. Everything needs to be laid on the altar now while we have the chance, because there will come a day when all of these will be taken from us and we will no longer have that opportunity to sacrifice all to God.

Rejected by the Pharisees

Jesus' worst enemies were the Pharisees and rulers. These were the church leaders of their day. These were men who were well versed in the Scriptures and should have known that the voice of Jesus was the same that led them throughout their history. But because of their pride and unbelief, they did not recognize the voice of God.

On one occasion their hatred for Jesus was stirred so much that they took counsel among themselves to find a way to kill Him.

“Then the Pharisees went out, and held a council against him, how they might destroy him.” - Matthew 12:14

On another occasion when Jesus healed a man who was possessed with a devil, blind and dumb, the people were so amazed that they began saying “is not this the son of David?”¹² Because the Pharisees hearts were so hardened to the voice and work of God they exclaimed:

“...This fellow doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils.” - Matthew 12:24

Jesus responded to the Pharisees by saying:

“Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men.” - Matthew 12:31

It is very dangerous to attribute the work of the Holy Spirit to the devil. Remember the Bible warns us not to call good evil and evil good.¹³ Those who reject the voice of God in the messages He has sent through His messengers are in great danger of this sin.

“It is not God that blinds the eyes of men or hardens their hearts. **He sends them light to correct their errors, and to lead them in safe paths;** it is by the rejection of this light that the eyes are blinded and the heart hardened. Often the process is gradual, and almost imperceptible. Light

¹² Matthew 12:22,23

¹³ Isaiah 5:20

comes to the soul through God's word, **through His servants**, or by the direct agency of His Spirit; but when one ray of light is disregarded, there is a partial numbing of the spiritual perceptions, and the second revealing of light is less clearly discerned. So the darkness increases, until it is night in the soul. Thus it had been with these Jewish leaders. **They were convinced that a divine power attended Christ, but in order to resist the truth, they attributed the work of the Holy Spirit to Satan.** In doing this they deliberately chose deception; they yielded themselves to Satan, and henceforth they were controlled by his power." - *The Desire of Ages*, p. 322.2

Rejected by many disciples

Not only was Jesus rejected by the church leadership, but He was also rejected by many of those who had chosen to follow Him.

In John 6, a rather challenging teaching was given by Jesus. He stated that unless His followers ate His body and drank His blood, they would not receive eternal life.¹⁴ At this, many walked away from Christ and exclaimed:

"...This is an hard saying; who can hear it? ...From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him." - John 6:60, 66

The book *Desire of Ages* tells us:

"As those disaffected disciples turned away from Christ, a **different spirit took control of them. They could see nothing attractive in Him whom they had once found so interesting.** They sought out His enemies, for they were in harmony with their spirit and work. **They misinterpreted His words, falsified His statements, and impugned His motives.** They sustained their course by **gathering up every item that could be turned against Him; and such indignation was stirred up by these false reports that His life was in danger.**" - *The Desire of Ages*, p. 392.4

Please remember that quote, as this is being repeated today against God's messenger. Notice as we break the paragraph down into the following points:

1. They turned away from Christ.
2. Once they had turned away, a different spirit took control of them.

¹⁴ See John 6:35-58

3. That which was once attractive to them about Christ no longer attracted them.
4. They sought to side with Christ's enemies.
5. They misinterpreted and falsified Christ's words.
6. They used every item they could to turn it against Him.
7. Christ's life was in danger because of their false reports.

As we have pointed out before, Satan hates God's messages and will do everything he can to destroy it. Those who once believed, ended up becoming some of Christ's worst enemies.

My people hear My voice

Before we finish this chapter, let us first be reminded by what Jesus said in John chapter ten:

"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me." - John 10:27

Those who truly follow Jesus hear His voice and follow Him and He knows them. If we refuse to listen to the voice of Jesus, as is recorded in the Scriptures or any other messenger He has called and sent to us, then we will not be His sheep. We therefore need to ask ourselves this important question, are we listening for the voice of Jesus? When a messenger comes claiming to be from God, do we investigate it and test it to the law and the testimony?¹⁵ Do we have open hearts or are they closed to the voice of God? Please pray as you have never prayed before that God will give you a heart that will follow Him.

Points to remember

1. Jesus was rejected by His own people.
2. The Jewish leaders rejected the reports of the shepherds and wise men, and refused to even go to Bethlehem and verify whether the reports were true.
3. These rulers also used their position of influence to stop others from going to Bethlehem to test the reports.
4. The people of Nazareth were convicted Jesus was the Messiah, but at the rebuke of Jesus they hardened their hearts and tried to kill Him.
5. The people of Gergesa were not willing to accept Jesus because they were afraid of losing their earthly possessions.

¹⁵ Isaiah 8:20

AS IT WAS IN THE DAYS...

6. The Pharisees accused Jesus of performing His miracles by the power of Satan.
7. After preaching a sermon that was hard to understand, many of Jesus' disciples rejected Him and became His worst enemies. They could no longer find anything attractive about Him and they spread false rumors and misinterpreted His words.
8. Jesus said that His sheep hear His voice and follow Him.

8. Ellen White

So far in this study we have looked at some of the messengers God has called that lived in Bible times. In this chapter we are going to briefly look at a messenger of recent times. Her writings have been a source of inspiration to many, and indeed much of what has been quoted in this book comes from her pen.

Ellen White lived most of her life during the nineteenth century (1827-1915). She was called to be a messenger of God at the early age of seventeen and continued to minister for Him until she died. During her life she had approximately two thousand dreams and visions and wrote more than forty books. This has resulted in:

1. Ellen White being the most translated woman writer in the entire history of literature.
2. The most translated American author of either gender.
3. According to a study done by the Barna Group, surveying influential authors for pastors, she ranked in the top three. “The under-40 pastors championed several authors who were not ranked highly by older church leaders. Those authors included business consultant James Collins, seminary professor Thom Rainer, nineteenth century Seventh-Day Adventist icon Ellen White, and pastor John Ortberg.”¹⁶
4. Her writings cover a broad range of subjects, including religion, education, social relationships, evangelism, prophecy, publishing, nutrition, and management. Her life-changing masterpiece on successful Christian living, *Steps to Christ*, has been published in more than 140 languages.¹⁷

Although for the most part she was accepted as a messenger of God, there were people who rose up against her, particularly at the beginning of her ministry.

Many rejected Ellen White

A messenger of God never has an easy life. We have seen this time and again through our study so far. Ellen White was no exception. Right from the start, she knew she would be labeled as being deceived by Satan:

¹⁶ <http://www.barna.org/barna-update/article/5-barna-update/178-survey-reveals-the-books-and-authors-that-have-most-influenced-pastors>

¹⁷ <http://www.whitestate.org/about/egwbio.asp>

“A sense of duty to my brethren and sisters and a desire that the blood of souls might not be found on my garments have governed me in writing this little work. I am aware of the **unbelief that exists in the minds of the multitude relative to visions, also that many who profess to be looking for Christ and teach that we are in the ‘last days’ call them all of Satan.** I expect much opposition from such, and had I not felt that the Lord required it of me, I should not have made my views thus public, as they will probably call forth the hatred and derision of some. But I fear God more than man.” - *Early Writings*, p. 76.1

It is hard to imagine that people, who were looking for Christ to return and thought they were living in the last days believed Ellen White’s visions were of Satan. In her second vision God revealed to her the opposition she would have to meet.

“About one week after this the Lord gave me another view and showed me the trials I must pass through, and that I must go and relate to others what He had revealed to me, and that **I should meet with great opposition and suffer anguish of spirit by going.** But said the angel, ‘The grace of God is sufficient for you; He will hold you up.’” - *Early Writings*, p. 20.1

Satan hates God’s message of love and will do everything he can to oppose it. Soon after Ellen White was told she would meet great opposition, the false reports started circulating:

“Soon it was reported all around that the visions were the result of mesmerism, and many **Adventists were ready to believe and circulate the report.** A physician who was a celebrated mesmerizer told me that my views were mesmerism, that I was a very easy subject, and that he could mesmerize me and give me a vision. I told him that the Lord had shown me in vision that mesmerism was from the devil, from the bottomless pit, and that it would soon go there, with those who continued to use it. I then gave him liberty to mesmerize me if he could. He tried for more than half an hour, resorting to different operations, and then gave it up. By faith in God I was able to resist his influence, so that it did not affect me in the least.” - *Early Writings*, p. 21.2

Notice the way Satan works. False reports were circulated that Ellen White’s visions were the result of mesmerism, which she knew was from the devil. Also

notice many Adventists believed the reports. Why would those who had gone through the great disappointment and were waiting for Christ's soon return believe the messenger God had chosen was being led by the devil?

"If I had a vision in meeting, **many would say that it was excitement and that someone mesmerized me.** Then I would go away alone in the woods, where no eye or ear but God's could see or hear, and pray to Him, and He would sometimes give me a vision there. I then rejoiced, and told them what God had revealed to me alone, where no mortal could influence me. **But I was told by some that I mesmerized myself.** Oh, thought I, has it come to this that those who **honestly go to God alone to plead His promises and to claim His salvation, are to be charged with being under the foul and soul-damning influence of mesmerism?** Do we ask our kind Father in heaven for 'bread,' only to receive a 'stone' or a 'scorpion?' These things wounded my spirit, and wrung my soul in keen anguish, well-nigh to despair, while many would have me believe that there was no Holy Ghost and that all the exercises that holy men of God have experienced were only mesmerism or the deceptions of Satan." - *Early Writings*, p. 21.3

True were the words Ellen White had heard in her second vision. God loves His people and often sends them messages to correct their wrong ways. But we need to ask ourselves, how often are they accepted? Ellen White writes:

"At this time there was fanaticism in Maine. Some refrained wholly from labor and disfellowshipped all those who would not receive their views on this point, and some other things which they held to be religious duties. God revealed these errors to me in vision and sent me to His erring children to declare them; **but many of them wholly rejected the message, and charged me with conforming to the world.** On the other hand, the **nominal Adventists charged me with fanaticism, and I was falsely, and by some wickedly, represented as being the leader of the fanaticism that I was actually laboring to correct.** Different times were repeatedly set for the Lord to come and were urged upon the brethren; but the Lord showed me that they would all pass by, for the time of trouble must come before the coming of Christ, and that every time that was set and passed by would only weaken the faith of God's people. For this I was charged with being with the evil servant that said in his heart, 'My Lord delayeth His coming.'" - *Early Writings*, p. 22.1

The opposition Ellen White received was so great that at one point early in her ministry, she doubted her experience and resisted the Spirit of God.

“All these things weighed heavily upon my spirits, and in the confusion **I was sometimes tempted to doubt my own experience.** While at family prayers one morning, the power of God began to rest upon me, and the **thought rushed into my mind that it was mesmerism, and I resisted it.** Immediately I was struck dumb and for a few moments was lost to everything around me. **I then saw my sin in doubting the power of God, and that for so doing I was struck dumb, and that my tongue would be loosed in less than twenty-four hours.** A card was held up before me, on which were written in letters of gold the chapter and verse of fifty texts of Scripture. After I came out of vision, I beckoned for the slate, and wrote upon it that I was dumb, also what I had seen, and that I wished the large Bible. I took the Bible and readily turned to all the texts that I had seen upon the card. I was unable to speak all day. Early the next morning my soul was filled with joy, and my tongue was loosed to shout the high praises of God. **After that I dared not doubt or for a moment resist the power of God, however others might think of me.**” - *Early Writings*, p. 22.2

This point reveals just how hard being a prophet of God really is. The continual opposition they receive can eventually wear their faith down so that they lose their hold on God. Many great prophets in the Bible struggled with this same problem. Moses sinned against God when he lost his temper and took God's glory upon himself. Elijah fled from Jezebel only hours after he had gained a mighty victory for God on Mount Carmel. Prophets are only human, and a careful study of the Bible shows that they too struggle against sin like all of us do. Sadly, at times, they fail God just like we have. But God is merciful. He forgave Moses and Elijah for their weakness and he forgave Ellen White as well.

Those who rejected Ellen White's visions were not just unknown people. Ellen White reveals:

“The **editor of The Advent Herald has said that my visions were known to be 'the result of mesmeric operations.'** But, I ask, what opportunity was there for mesmeric operations in such a time as that? Brother G. had more than he could well do to manage the boat.” - *Early Writings*, p. 23.2

One has to wonder what kind of damage the editor of *The Advent Herald* was doing to the message of God if he believed it was known to be the result of mesmeric operations? What would we have thought if we lived back then when Ellen White was first receiving her visions? Would we have believed the false reports? Would we have charged Ellen White as being under the influence of Satan? For those who reject the ministry of Ellen White and all of God's messengers, God gives the following warning:

“Sabbath afternoon one of our number was sick, and requested prayers that he might be healed. We all united in applying to the Physician who never lost a case, and while healing power came down, and the sick was healed, the Spirit fell upon me and I was taken off in vision. I saw the state of some who **stood on present truth, but disregarded the visions**,--the way God had chosen to teach in some cases, those who erred from Bible truth. I saw that in striking against the visions they did not strike against the worm--the feeble instrument that God spake through; **but against the Holy Ghost**. I saw it was a small thing to speak against the instrument, but it was dangerous to slight the words of God. I saw if they were in error and **God chose to show them their errors through visions, and they disregarded the teachings of God through visions, they would be left to take their own way**, and run in the way of error, and think they were right, until they would find it out too late. Then in the time of trouble I heard them cry to God in agony--‘Why didst thou not show us our wrong, that we might have got right and been ready for this time?’ Then an angel pointed to them and said--‘My Father taught, but you would not be taught.--**He spoke through visions, but you disregarded his voice, and he gave you up to your own ways, to be filled with your own doings.**’” - *Broadside2 - To Those who are receiving the seal of the living God*, Jan. 31, 1849 par. 3

In another account she writes:

“What reserve power has the Lord with which to reach those who have **cast aside His warnings and reproofs, and have accredited the Testimonies of the Spirit of God to no higher source than human wisdom?** In the judgment, what can you who have done this, offer to God as an excuse for **turning from the evidences He has given you that God was in the work?** ‘By their fruits ye shall know them.’ I would not now rehearse before you the evidences given in the past two years of the dealings of God by His chosen servants; but the present evidence of His working is revealed to you, and you are now under obligation to believe.

You cannot neglect God's messages of warning, you cannot reject them or treat them lightly, but at the peril of infinite loss." - *Life Sketches of Ellen G. White*, p. 324.3

One of the reasons why people rejected Ellen White was because her messages conflicted with their lives as noted in the following quote:

"I tell you, in the fear of God, I have been shown that many of you will fail of everlasting life because you are building your hopes of heaven on a false foundation. God is leaving you to yourselves, 'to humble you and to prove you, to know what...[is] in your heart.' You have neglected the Scriptures. **You despise and reject the testimonies because they reprove your darling sins and disturb your self-complacency.**" - *Mind, Character, and Personality*, Vol. 2, p. 618.4

Ellen White experienced much opposition in the early years of her ministry. Much of this opposition fizzled out over the years and the church recognized her role as God's messenger. However she still had to face opposition from time to time. In recent years many within and outside the church have risen up to prove she was not God's messenger. Sometimes this is in a subtle way where insinuations are made to cause doubt in her work. Other times the attacks are open and blatant. As a people, we are no different from the Jews who rejected God's prophets, and eventually Jesus Himself as is noted in the following quote:

"Sufficient light was given to the Jewish people so that they might have known 'the time of their visitation.' God had sent them 'the way, the truth, and the life,' in the gift of His Son. Christ came as the messenger of Jehovah, and His path was marked with blessings. He was sent to make known the Father. His whole life to its final sacrifice was a revelation of God to men. Calvary itself announced Him, 'the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long suffering and abundant in goodness and truth, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty.' From Christ, the Light of the world, shone forth the clear, bright beams of His Father's glory. Yet the Jews comprehended it not.

"Thus it is in our day. The light of truth is shining upon us as clearly as it shone upon the Jewish people, but the hearts of men are as hard and unimpressible as in the days of Christ, **because they [know] not what they oppose.** Many who claim to be standing in the light are in darkness and know it not. They have so enshrouded themselves in unbelief that they call darkness light, **and light darkness. They are ignorant of that which they condemn and oppose. But their ignorance is not such as God will**

excuse, for He has given them light, and they reject it. They have before them the example of the past, but they will not be warned, and unbelief is enclosing them in impenetrable darkness. **They refuse to accept the testimonies they ought to believe and are ready to accept tidbits of gossip and testimonies of men showing their credulousness and readiness to believe that which they want to believe.**” - *The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, p. 408

Betrayed by a close friend and fellow worker

Before we finish this chapter, let us briefly look at the life of Fannie Bolton, one of Ellen White’s literary assistants. She worked very closely with Ellen White by proofreading her writings before it went to print. Ellen White put a lot of trust in Fannie, but eventually that trust was broken. Fannie began to feel resentment that the books and articles she was proofreading were not her own work. She then began to spread false rumors around that a lot of what was claimed as Ellen White’s writings were in fact her own or was plagiarized from someone else. For example one website that opposes Ellen White claims:

“In the days that followed, Fannie found that many authors’ works were used without credit. Nor was credit given to Fannie or to Marian for their original work incorporated in articles going out over Ellen’s name and, moreover, represented as inspired of God. Thus Fannie found herself involved in something she believed to be dishonest. Conscience-stricken and disillusioned, she brought the matter up with Ellen, in the conviction that she ought to uphold the ‘principle of ordinary justice and literary honesty [and be] a martyr for truth’s sake.’” - Fannie Bolton, *A Confession Concerning the Testimony of Jesus*, ca. April 1901; p. 102¹⁸

“At the same time she told Merritt G. Kellogg, half-brother of John Harvey Kellogg and William K. Kellogg, that she was ‘writing all the time for Sister White.’ Furthermore, she said that most of what she wrote was ‘published in the Review and Herald...as having been written by Sister White under inspiration of God...I am greatly distressed over this matter, for I feel that I am acting a deceptive part. The people are being deceived about the inspiration of what I write. I feel that it is a great wrong that anything which I write should go out under Sister White’s name as an article specially inspired of God. What I write should go out over my own

¹⁸ www.ellenwhiteexposed.com/fannie1.htm

signature[;] then credit would be given where credit belongs.” - *Merritt G. Kellogg statement [March 1908], The Story*, p. 107¹⁹

Fannie is supposed to have written to Ellen White the following:

“I thought as I have always thought before, that you did not see my perplexity, or comprehend my trouble, that it was your withholding of the truth about your writings in not acknowledging your editorial help, that was at the bottom of all the perplexity, and that your work was not as you say the work of God ought to be, ‘as open as sunlight’ - *Bolton to EGW*, 5 July 1897; p. 81²⁰

Not only did Fannie attack Ellen White in the way that she wrote her books and articles, but she also attacked her integrity. She claimed that Ellen White did not live up to the principles she taught. For example:

“Ellen was ‘not with her party, so Elder Starr hunted around till he found her behind a screen in the restaurant very gratified in eating big white raw oysters with vinegar, pepper and salt,’ Fannie wrote; and on the same trip Willie White brought into the car a ‘thick piece of bloody beefsteak’ for Sara McEnterfer, one of Ellen’s valued employees, to cook on a small oil stove. These incidents were shocking to Fannie, who had ‘lived up to the testimonies with all faithfulness discarding meat, butter, fish, fowl and the supper meal, believing that as the ‘Testimonies’ say, ‘no meat-eater will be translated.’” - *Bolton to Slawson*, 30 December 1914; p. 108-9.²¹

Satan loves to spread false rumors that destroy confidence in God’s messengers. He achieves this by connecting his servants with those who are doing God’s work. Judas betrayed Jesus and no one but Jesus knew his true character. Satan used Fannie Bolton to do a similar work. Ellen White wrote Fannie the following:

“Your words regarding me and my writings are false, and I must say that you know them to be false. Nevertheless, those unacquainted with you take your words as being the words of one who knows. Because you have been acquainted with me, and connected with me, you can state what you

¹⁹ www.ellenwhiteexposed.com/fannie1.htm

²⁰ www.ellenwhiteexposed.com/fannie1.htm

²¹ www.ellenwhiteexposed.com/fannie1.htm

please, and you think that your tracks are so covered that they will never be discovered. But my writings have not stopped. They go out as I have written them. No words of my copyists are put in the place of my own words. This is a testimony that cannot be controverted. My articles speak for themselves. . . .

I will now only say further that I forgive you, and will continue to pray, as I have done, that you may be converted. The articles in the Review give me more discouragement over your case than I have ever had, for I see you clothed in garments of pretentious light, and this is a terrible deception. May the Lord anoint your eyes with eyesalve, that you may see yourself as you are, and that you may have that repentance that needs not to be repented of.--Letter 24, 1897, p 4,5. (To Fannie Bolton, June 25, 1897.)" - *Manuscript Releases*, Vol. 9, p. 273

Even to this day, the false rumors of Fannie Bolton are used by Ellen White's critics to prove she was a false prophet. And they are believed not only by those outside the church, but sadly, many within the church believe them as well.

"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 if my way is not blocked by such influences as the influence exerted by Fannie Bolton. **Such a work as hers calls for my pen and voice to contradict her statements, in order to save poor souls from being entirely swamped by her assertion that she has received the Holy Ghost. This is another phase of her desire to exalt herself as ordained by the Lord to bear a message to His people.** The Lord did not send her, yet she ran. She will not honor the cause of God, but will mislead others.

Those who have been unwilling to receive the true testimonies of God, notwithstanding that these testimonies have been in the field for so many years, who know not the voice of the Lord, may listen to the voice of a stranger, and receive from a poor, deceived, unbalanced human agent what is supposed to be truth. What is the chaff to the wheat? Know that you are on trial for spiritual life, and accept no delusive sentiments. God save His people from Satan's snare.--Letter 61a, 1900, pp. 4,6,7. (To G. A. Irwin, April 23, 1900.)" - *Manuscript Releases*, Vol. 9, p. 23

The false rumors of what Fannie Bolton was saying to others must have had some effect on the people, as Ellen White writes:

“You asked if you could come back again and connect with me in my work, if you should regain your health. The light I have from the Lord is: She is not converted. . . . I was shown that by your coming to my home, the Lord would give you an opportunity to clear your soul of its guiltiness in connection with me and my work. **Your words had created in others ideas that would be communicated to still others.** The opportunity was granted you to make straight and thorough work, to clear your soul, and place me in a clear and proper light before the people to whom you had spoken, to show that you had acted as my adversary. The light given me of God is that it was not the will of the Lord henceforth that you should have the least connection at any time with me and the work which God had given me to do.--Letter 25, 1897, p. 4,5. (To Fannie Bolton, April 11, 1897.)” - *Manuscript Releases*, Vol. 9, p. 274.1

“I can write but little to you now at this time. I have very much writing to do to complete the ‘Life of Christ’ [The Desire of Ages], and I have been called away so much that I have but little time to write. **But my soul is made very sad to see how quickly those who have had light and truth will accept the deceptions of Satan, and be charmed with a spurious holiness, like Fannie Bolton, who in the midst of her deceiving, claimed that she was inspired of God.** When men turn away from the waymarks the Lord has established, that we may understand our position as marked out in prophecy, they are going, they know not whither.” - *Manuscript Releases*, Vol. 9, p. 359.2

The betrayal of Fannie Bolton caused Ellen White a great deal of suffering. She writes:

“Fannie Bolton has failed me after causing me the most intense suffering of mind by her tragic attitudes and her exalted opinion of her superior qualifications. She no longer has any connection with me, and she never will have again.” - *Manuscript Releases*, Vol. 9, p. 268.2

There is an important lesson we can learn from the case of Fannie Bolton, and that is we cannot trust what people write about others, even when they have been closely associated with them.

Points to remember

AS IT WAS IN THE DAYS...

1. Many Adventist who claimed to be looking for the Second Coming claimed Ellen White received her visions from Satan.
2. False reports were circulated around that Ellen White's visions were the result of mesmerism. Many Adventists were ready to believe and circulate that report, including influential people in the publishing houses.
3. Ellen White was accused of fanaticism.
4. With all the false reports circulating, Ellen White was even tempted to question if God was the source of her visions.
5. Ellen White was shown that many who had accepted present truth disregarded her visions. She saw that they did not reject her, but God, when they rose up against the visions.
6. God chose to show His people their errors through Ellen White's visions yet many rejected them. In the time of trouble, these people will cry "Why didn't God show us our wrongs?" The only answer they will get is that God sent them visions to teach them, but they did not accept those visions.
7. Many claimed the visions of Ellen White were only the result of human wisdom.
8. Often Ellen White's messages were rejected because people's sins were reprovved.
9. Even one of Ellen White's secretaries turned against her and spread false rumors. She claimed Ellen White was not honest and did not live up to what she taught.

9. Summary of past chapters

In our study so far, we have seen from many different angles of how God's messengers were rejected. These records are there for a purpose, so that we can learn from them. Let us quickly recap some of the main points:

Noah

1. Noah was rejected as God's messenger by the people of his time.
2. Because it had never rained, he was accused of being a false prophet.
3. He was called a fanatic and was laughed at.
4. Some were convinced of his message, but later they turned against it because of the prevailing unbelief around them.
5. Those who rejected the heaven-sent message used their influence to cause others to reject the message as well.

Moses

1. Moses was rejected almost at the beginning of his ministry because the children of Israel were not delivered the way they thought they should be.
2. They accused Moses of leading them out to the wilderness to die.
3. They regretted listening to Moses and preferred to be slaves in Egypt where life was more comfortable.
4. They believed Korah and those who perished could not have been wrong because they were good men.
5. They wanted to follow another leader who would lead them back to Egypt.

Elijah

1. Some were aroused, but the majority treated Elijah's message with scorn and ridicule.
2. After some time the people began to wonder if Elijah's message was from God. However the leaders urged them to have confidence in the power of Baal and disregard Elijah's prophecy.
3. God's people preferred to see their children die rather than accept Elijah's message.
4. God sent Elijah to a heathen land to be cared for.

Jesus

AS IT WAS IN THE DAYS...

1. The Jewish rulers, who were the leaders in God's church, closed their eyes to light because of pride.
2. They could not accept the fact that God would pass them by and communicate with ignorant shepherds or uncircumcised Gentiles.
3. They would not even verify whether the reports were true.
4. They used their position of influence to turn the people away from finding out if the reports were true.
5. This was the beginning of their rejection of Christ.
6. They eventually ended up accusing Jesus of performing His miracles by the power of Satan.
7. Many of Christ's disciples left Him when the message was too difficult to understand and accept.
8. These people became Christ's worst enemies and misinterpreted and falsified His words.

Ellen White

1. People rejected Ellen White's messages because they didn't like being corrected.
2. She saw that those who attacked her messages didn't attack her, but God.
3. When the time of trouble comes, those who rejected her messages will find they are not ready and will be lost.
4. Someone who was part of Ellen White's team turned on her and spread false rumors, which caused people to reject her writings.

10. A modern day messenger

Now that we have studied how many of God's prophets have been treated in the past, would we expect a modern day messenger to be treated any different? Ernie Knoll is a humble man who has been receiving dreams from God since 2005. At the time of this writing, Ernie has had thirty-five dreams. His dreams contain messages similar to Elijah's, calling God's people to repentance and to prepare them for His soon coming.

Many have been blessed by the dreams, but like the children of Israel, the majority are rejecting them. Like those who at first accepted God's messengers but later rejected them because popular influential people led them to doubt the messages, so many people today have accepted the dreams, but eventually were convinced to reject them.

Just as Fannie Bolton turned against Ellen White and spread false rumors to destroy people's confidence in her work, so Ernie Knoll was betrayed in a similar manner by a lady whom he trusted with confidential information. This lady helped to edit one of Ernie's dreams. He confided in her (as well as others) the name of someone he had seen in one of his dreams who would one day support him and she broke her promise not to reveal who that person was. He shared personal information with her; however, the trust was broken when she published a very lengthy letter on the Internet for all to see, which attacked Ernie's character. That letter has been the cause of many rejecting Ernie's dreams because people believed false insinuations that were written about him.

The dreams that Jesus gave to Ernie contain a variety of compelling messages, some like John the Revelator's, some like John the Baptist's: "Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." There is a clarion call to repentance throughout the messages, a return to primitive godliness and purity, and to prepare ourselves for Jesus' soon return. Ernie's dreams also contain amplification or expansions of prophecies found in Scripture, especially the book of Revelation, and the writings of Ellen White. These include:

1. The purification of the church (22. *The SDA Church*).
2. The sending forth of literature to call people to preparation, repentance and purification (13. *The Mailroom*).
3. Scenes of the four angels holding back the winds of destruction (13. *The Mailroom*).

4. The sealing of God's people, the 144,000 (33. *In His Time*, 16. "Watch, as I Am Coming!", 34. *Repent, as I Am Coming!* and throughout the dreams).
5. The end of Jesus' intercessory ministry (34. *Repent, as I Am Coming!*).
6. The destruction of many cities and coastal areas due to falling balls of fire (5. *Buildings Falling*, 29. *Get Ready*, 33. *In His Time*).
7. The coming of Satan, the Angel of the abyss (19. *If You Love Me*).
8. The institution of the Mark of the beast/Sunday laws (10. *Sabbath vs. Sunday*, 29. *Get Ready*).
9. The testing of the loyalty of God's people, even until the martyrdom and the beheading of many (28. *Stand Fast*).
10. Scenes of the 144,000 in remote areas (34. *Repent, as I Am Coming!*).
11. The Second Coming of Christ (34. *Repent, as I Am Coming!*).
12. Views of heaven and the New Jerusalem (1. *At The Table*, 3. *A View of Heaven and a Message for His People*, 21. *The New Earth*).

In Part II of this study, we will be taking a closer look at many of the criticisms Ernie is receiving. You will notice we do not mention the critics' names. Our purpose for writing this book is not to attack Ernie's critics, but to carefully assess their criticisms and point out where they are wrong. We need to be careful we are not deceived by false dreams and visions, but we need to be equally careful we do not reject the true ones.

Some may question whether it is right to defend Ernie Knoll. One only has to do an Internet search on Ellen White to find many websites that defend her and her writings.²² We therefore see no reason why Ernie Knoll and his messages cannot be defended. When Jeremiah the prophet was facing opposition, we are told:

"Had the prophet [Jeremiah] been intimidated by the threatening attitude of those high in authority, his message would have been without effect, and he would have lost his life; but the courage with which he delivered the solemn warning commanded the respect of the people and turned the princes of Israel in his favor. They reasoned with the priests and false prophets, showing them how unwise would be the extreme measures they advocated, and their words produced a reaction in the minds of the people. **Thus God raised up defenders for His servant.**" - *Prophet and Kings*, p. 418.1

²² See www.ellen-white.com/, www.ellenwhitedefend.com/index.htm, www.ellenwhite.info/, www.ellengwhitetruth.com/

PART II - Ernie Knoll's Critics

The Tithe Issue

The majority reject Ernie's dreams because of what the Herald has said about tithe. One popular critic has said:

"Here the Herald says that if someone gives 'tithe' and 'they understand that the funds are not being used according to His will, that person will be held accountable.' He also said that because 'many tributes [tithe]' are being used for 'spiritualism within God's church' that therefore, 'That is not God's storehouse.'

After reading this, my mind was deeply troubled." - *critic*

This critic then goes on to try and prove the Herald contradicts the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy. However as you will see, this proof is a twisting of the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy.

"[The Bible] 'Now Jesus sat opposite the treasury and saw how the people put money into the treasury. And many who were rich put in much. Then one poor widow came and threw in two mites, which make a quadrans. So He called His disciples to Himself and said to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you that this poor widow has put in more than all those who have given to the treasury; for they all put in out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty put in all that she had, her whole livelihood' (Mark 12:41-44).

Critic's comment: The Jewish 'treasury' at that time was corrupt, yet Jesus commended the poor woman for putting her money there because she loved God's cause. Jesus did not hold her 'accountable' for what was occurring in that temple, or because of how her money might be misused. Instead, He commended her unselfish act and inspired His gospel writers to record this event to instruct His church to the end of time."

We need to realize Jesus did not commend the poor woman for supporting a corrupt leadership in the church. He commended her motive in giving the last of what she had even though its monetary value was worthless.

"The Saviour called his disciples to him and bade them mark the widow's poverty; and as they stood looking at her, words of commendation from the Master's lips fell unexpectedly upon her ear: 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, that this poor widow hath cast in more than they all.' Tears of joy filled the poor woman's eyes as she felt that her **act was understood and appreciated by Jesus**. Many would have advised her to appropriate her small pittance to her own use rather than to give it into the hands of well-

fed priests, to be lost among the many and costly gifts donated to the temple; **but Jesus understood the motives of her heart.** She believed in the service of the temple as appointed by God, and she was anxious to do her utmost to sustain it. She did what she could, and her act was destined to be as a monument to her memory through all time, and her joy in eternity. Her heart went with her gift, the amount of which was estimated, not by its intrinsic value, but by the love to God and interest in his work which had prompted the deed.” - *The Spirit of Prophecy*, Vol. 3, p. 72.1

There is no proof (to our knowledge) that this poor widow was aware of the corruption in the “church.” There is no proof either that the widow was paying tithe. In fact, if she had been paying tithe, it would have only been one tenth of all that she had.

The next proof text the critic uses is:

“[Ellen White] ‘Some have been dissatisfied and have said: ‘I will not longer pay my tithe; for I have no confidence in the way things are managed at the heart of the work.’ But will you rob God because you think the management of the work is not right? ... do not withdraw from the work of God, and prove unfaithful, because others are not doing right.’ (9T 249)

Critic’s comment: If some are not doing right, even at “the heart of the work,” we should still pay our tithe there, or we are robbing God.”

Although this may seem to support the critic’s opinion, in fact Ellen White was addressing people who had stopped paying tithe altogether or were diverting it into lines that tithe should not support. This critic needs to read the full context. The Herald does not teach we should stop paying our tithe. The critic’s next argument for rejecting the tithe continues:

“[Ellen White] ‘Cannot you see that it is not best under any circumstances to withhold your tithes and offerings because you are not in harmony with everything that your brethren do? The tithes and offerings are not the property of any man, but are to be used in doing a certain work for God. Unworthy ministers may receive some of the means thus raised, but dare anyone, because of this, withhold from the treasury and brave the curse of God? I dare not.’ (2 *Sermons and Talks*, 74).

Critic’s comment: Some of our tithe may be misused and go to ‘unworthy ministers,’ but this is no reason not to pay our tithes into ‘the

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treasury.' It is "not best under any circumstances" to withhold our tithe; if we do, we risk the curse of God."

Again Ellen White is addressing people who had stopped paying tithe altogether. We need to ask ourselves, is the organized church the only valid treasury? We will answer this shortly. The critic continues:

"[Ellen White] 'I was shown that the recording angel makes a faithful record of every offering dedicated to God and put into the treasury, and also of the final result of the means thus bestowed... Even though the means thus consecrated be misapplied, so that it does not accomplish the object which the donor had in view,--the glory of God and the salvation of souls,--those who made the sacrifice in sincerity of soul, with an eye single to the glory of God, will not lose their reward. Those who have made a wrong use of means dedicated to God will be required to give an account of their stewardship.' (2T 518-519).

Critic's comment: Even if the tithe is misapplied, the angels make a faithful record of the giver's contribution. They will not lose their reward."

The critic is correct if we understand the true context relates to people who gave and were not aware of the corruption they were supporting, as you can see below from the full context.

"Families in poverty, who had experienced the sanctifying influences of the truth and who therefore prized it and felt grateful to God for it, have thought that they could and should deprive themselves of even the necessities of life in order to bring in their offerings to the treasury of the Lord. Some have deprived themselves of articles of clothing which they really needed to make them comfortable. Others have sold their only cow and have dedicated to God the means thus received. **In the sincerity of their souls, with many tears of gratitude because it was their privilege to do this for the cause of God, they have bowed before the Lord with their offering and have invoked His blessing upon it as they sent it forth, praying that it might be the means of bringing the knowledge of the truth to souls in darkness.** The means thus dedicated **has not always been appropriated as the self-sacrificing donors designed.** Covetous, selfish men, having no spirit of self-denial or self-sacrifice themselves, have handled unfaithfully means thus brought into the treasury; and they have robbed the treasury of God by receiving means which they had not justly earned. Their unconsecrated, reckless management has squandered and scattered means that had been consecrated to God with prayers and tears.

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I was shown that the recording angel makes a faithful record of every offering dedicated to God and put into the treasury, and also of the final result of the means thus bestowed. The eye of God takes cognizance of every farthing devoted to His cause, and of the willingness or reluctance of the giver. **The motive in giving is also chronicled.** Those self-sacrificing, consecrated ones who render back to God the things that are His, as He requires of them, will be rewarded according to their works. Even though the means thus consecrated be misapplied, **so that it does not accomplish the object which the donor had in view,**--the glory of God and the salvation of souls,--those who made the sacrifice in sincerity of soul, with an eye single to the glory of God, will not lose their reward." - *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol 2, p. 518

These faithful givers gave because they believed their sacrifice would be used to help others enter the kingdom of God. Their motive is all that God is concerned about. God does not hold us accountable for something we do not know. Ernie's dreams teach that it is only when we know we are supporting corruption that we will be held accountable. The critic continues with the following:

"[Ellen White] 'When persons declare that they will not pay their tithes because the means is not used as they think it ought to be, will the elder of the church or the minister sympathize with the sinners? Will he aid the enemy in his work? Or will he, as a wise man endued with knowledge, go to work to correct the evil and remove the stumblingblocks? Let those who are dissatisfied state plainly their grievances to the ones who they think have erred instead of talking the matter over with others and thus fanning the flame of discontent.' (2 *Sermons and Talks*, 75).

Critic's comment: Those who don't pay their tithes because they think it is being misused are unknowingly aiding the enemy in his work and 'fanning the flame of discontent.'"

Yet again Ellen White is warning those who had stopped paying tithe. This quote does not deal with the issues the Herald speaks about. The critic then says:

"[Ellen White] 'God's reserved resources are to be used in no such haphazard way. The tithe is the Lord's, and those who meddle with it will be punished with the loss of their heavenly treasure unless they repent. Let the work no longer be hedged up because the tithe has been diverted into

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various channels other than the one to which the Lord has said it should go.' (9T 249).

Critic's comment: The tithe issue is a life and death matter. Those who 'meddle' with it will be 'punished' with the 'loss of their heavenly treasure.' The tithe is not to be diverted into other channels, or paid in a 'haphazard way,' for this would hinder God's work."

If the critic had quoted the next sentence the context would have been a lot clearer and it would have revealed they misused the above quote to support their position. Ellen White continued to say "*Provision is to be made for these other lines of work. They are to be sustained, but not from the tithe. God has not changed; the tithe is still to be used for the support of the ministry.*" Ellen White was addressing people who were putting their tithe into other lines of work that was not the ministry. The Herald does not advocate this. The critic is misapplying the Spirit of Prophecy to support a wrong view.

This popular critic then makes the following conclusion:

"Many are reading the dreams. As EGW warned, much is 'all straight.' But once 'the Herald' gains people's confidence, we don't know where this will go. Someone might say, 'Yes, that's why we keep testing everything by the Bible and SOP, for the Herald himself said to do this.' Well, two dreams ago the Herald made comments about tithe that were clearly wrong. He introduced 'a jot here, a tittle of error there.' His words have now alerted many, many people, that the Herald is a deceiver. Just this past weekend I was at a church retreat with many of my friends from the Templeton Hills church, where I used to pastor. Ernie had previously spoken to some of the leaders of that church. Since that time, some had been reading the dreams, watching this develop. But when the Herald spoke about tithe, that was it. They knew he was wrong, and this changed everything. It was one of the elders of that church that mentioned Roger Morneau's book to me. In the last dream 'the Herald' said, 'Many did not understand the things you were shown in the last dream either.' Well, the problem for the Herald is that some of us do understand, all too well, exactly what he said, and now we know that he is a demon, not a true angel of God. We will give no credence to any future 'explanations,' for we are 'not ignorant of his devices' (2 Cor. 2:11). Paul warned about those who 'by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple' (Romans 16:18)."

If your conclusion is based on misapplied quotes, then all you have is a false conclusion. This critic is doing exactly what the Jewish leaders did when they accused Jesus of casting out demons by the power of Beelzebub. Jesus warned us of the dangers of doing this. If we are going to reject Ernie's dreams, let's do it based on solid Bible and Spirit of Prophecy teachings; else we will sin against the Holy Spirit.

Are we accountable for who we pay our tithes to?

We have just seen how one popular critic twisted the Spirit of Prophecy and concluded the Herald was a demon. This critic is not the only one who is guilty of this. One Internet ministry made the following public statement:

“For the next several months each of Mr. Knoll's dreams were examined and discussed by the group in the special forum opened for that purpose. By May of 2008 a decision was reached concerning the source of Ernie Knoll's dreams and the conclusions are given in this statement. Though a number of discrepancies were noted throughout the dreams, it was not felt that these alone were enough to make a definitive decision regarding the source of the dreams. It was the examination of the 'Stand Fast' dream of February 5, 2008, that solidified the decision of the majority of the study group... When compared to the inspired counsel of both the Word of Scripture and Ellen G. White, nowhere can such a statement be found that the tithe payer is guilty if tithe funds are misused.” - *critic*

Notice they found no solid reason to reject the dreams until they came to the issue regarding tithe. Let us examine exactly what Ernie has been shown in regards to the tithe:

“The Herald turns to me and says, 'It is important that His people understand while it is important that we are to return a tithe to God's storehouse, it is equally important that they understand what the funds are being used for. If an individual is providing funds and they understand that the funds are not being used according to His will, that person will be held accountable.’” - *Stand Fast*, Feb. 5, 2008

“If an individual is providing funds and they understand that the funds are not being used according to His will, that person will be held accountable if they do nothing about bringing it to the attention of the recipient, the one who holds the keys.” - *Testing the Spirits*, May 12, 2008

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Notice that we are only held accountable for two reasons:

1. Knowing that the funds are not being used according to God's will.
2. We do nothing about bringing it to the recipient's attention.

For those who are ignorant of their tithes being misused, God does not hold them accountable, just as God takes into account those who are ignorant of His truth and judges them according to what they know. We are held accountable to God in many areas of our lives. Some of these areas include:

1. Privileges, time and abilities

“Young men should remember that they are **accountable for all the privileges** they have enjoyed, for the improvement of their time, and for the right use of their abilities. They may inquire, Shall we have no amusement or recreation? Shall we work, work, work, without any variation?” - *The Adventist Home*, p.507

2. Our children

“Parents, you carry responsibilities that no one can bear for you. As long as you live, you are **accountable to God** to keep His way. . . . Parents who make the word of God their guide, and who realize how much their children depend upon them for the characters they form, will set an example that it will be safe for their children to follow.” - *The Adventist Home*, p.187.1

3. Our means

“The possession of the Word of God places great responsibilities upon us; **for it makes us accountable for the means that he entrusts to us**. It is a great privilege to have money to invest in the cause of God; and that man is blessed who desires to place it where instead of ministering to selfish desires, it will help to work out the purposes of God. The offerings made to help carry out the plan of salvation, bring joy to the giver and glory to the One for whose sake they are made.” - *The Review and Herald*, Mar. 5, 1908 par. 6

“Some think that only a portion of their means is the Lord's, but this is a mistake. All is the Lord's. **All should feel their accountability to appropriate the means as the different necessities of the work shall**

demand. There are poor to be helped. If you put out of your power the talents lent you by God to do this work, you are held responsible for the work you should have done. You place man as God, and he feels fully authorized to use the purchased talents just as he pleases, when he might listen to the calls for help. You put it out of your power to do the work you feel impressed to do.” - *The Publishing Ministry*, p. 233

4. Our income

“But not so does God regard the matter. The ability to write a book is, like every other talent, a gift from Him, for the improvement of which the possessor is accountable to God; and he is to invest the returns under His direction. Let it be borne in mind that it is not our own property which is entrusted to us for investment. If it were, we might claim discretionary power; we might shift our responsibility upon others, and leave our stewardship with them. But this cannot be, because the Lord has made us individually His stewards. **We are responsible to invest this means ourselves.** Our own hearts are to be sanctified; our hands are to have something to impart, as occasion demands, of the income that God entrusts to us.

It would be just as reasonable for the conference or the publishing house to assume control of the income which a brother receives from his houses or lands as to appropriate that which comes from the working of his brain.” - *Counsels to Writers and Editors*, p. 163

5. Our gifts

“There is not a follower of Christ but has some peculiar gift for the use of which he is **accountable to God.**” - *Ye Shall Receive Power*, p. 218

6. Our tithe and offerings

“Do not rob God. Walk honestly before him. All is his. He has intrusted goods to his agents for the advancement of his work in the world. They are to bring to his treasury a faithful tithe and besides this, they are to bring gifts and offerings as the cause shall demand. God does not propose to do the work which he has intrusted to us. We are to do our part in carrying out the plan of redemption provided for the human race at an infinite cost. God desires us to realize our **accountability to him**, and act as his helping hand.” - *The General Conference Bulletin*, April 8, 1901 par. 17

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"I pay my tithe gladly and freely, saying, as did David, "Of Thine own have we given Thee." A selfish withholding from God will tend to poverty in our own souls. Act your part, my brethren and sisters. God loves you, and He stands at the helm. If the conference business is not managed according to the order of the Lord, that is the sin of the erring one. **The Lord will not hold you responsible for it if you do what you can to correct the evil.** But do not commit sin yourselves by withholding from the Lord His own property. "Cursed be he that doeth the work of the Lord deceitfully" or negligently." - *Sermons and Talks, Vol. 2, p. 74.4*

Please notice the word *if*. This suggests that if we do not fulfill the requirements God *will* hold us responsible.

7. For warning the wicked

"When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die; if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand." - Ezekiel 33:8

8. Reproving sin

"When existing evils are not met and checked, because men have too little courage to reprove wrong, or because they have too little interest or are too indolent to tax their own powers in putting forth earnest efforts to purify the family or the church of God, they are accountable for the evil which may result in consequence of neglect to do their duty. **We are just as accountable** for evils that we might have checked in others, by reproof, by warning, by exercise of parental or pastoral authority, as if we were guilty of the acts ourselves." - *Testimonies for the Church, Vol. 4, p. 516*

"If wrongs are apparent among His people, and if the servants of God pass on indifferent to them, they virtually sustain and justify the sinner, and are alike guilty, and will just as surely receive the displeasure of God; for they will be made **responsible for the sins of the guilty.**" - *Testimonies for the Church, Vol. 3, p. 365-366*

Think about this. If God holds us accountable for our time, talents, children, income, money, warning the wicked and reproving sin in the church, why would He not hold us accountable for who we pay our tithe to *if we know it is going to be misused*? If this was not the case, God would not be consistent. If you are

knowingly supporting a corrupt organization, you are essentially giving your approval to their corruption. We are told:

“It would be poor policy to support from the treasury of God those who really mar and injure His work, and who are constantly lowering the standard of Christianity.” - *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 3, p. 553.2

All of this counsel is supported by the Spirit of Prophecy as shown in the following passages:

“If the conference business is not managed according to the order of the Lord, that is the sin of the erring one. **The Lord will not hold you responsible for it if you do what you can to correct the evil.** But do not commit sin yourselves by withholding from the Lord His own property. ‘Cursed be he that doeth the work of the Lord deceitfully’ or negligently.” - *Sermons and Talks* Vol. 2, p. 74.4

“The churches must arouse. **The members must awake out of sleep and begin to inquire, How is the money which we put into the treasury being used?** The Lord desires that a close search be made. Are all satisfied with the history of the work for the past fifteen years? Where is the evidence of the co-working with God? Where has been heard throughout the churches the prayer for the help of the Holy Spirit? Dissatisfied and disheartened, we turn away from the scene.” - *The Kress Collection*, p. 120.3

“I was shown how important it is that the ministers who engage in the solemn, responsible work of proclaiming the third angel’s message be right. The Lord is not straitened for means or instruments with which to do His own work. He can speak at any time, by whom He will, and His word is powerful and will accomplish the thing whereunto it is sent. But if the truth has not sanctified, made pure and clean, the hands and heart of him who ministers in holy things, he is liable to speak according to his own imperfect experience; and when he speaks of himself, according to the decisions of his own unsanctified judgment, his counsel is not then of God, but of himself. As he that is called of God is called to be holy, so he that is approved and set apart of men must give evidence of his holy calling and show forth in his heavenly conversation and conduct that he is faithful to Him who hath called him. There are fearful woes for those who preach the truth, but are not sanctified by it, **and also for those who consent to receive and maintain the unsanctified to minister to them in word and doctrine.** I am alarmed for the people of God who profess to

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believe solemn, important truth, for I know that many of them are not converted nor sanctified through it. Men can hear and acknowledge the whole truth, and yet know nothing of the power of godliness. All who preach the truth will not themselves be saved by it. Said the angel: 'Be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the Lord.'" - *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 1, p. 261-262

We have no excuse to stop paying tithe. It is rightfully God's. Ernie and the Herald have never counseled us to stop paying tithe like many critics imply. If we see that our tithe is being misused by our local conference and we have tried to correct the corruption, we need to send our tithe elsewhere where it will be used to support those who are genuinely working for God. This may be another conference or it may be a self-supporting ministry. You are responsible for the money God has given you and you need to seek God's guidance regarding where He wants it sent. Don't let anyone deceive you on this matter.

What do the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy teach regarding who we pay our tithe to?

Where does God require us to place our tithe?

"Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it." - Mal 3:10

"In the tithe, with gifts and offerings, He has made provision for this work. Thus He intends that the ministry of the gospel shall be sustained. He claims the tithe as His own, and it should ever be regarded as a sacred reserve, **to be placed in His treasury** for the benefit of His cause. He asks also for our free-will gifts and offerings of gratitude. All are to be devoted to the sending of the gospel unto the uttermost parts of the earth." - *Christ Object Lessons*, p. 300.3

Where then is God's treasury or storehouse?

"There are only **two places** in the universe where we can **place our treasures**,--**in God's storehouse or in Satan's**; and all that is not devoted to God's service is counted on Satan's side, and goes to strengthen his cause." - *Counsels on Stewardship*, p. 35.4

There is no question that when God's church is faithful, it is His storehouse. But there is no quote that tells us the church is the *only* storehouse.

What did Ellen White do with her tithe?

"I have **myself appropriated my tithe to the most needy cases brought to my notice**. I have been instructed to do this" - *Spalding and Magan Collection*, p. 215.4

How long did Ellen White pay her tithes to the neglected southern workers?

"It has been presented to me **for years that my tithe was to be appropriated by myself** to aid the white and colored ministers who were neglected and did not receive sufficient properly to support their families. When my attention was called to aged ministers, white or black, it was **my special duty** to investigate into their necessities and supply their needs. This was to be **my special work**, and I have done this in a number of cases. No man should give notoriety to the fact that **in special cases** the tithe is used in that way." - *Spalding and Magan Collection*, p. 215.2

"Some cases have been kept before me **for years**, and I have supplied their needs **from the tithe**, as God has instructed me to do." - *Spalding and Magan Collection*, p. 215.5

Did Ellen White's practice of supporting neglected workers mean she was withholding tithe from the Lord's treasury?

"I have myself appropriated my tithe to the most needy cases brought to my notice. I have been instructed to do this; **and as the money is not withheld from the Lord's treasury**, it is not a matter that should be commented upon; for it will necessitate my making known these matters, which I do not desire to do, because it is not best." - *Spalding and Magan Collection*, p. 215.4

Ellen White supported ministers with credentials from the church. Surely that is why she was not withholding tithe from the treasury?

"There are ministers' wives, Sisters Starr, Haskell, Wilson and Robinson, who have been devoted, earnest, whole-souled workers, giving Bible readings and praying with families, helping along by personal efforts just as successfully as their husbands. These women give their whole time, and are

told that they receive nothing for their labors because their husbands receive their wages. I tell them to go forward and all such decisions shall be reversed. The Word says, 'The laborer is worthy of his hire.' When any such decision as this is made, I will in the name of the Lord, protest. **I will feel it in my duty to create a fund from my tithe money, to pay these women** who are accomplishing just as essential work as the ministers are doing, and this tithe I will reserve for work in the same line as that of the ministers, hunting for souls, fishing for souls." - *Spalding and Magan Collection*, p. 118

Was Ellen White ever an example to others in what she did with her tithe?

"Some cases have been kept before me for years, and I have supplied their needs from the tithe, as God has instructed me to do. **And if any person shall say to me, Sister White, will you appropriate my tithe where you know it is most needed, I shall say, Yes, I will; and I have done so.**" - *Spalding and Magan Collection*, p. 215.5

Did Ellen White ever commend people for not paying their tithe through the regular channel [church storehouse]?

"**I commend those sisters who have placed their tithe where it is most needed to help to do a work that is being left undone**; and if this matter is given publicity, it will create knowledge which would better be left as it is." - *Spalding and Magan Collection*, p. 215.5

"If there has been cases where **our sisters have appropriated their tithe** to the support of the ministers working for the colored people in the South, let every man, if he is wise, hold his peace." - *Spalding and Magan Collection*, p. 215.3

Since Ellen White was a prophet she was directed to go against her own supposed counsel (to only pay tithe to the church). However, no one else did this, right?

"I do not care to give publicity to this work which the Lord has appointed me to do, **and others to do.**" - *Spalding and Magan Collection*, p. 215.5

Is it wrong to send our tithe to faithful ministers or ministries if we have lost confidence in the way the church appropriates it?

“But for years there have now and then been persons who have **lost confidence in the appropriation of the tithe** who have placed their tithe in my hands, and said that if I did not take it **they would themselves appropriate it** to the families of the most needy minister they could find. I have taken the money, given a receipt for it, and told them how it was appropriated.” - *Spalding and Magan Collection*, p. 215.6

What rule did Ellen White use when paying her tithe to places other than the church?

“I send this matter to you so that you shall not make a mistake. **Circumstances alter cases.**” *Spalding and Magan Collection*, p. 215.6

Is there an example in the Bible where circumstances alter cases?

“And there came a man from Baalshalisha, and brought the man of God [Elisha] bread of the firstfruits, twenty loaves of barley, and full ears of corn in the husk thereof. And he said, Give unto the people, that they may eat. And his servitor said, What, should I set this before an hundred men? He said again, Give the people, that they may eat: for thus saith the LORD, They shall eat, and shall leave thereof. So he set it before them, and they did eat, and left thereof, according to the word of the LORD.” - 2Kings 4:42-44

The firstfruits were to be given to the priests.²³ On this occasion though, the firstfruits are given to Elisha the prophet who was not a Levite. One of the reasons this may have occurred is because all the priest had fled to Judah.²⁴ Circumstances can alter cases.

“There are exceptional cases, where poverty is so deep that, in order to secure the humblest place of worship, it may be necessary to appropriate the tithes. But that place is not Battle Creek or Oakland.” - *Manuscript Releases Vol. 1*, p. 191.1

Ellen White was very clear that tithe was to be used to support the ministry.²⁵ Yet in this quotation, she concedes that tithe may be used to secure a place of

²³ See Leviticus 23:10; Deuteronomy 18:1-4

²⁴ See 2 Chronicles 11:13-14

²⁵ See Gospel Workers, p. 227

worship in *exceptional* cases. Again we see the principle that circumstances can alter cases.

Is there any other example where people in authority have approved paying tithe directly to the needy field when the church is failing to use the tithe correctly?

“6. As to the proper use of the tithe: The outline of a statement on this subject which was agreed upon was briefly this: To give extracts from Sister White's writings as to the tithe and its use; to show that her testimony and her own usual practice was in favor of paying the tithe into the regularly designated treasury, to be used under the counsel of the committees appointed for such purposes; to show further from her writings that when those who have charge of the expenditure of the tithe so far fail in the discharge of their duty that the regularly organized channels for the distribution of tithe become hindrances to its proper use, then in order to carry out the divine plan that the tithe should be expended in the wisest manner for the furtherance of the work, **individuals have the right to pay their tithes direct to the needy fields;** but that this involves a considerable degree of personal responsibility, which must be assumed by those who decide to follow this plan. It was thought that this matter could be handled in a way to show that the departure from the regular plans was authorized only when the regular plans failed to be carried out by those in positions of responsibility.” - *Document file 213 (unpublished from the White Estate) Reported to have been prepared by Willie White, Daniells, and Prescott*²⁶

Are we held accountable if we know our tithe is not used correctly?

“I pay my tithe gladly and freely, saying, as did David, ‘Of Thine own have we given Thee.’ A selfish withholding from God will tend to poverty in our own souls. Act your part, my brethren and sisters. God loves you, and He stands at the helm. If the conference business is not managed according to the order of the Lord, that is the sin of the erring one. The Lord will not hold you responsible for it **if you do what you can to correct the evil.** But do not commit sin yourselves by withholding from the Lord His own property. ‘Cursed be he that doeth the work of the Lord deceitfully’ or negligently.” - *Sermons and Talks*, Vol. 2, p. 74.4

²⁶ www.stepstolife.org/libreria/The_Tithe_Problem.html

According to Ellen White's counsel, has Ernie Knoll provided false information about tithe and offering?

“The Herald turns to me and says, ‘It is important that His people understand while it is important that we are to return a tithe to God’s storehouse, it is equally **important that they understand what the funds are being used for. If an individual is providing funds and they understand that the funds are not being used according to His will, that person will be held accountable.**’ The Great Creator has said to pay a tribute to those who do His bidding. The Herald explains that many tributes are used toward Lucifer’s work of using spiritualism from within God’s church by those who collect and place the funds in a storehouse. The Herald says, ‘That is not God’s storehouse. Those that give a tribute will be able to see the blessing they give in faith when it is placed in God’s storehouse.’ Now I see many who are crying because they have lost all. They no longer have a way to contribute in faith. Some were given an opportunity to give a large portion of the talent they were blessed with but wanted to hold back. They wanted to hold off, because they felt there would still be time. Now that talent is removed from them, and they will be unable to share. I am shown that many could have been blessed, if only faith had been strong in the individuals who could have stepped out in faith. I look at my angel and have no words to say. For the first time I have no questions, just an empty feeling. He says, ‘Let us leave here, as many will not understand what you have been shown. Anyone who does not understand, you are to only tell them that each has to pray and ask for God’s guidance concerning whom and what they support. They are to understand that they will be held accountable for what and whom they support. Again, I am to tell you to tell them that they are to support and pay a tribute to those who do His bidding.’ I tell the Herald that this is a very controversial subject, and that there is much confusion as to God’s storehouse. He calls me by my heavenly name and says, ‘They are to understand that you, like I, are a messenger. I was instructed to share exactly what I have. You are to share exactly what I have shared with you. Those who have questions are to take it to the One who holds the keys to the Great Storehouse.’” - *Stand Fast*, Feb. 5, 2008

“If an individual is providing funds and they understand that the funds are not being used according to His will, that person will be held accountable **if they do nothing about bringing it to the attention of the recipient, the one who holds the keys.**” - *Testing the Spirits*, May 12, 2008

What did Paul say about those who give their lives to the preaching of the gospel?

“Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things live of the things of the temple? and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar? Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which **preach the gospel should live of the gospel.**” - 1 Corinthians 9:13-14

What type of missionary was Paul?

“It was as a **self-supporting missionary** that the apostle Paul labored in spreading the knowledge of Christ throughout the world. While daily teaching the gospel in the great cities of Asia and Europe, he wrought at the trade of a craftsman to sustain himself and his companions. His parting words to the elders of Ephesus, showing his manner of labor, have precious lessons for every gospel worker.” - *The Ministry of Healing*, p. 154.1

Did Paul ever receive support from churches?

“Notwithstanding ye have well done, that ye did communicate with my affliction. Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only. For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again **unto my necessity**. Not because I desire a gift: but I desire fruit that may abound to your account.” - Philippians 4:14-17

“I robbed other churches, taking wages of them, to do you service. And when I was present with you, and wanted, I was chargeable to no man: for that which was lacking to me the brethren which came from Macedonia supplied: and in all things I have kept myself from being burdensome unto you, and so will I keep myself.” - 2 Corinthians 11:8-9

As we have seen, the tithing issue is not as clear cut as Ernie’s critics would like us to think. We believe that the church is the best place to pay our tithes to, but when it misuses the tithes, we have a personal responsibility before God to ensure His money is used correctly to the best of our knowledge. This view has been held by many of God’s faithful people for many years, long before the Herald brought the issue of tithe to our attention.

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Some may object and say that by withholding tithe from the church organization, that faithful ministers on the church payroll will be penalized and eventually there will not be enough funds to support the church. There are two simple answers to this objection:

1. If enough people stopped paying their tithe to the church that it had a devastating effect on the church budget, maybe church leaders would wake up and ask why this was happening and seek to rectify the evils that have led to this.
2. Sadly God's faithful ministers employed by the church are already suffering, not because there is a lack of people paying their tithe to the church, but because so much of the tithe it receives is locked away in investment funds. In some cases, this includes 20 to 30 years.²⁷

We need to ask ourselves the question, do we really believe Jesus is coming soon? Or do we only *profess* it? If we did believe with all our heart, as a church we would not be investing God's money in stocks, property or any other investment, especially long-term investments. God has shown that this practice is not in accordance with His will.

“It should not be the chief consideration of conference officers to **collect and save up money**, for then the real work of the conference, the salvation of souls, will become a matter of secondary importance. Our people should never be permitted to lose sight of a world shrouded in darkness, waiting for the light of the gospel message.

What a change would have been seen in this conference, if all its laborers, with truly converted hearts, had worked with zeal and sanctified ability! Men and women would have been converted to the truth through the preaching of the Word, and these would have reached out for others. Many souls would have been converted, **and these new converts would have brought additional revenue to the cause of God** in their tithes and offerings.

The character of the economy which has often been revealed in the effort to save up means, is an offense to God. He says, ‘The gold and the silver is Mine.’ **Religious and spiritual interests must not be narrowed down and subordinated to the accumulation of means in the conference treasury, that the officers may stand high in the estimation of the people as good financiers.** The Lord looks beneath the surface to the outcome,

²⁷ <http://news.adventist.org/2008/09/market-eclies-wot-affect-avetist-churchs-ivestmet-strategy-leaers-say.html>

and **He does not approve of such financiering.**--Ms 17, 1908. ('The Work in California,' February 15, 1908.)" - *Manuscript Releases*, Vol. 8, p. 8

"In some conferences it has been considered commendable to save up means, and to show a large surplus in the treasury. But in this God has not been honored. It would have been better if the money thus laid by had been wisely expended in supporting diligent, efficient laborers in needy fields." - *Gospel Workers*, p. 456.3

"Some have been fearful of undertaking work in the cities, because this would mean hard and continuous labor and the investment of considerable means. In some conferences it has been regarded as commendable to **keep the laboring forces reduced to a minimum, and thus save up means, and show a large surplus in the treasury,--a surplus that might have been wisely expended in diligent, efficient labor.** Those who have been influenced by such considerations, need to gain an understanding of the magnitude of the gift that the Lord has made for the salvation of a lost world. The Lord can not accept as workers those who, knowing the truth, can go on day by day, carrying no real burden for those who know it not. Many are in need of a new conversion." - *The Review and Herald*, April 7, 1910 par. 17

"And if there is a surplus of means in the treasury, there are many places where it may be used strictly in the appointed lines. In many places the dearth of means is so great that the workers cannot be employed to do missionary work. Every dollar of the money put into the treasury is not needed in _____. Let the Lord's money be donated to support the ministers in foreign countries where they are working to lift the standard in new fields. This is God's money, and He designs that it shall be used in sustaining the ministry, in educating a people to prepare to meet their God. . . .

If you have more means than you need to settle [with] your ministers in a fair, liberal, Christian manner, there are other places where you can help, where there are but few people and poor, and the tithe is limited. Send the Lord's money to them. This I have been repeatedly shown is the way to do. . . ." - *Manuscript Releases*, Vol. 1, p. 189 - 190

We are aware of Ellen White's counsel that the church should have a workers' fund for the aged ministers who no longer can work.²⁸ But we question

²⁸ See Testimonies for the Church, Vol. 7, p. 294

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whether this fund should be invested in worldly enterprises for long periods where it can lose its value. Again we ask, do we really believe Jesus is coming soon? Do we have enough faith that God will support His work? If God's people knew the money they give to the church was being used as it was given instead of being invested for lengthy periods, maybe they would sacrifice more because they know it will be used correctly.

Ernie Knoll's Character

We have seen in our study of God's messengers that often their character is attacked. Satan uses this method because people are more willing to listen to bad reports of people than to study out the truth for themselves. He used it to turn people away from the Sabbath truth as noted below:

"I saw that those who oppose the Sabbath of the Lord could not take the Bible and show that our position is incorrect; therefore they would slander those who believe and teach the truth and would attack their characters. Many who were once conscientious and loved God and His Word have become so hardened by rejecting the light of truth that they do not hesitate to **wickedly misrepresent and falsely accuse those who love the holy Sabbath, if by so doing they can injure the influence of those who fearlessly declare the truth.** But these things will not hinder the work of God. In fact, this course pursued by those who hate the truth will be the very means of opening the eyes of some. Every jewel will be brought out and gathered, for the hand of the Lord is set to recover the remnant of His people, and He will accomplish the work gloriously." - *Early Writings*, p. 69.3

Even Jesus Himself was falsely accused many times. At His trial, Jesus was accused of the following:

"And they began to accuse him, saying, We found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, saying that he himself is Christ a King." - Luke 23:2

Jesus was also accused of being a glutton:

"And all the people that heard him, and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John. But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him. And the Lord said, Whereunto then shall I liken the men of this generation? and to what are they like? They are like unto children sitting in the marketplace, and calling one to another, and saying, We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned to you, and ye have not wept. For John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine; and ye say, He hath a devil. The Son of man is come eating and drinking;

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and ye say, Behold a gluttonous man, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners!" - Luke 7:29-34

Can you imagine the leaders of God's church, the ones who were supposed to be leading the people to God, believed John the Baptist had a devil leading him and they accused Jesus of being a glutton and winebibber! Are we any different today? Is it possible to be as guilty as those who crucified Jesus?

Sadly the answer is yes. God has sent Ernie Knoll to His people with a message of repentance and warning and just like the Jews of old, many of His people are rejecting the message. You cannot reject God's message without rejecting God. Some people are rising up against Ernie Knoll and because they can't fault the messages he delivers, they attack his character.

1. Can a prophet ask questions in their dreams/visions

"There were several things that made me question the origin of the dreams right from the start. One of them was the fact that you could ask the 'angel' anything you wanted in the dreams. It was not like you were really asleep, but that you could have a list of questions that you wanted to ask, and talk to him as if you were awake. The questions that you chose to ask, I remember thinking at the time, were not questions that concerned the people of God as a whole, but more personal questions. I remember you telling me that one of the questions that you asked the angel was that if you should receive tithe, and the angel said yes. That bothered me greatly at the time. Another was about the Bible code. I don't think any serious Bible student would have even bothered with this question." - *critic*

Why should the fact that Ernie can ask questions in his dreams cause us to question the dreams? Dreams are similar to visions. One happens when you are awake and the other while you are asleep. They are supernatural experiences which we cannot explain. Who are we to say what we can and can't do in a dream? Daniel asked a question in one of his dreams.²⁹ Read the book *Early Writings* by Ellen White. She often asked her attending angel questions.

In regards to the questions Ernie asks in his dreams, how are we to know who the answers are for? The dreams are for God's people. Many of His people are still in other churches and may be caught up in some of these issues.

²⁹ Daniel 7:16

2. Does Ernie use false methods for testing the dreams?

“Ernie depends on his heavenly name being spoken by the angel as evidence that it is a holy angel. This is not a biblical concept, or test of the spirits, but is a strange doctrine.” - *critic*

It wouldn't matter what tests Ernie used to test the nature of his dreams, the critics would still condemn him. For example, when Ernie uses the Bible test of 1 John 4:1-2 one critic responded by saying:

“How do we know for certain that Satan's angels cannot make such a confession? And even if the Herald does make a true confession, does this really 'prove' that he is of God and that Ernie has not been deceived?” - *critic*

After the critics gave such responses, Jesus came to Ernie in the “Testing the Spirits” dream and outlined very clearly how we (including Ernie) are to test whether the dreams are from God or from Satan. Even the Herald tells us we need to test the dreams by the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy:

“When you have read these messages did you see any 'nail holes'? If you did, then did you not question? Have you not been instructed to test all dreams against the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy?” - *The Work Now Begins*, Dec. 14, 2007

In regard to the question at hand, we need to remember Ernie is having a dream. It is not reality even though it seems like it is to him. Ernie identifies whether the angel is good or bad by hearing his heavenly name, but this test within his dream does not supersede testing the dreams by the Word of God once he is awake. What prophet, including Ellen White, do you hear explaining the test they applied while having a dream or vision? *It is the message we need to test.*

3. Does Ernie refuse to go to church or Bible study?

“I did some research of my own. First, I asked you if you were involved in a small group, such as a Bible study group or fellowship. You said no. I asked who your close friends were locally, and you said you didn't have many close friends. I asked where you fellowshipped at church, and you said that you didn't attend church regularly, because you often just rested at home

on Sabbath. Other times you visited around to churches, because the church your membership was at was too far away. You also talked about your speaking appointments, but as it turned out, you had really had few speaking appointments, and two of the major ones turned out to be disasters for you because they were cancelled after you arrived.” - *critic*

“How can a body of believers evaluate Ernie’s claims if he does not fellowship regularly at a local church? If he is not a participant in a group fellowship of unbiased Bible and Spirit of Prophecy students, how can he in turn benefit from their study and counsel? He doesn’t even attend the church where he holds his membership.” - *critic*

The second critic’s comments are founded on the first, and we doubt they have even bothered to find out from Ernie just what he does for Sabbath worship. If these criticisms unsettle your faith in the dreams, we suggest you contact Ernie Knoll himself and find out his side of the story, because we know it is very different from what these critics are trying to suggest.

4. Should Ernie come highly recommended by employers or those who know him?

“I was trying to find others who knew you before the dreams came, from whom I could obtain a character reference. I called your pastor, but he didn’t want to talk about you much, and referred me to your father-in-law. I called that number, and talked with your mother-in-law.

God’s messenger will be recommended by others, who will confirm his integrity, faithfulness and godly life in the past, such as past employers, associates, co-laborers and relatives...Ernie does not come highly recommended by his former employer, or those who have known him prior to the dreams.” - *critic*

As this criticism relates to the very integrity of Ernie, we don’t believe we can answer this objection on his behalf. We would just caution believing other’s opinions. If you don’t know Ernie personally and if you haven’t known him for many years, then we think silence on this point is golden. We would like to remind you that all have sinned and come short of God’s glory³⁰ so there is sure to be someone out there who will have something bad to say about us. Also remember the life of Jesus. He didn’t come recommended by the church of his time. Neither did the apostles. Look at the life of Paul:

³⁰ Romans 3:23

“And there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and to him said the Lord in a vision, Ananias. And he said, Behold, I am here, Lord. And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and enquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul, of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth, And hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in, and putting his hand on him, that he might receive his sight. Then Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem.” - Acts 9:10-13

5. Should we reject Ernie’s dreams based on his life before he had them?

The critics really love to use this point in discrediting Ernie’s character. They seem to think that in order to be called of God, one must be living a perfect life.

“From your own testimony, Ernie, the biggest red flag that has been raised is regarding your conversion experience. You shared with us how you were a ‘pew warmer’ for those 25 years that you were an Elder, and didn’t have a close relationship with Jesus. Then, you got sick, lost your job, and lost everything. You began questioning God, then you started blaming God for allowing you to become sick, and cause you to lose your job, and to be humbled to being a person of no importance, even to having to vacuum your mother-in-law’s living room. When you went to bed on the night of December 9, 2006, you were discouraged, angry at God, and wanting to die. You challenged God to prove that he loved you, by coming down and talking to you like He did the other prophets.... According to your own testimony, you were in a miserable frame of mind that night. You had not spent significant time in God’s Word, and admitted you didn’t know Christ. Your prayers were full of bitterness, blame and doubt. You disbelieved the very Word of God, which tells us beyond question of God’s love for us. You were unhappy, discontented, discouraged, begging God to let you die. It was in this frame of mind that you went to sleep. Ernie, I believe your ungodly state of mind gave place to the devil, giving him opportunity, power and occasion for action. You were also begging for a supernatural experience. And you received one, did you not?

It seems apparent that this is what opened the door to a satanic delusion. You were not spiritually prepared to be called to be a holy messenger of God’s pure truth to His people. You were, instead, setting the scene for an encounter with demons.” - *critic*

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“God’s messenger will be a godly example in all things that God’s people can safely follow....Ernie has not been a good example in lifestyle. He admits that he wasn’t following the counsels of the Spirit of Prophecy, such as the Health Message, prior to his dreams” - *critic*

When we read criticisms like this, we first need to remember they can be tainted with the critic’s own interpretation of what they have heard. We really need to ask the person who is being criticized their account of the events instead of believing gossip.

We also should notice that Ernie does not try to cover up his past. He didn’t have to mention his Laodicean state. He didn’t have to reveal how he questioned why God allowed all these bad things to happen to him. However he did, and this reveals he does not try to hide his past.

Now according to the first critic’s conclusion, Ernie’s condition made way for the devil to deceive him. Is this a sound conclusion? Did they compare Ernie’s messages with the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy to test? No. Their conclusion was based on a false premise. For example:

- The apostle Paul wrote a large portion of the New Testament and is considered one of the greatest Christian missionaries. Before he was this great Christian, Paul was persecuting the early Christians. He put some in prison and consented to the death of others. You would hardly say he was living a holy life. Yet it was in this condition that Jesus came to him in a vision. Not only that, but it was the vision that converted Saul. This then contradicts those critics who claim God can only come to those who are holy.
- The prophet Elijah after he had slaughtered all the prophets of Baal and turned the hearts of Israel back to God on Mount Carmel, ran from the presence of Jezebel and later asked God to take his life. He was discouraged and wanted to die. God’s people get discouraged sometimes, even His prophets.
- God gave Jonah a message to deliver to Nineveh and instead of obeying God Jonah went in the opposite direction. One would hardly call him an obedient prophet. Then when the city accepted the message he was upset that they were not destroyed and that people would think he was a false prophet. He was concerned more about his own reputation than the salvation of those in Nineveh. He even asked God to take his life.

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- Moses was one of God's most special prophets and yet look at his character reference. He was guilty of murdering an Egyptian and then later when leading the children of Israel through the wilderness, he sinned against God by taking God's glory upon himself, which prevented him from entering the Promised Land.
- Job suffered much and didn't know fully what was happening. He recorded the following words of despair:

"Why did I not from the womb? Why did I not give up the ghost when I came out of the belly?" - Job 3:11

"Oh that I might have my request; and that God would grant me the thing that I long for! Even that it would please God to destroy me; that he would let loose his hand, and cut me off!" - Job 6:8, 9

"Wherefore then hast thou brought me forth out of the womb? Oh that I had given up the ghost, and no eye had seen me! I should have been as though I had not been; I should have been carried from the womb to the grave. Are not my days few? Cease then, and let me alone, that I may take comfort a little, Before I go whence I shall not return, even to the land of darkness and the shadow of death;" - Job 10:18-21

- God even gave dreams to the heathen king Nebuchadnezzar. This man didn't even worship the true God!
- Even Ellen White had faults the critics could use to suggest her ministry was of Satan. You can read *Life Sketches of Ellen G. White*, p. 32-34 where Ellen White relates the despair she was in and the dream she had that led her to think she would not be saved. It wasn't long after Ellen White had been given her first vision she was struck dumb because she disbelieved they were from God.

Although Ernie had problems, these examples from the Bible show us God can use anyone, despite what they might have been. We need to remember that God's messengers are just as human as ourselves and they probably carry more trials than we do because Satan wants to discredit their message so much. God chooses people not based on what they have done, but on what He knows they will become. How many people are rededicating their lives back to God after reading the dreams? How many people who didn't even know God have given their lives to Him now since reading the dreams?

6. Does God cast us aside if we have doubts?

“If we harbor doubt of God’s love, or bitterness against God in our hearts, we open ourselves up to the evil one....Ernie tells of his doubt of God’s love, his challenge of God to prove His love for him, his blaming of God for his problems.” - *critic*

Many of God’s people, including prophets, have gone through discouraging times. We have seen where Job prayed that God would allow him to die because of his circumstances. After Elijah’s great triumph on Mount Carmel, he fled from Jezebel and declared:

“But he himself went a day’s journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree: and he requested for himself that he might die; and said, It is enough; now, O LORD, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers.” - 1 Kings 19:4

Even Ellen White suffered doubts:

“Up to this time I had never prayed in public, and had only spoken a few timid words in prayer meeting. It was now impressed upon me that I should seek God in prayer at our small social meetings. This I dared not do, fearful of becoming confused and failing to express my thoughts. But the duty was impressed upon my mind so forcibly that when I attempted to pray in secret, I seemed to be mocking God, because I had failed to obey His will. Despair overwhelmed me, and for three long weeks no ray of light pierced the gloom that encompassed me.

My sufferings of mind were intense. Sometimes for a whole night I would not dare to close my eyes, but would wait until my twin sister was fast asleep, then quietly leave my bed and kneel upon the floor, praying silently, with a dumb agony that cannot be described. The horrors of an eternally burning hell were ever before me. I knew that it was impossible for me to live long in this state, and I dared not die and meet the terrible fate of the sinner. With what envy did I regard those who realized their acceptance with God! How precious did the Christian’s hope seem to my agonized soul!...

While in this state of despondency, I had a dream that made a deep impression upon my mind. I dreamed of seeing a temple, to which many persons were flocking. Only those who took refuge in that temple would be saved when time should close; all who remained outside would be

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forever lost. The multitudes without who were going about their various ways, derided and ridiculed those who were entering the temple, and told them that this plan of safety was a cunning deception, that in fact there was no danger whatever to avoid. They even laid hold of some to prevent them from hastening within the walls.

Fearful of being ridiculed, I thought best to wait until the multitude dispersed, or until I could enter unobserved by them. But the numbers increased instead of diminishing, and fearful of being too late, I hastily left my home and pressed through the crowd. In my anxiety to reach the temple I did not notice or care for the throng that surrounded me.

On entering the building, I saw that the vast temple was supported by one immense pillar, and to this was tied a lamb all mangled and bleeding. We who were present seemed to know that this lamb had been torn and bruised on our account. All who entered the temple must come before it and confess their sins. Just before the lamb were elevated seats, upon which sat a company looking very happy. The light of heaven seemed to shine upon their faces, and they praised God and sang songs of glad thanksgiving that seemed like the music of the angels. These were they who had come before the lamb, confessed their sins, received pardon, and were now waiting in glad expectation of some joyful event.

Even after I had entered the building, a fear came over me, and a sense of shame that I must humble myself before these people; but I seemed compelled to move forward, and was slowly making my way around the pillar in order to face the lamb, when a trumpet sounded, the temple shook, shouts of triumph arose from the assembled saints, an awful brightness illuminated the building, then all was intense darkness. The happy people had all disappeared with the brightness, and I was left alone in the silent horror of night.

I awoke in agony of mind, and could hardly convince myself that I had been dreaming. It seemed to me that my doom was fixed; that the Spirit of the Lord had left me, never to return." - *Life Sketches of Ellen G. White*, p. 32-34

Fortunately for Ellen White the dream didn't end there, but it does show that Ellen White struggled with different issues that left her feeling very perplexed - to the point of believing she was lost.

In regards to Ernie, should we judge that God cannot possibly use him because he expressed doubt? The fact that he was praying to God should tell us that he had not given up on God. Maybe we need to experience the trials Ernie was going through to fully understand his actions regarding this point.

7. Is Ernie witnessing enough?

I know this sounds like a strange question, but there is a critic which has attacked Ernie's character and used this point to make Ernie look as bad as they could.

"I asked you about your outreach endeavors. Perhaps, I thought, you were involved in Bible studies, or distributing literature, and so on. You said that you told people whenever you got a chance that you were receiving dreams from God. This did not sound like witnessing at all to me, but rather a way to exalt yourself. This troubled me also." - *critic*

Ernie is doing what God has told him to do. God gives us different gifts to work in His vineyard. Ernie's work is to share with everyone he possibly can the dreams God has given to him. Instead of seeing this as exalting himself, we should see it as exalting God.

8. Can God convert someone in a dream or vision?

"And as I questioned you further about your conversion, you stated that you woke up converted, in love with Jesus. Please tell me, how does one become converted in his sleep? This is an absolute impossibility!" - *critic*

Obviously some people have restrictions that not even God can overcome. Was Saul converted in the vision he saw on the road to Damascus? Yes. It has been reported that there are many Muslims who are being converted to Christianity by dreams they have of Christ. Who are we to say God cannot convert someone in a dream or vision?

9. Does knowing his heavenly name give Ernie a false sense of confidence?

"We will be given our new name and our crown at the same time, after the coming of Christ. Our new names are symbolic of victorious overcoming, of a character perfected by faith in Christ. Not one of us can claim this condition this side of the second coming. To be given a heavenly name would give one a sense of false confidence." - *critic*

It is true we will receive our new name after Christ returns and that is why Ernie cannot remember the name once he comes out of his dreams. As much as he tries, he cannot remember it. However, Ernie is told five times (as of this writing) that he will only see heaven “if he is faithful.”

“The Herald looks at me and says, ‘It is time we leave.’ I turn and plead with him to please let me stay a little while longer. As we lift off the heavenly ground, my heart aches even more. The Herald smiles and says, ‘You know, if you remain faithful to Jesus, you will soon be here and not in a dream. You need to realize that this is a dream and that what God has planned is even better than what you have been shown in a dream.’” - *Stand Fast*, Feb. 5, 2008

This shows that Ernie is never given the sense that he has already attained salvation. Therefore this objection bears no ground. It is interesting to note Ellen White who had seen the wonders of heaven was told the same thing.

“I begged of my attending angel to let me remain in that place. I could not bear the thought of coming back to this dark world again. Then the angel said, ‘You must go back, and if you are faithful, you, with the 144,000, shall have the privilege of visiting all the worlds and viewing the handiwork of God.’” - *Early Writings*, p. 39.3

10. Why doesn't Ernie humble himself when he approaches divinity?

“When a prophet encounters divinity, he humbles himself greatly before Him...In the View of the ‘Heaven’ dream, Ernie casually encounters Jesus, and talks about trivial things. He does not bow before Him in deep repentance.” - *critic*

The critic would have you think that Ernie shows no respect for Jesus. However, the circumstances within the dream determine how Ernie reacts when in Jesus' presence. In the “Heaven” dream the atmosphere is very casual. It would be out of place for Ernie to fall on his knees and declare he was a sinner after experiencing the glories of heaven. We need to take the context of the dream into account. There are at least two accounts where Ernie does fall on his knees before Jesus. In both these scenes, Ernie approaches Jesus in a setting of kingly honor, and as you would expect, Ernie humbles himself.

“We instantly are in a garden of extreme beauty that cannot be put into words. As we walk along a path, we come to an open area. I see many angels lined on each side of the path. They all form one focal point, and that is Jesus who sits on a most beautiful throne. The Herald takes me to Jesus. I fall to my knees at His feet. He calls me by my heavenly name and puts a hand on each of my shoulders.” - *Get Ready*, March 18, 2008

“I turn and see Jesus sitting on the throne. He stands up and walks on the river toward me. Angels that accompany Jesus attire Him with His purple robe and sashes. One angel places a scepter in His right hand, and another places a crown within a crown on His head. He walks over to me, and I kneel at His feet and tell Him how much I love Him.” - *Stand Fast*, February 5, 2008

11. Should Ernie be open to rebuke and counsel?

“God’s prophet will be approachable, responsive, and easy to appeal to....Ernie is not open to rebuke and counsel. His ‘divine’ messenger counsels him to not pay any attention to them.” - *critic*

God’s prophets cannot be reasoned with. Whatever message God has given them to declare, they obey no matter what man might say. Look at the example of Moses. God told him to approach the highest power on earth and Moses did it without asking permission or taking counsel from others. John the Baptist could not be shaken but instead declared his scathing rebuke of the then known “church.”

When you read Ernie’s dreams, you can sense he is emotionally affected by all those who criticize the dreams and lead others to believe the dreams are from Satan. The critics have advised him not to listen to the Herald and to tell him to leave. If the dreams were from Satan, don’t you think God would answer this request? Wouldn’t God rescue him from Satan’s clutches? In the dream, “In His Time,” Ernie does what the critics have been telling him to do:

“Some of them (angels) I recall from other dreams. The one angel who stands in front of the rest is a little taller and more noble-looking. I recognize him to be the Herald. He and the angels come and stand in front of me. He smiles at me, but before he can speak I say aloud in a clear voice, ‘In the name of Jesus Christ whose blood was shed for all that will believe in Him and have everlasting life, I command you to not say a word but depart and never return to me.’ And to the accompanying angels I say,

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'In the name of Jesus Christ whose blood was shed for all that will believe in Him and have everlasting life, I command you to not say a word but depart and never return to me.' The Herald speaks and says, 'The name of the One in whom you command me to leave is the name of the One who has sent me. I cannot leave as He-my Lord, my Master, Michael, the One whom all should call out His name, Jesus Christ-has sent us.'" - *In His Time*, July 12, 2008

It doesn't stop there. Jesus Himself comes down and Ernie says the same thing to Him!

"What you command of the Herald, command of Me.' I look to Him and I say that I do not want to, as I know who He is. He calls me by my heavenly name and says, 'It is not through just your private prayers that I offer and answer to this test but through the prayers of many that I now answer. So ask.' I look to Him and say, 'In the name of Jesus Christ whose blood was shed for all that will believe in Him and have everlasting life, I command you to not say a word but depart and never return to me.' Jesus looks at me and says, 'It is through My blood, it is through My death, it is through strikes I took for you, it is through being nailed to a cross, being separated from My Father, your Father, and dying that I will not leave, I cannot leave. It is through My love for you that I stay.'" - *In His Time*, July 12, 2008

Wow! What can the critics say about that! We are sure they will come up with something. After reading that, how can you believe the dreams are from Satan? If we can't command Satan to leave us in the name of Jesus, what hope do we have? Remember the Bible says we are to resist the devil and he will flee from us.³¹

12. Does Ernie covet his dreams?

"Mr. Knol's comment about praying to have a dream, it came across as if he covets the experience. This is completely opposite to what is found in the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy." - *critic*

This critic believes that all those who receive dreams and visions should have no desire to ask God for another one. They believe that because Ernie has supposedly asked God for a dream it somehow proves the dreams are not from

³¹ James 4:7

God. First of all, let's read the context of where Ernie supposedly asks for another dream.

“Over the last couple months, I have received emails stating that what my angel, the Herald, has been telling me is wrong. I have received counsel that I should ignore what the Herald says and that I should ask for God to send His angels to escort me to safety. I was counseled to remove the web site. I have been told the Herald is an angel of Satan.

Several counseled me to ‘test the spirits.’ I was counseled to follow 1 John 4:1-3, which says: Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.

Knowing that an angel of Satan can only answer that Jesus did not come in the flesh, if the Herald stated this, it would prove that he is an agent of Satan and is trying to deceive many. However, if the Herald answered that Jesus did come in the flesh, then that would mean I am not being deceived.

With these verses in mind, I invited some to join me in prayer that if the Father would send another dream that I would be allowed to ask this question of the Herald. This morning I was given the following dream.” - *Love and Rebuke*, April 12, 2008

In this situation, Ernie is not coveting another dream from God. He only prays that if God sends another dream, he would be allowed to ask a question that would answer those who criticize the dreams.

God's messengers never have it easy. Although they may experience many wonderful things through what God shows them, the responsibility and ridicule that comes with that experience is great. It can be so great that in one of his dreams, Ernie says the following.

“I stand up and notice that it is the Herald. As the horse stops quickly in front of me, the Herald jumps off and comes over. He calls me by my heavenly name and says he has been sent to me. I tell him that I know Jesus does not make mistakes, but can He send these dreams instead to someone who is important and well versed in the Bible and the Spirit of

Prophecy, someone who is better suited for this task.” - *The Work Now Begins*, December 14, 2007

Even if Ernie has asked God for another dream, does this prove he is a false prophet? Does the Bible teach that a prophet will never ask for a dream or vision? No it doesn't. We have very little information about the lives of God's prophets. How can we be so definite that none of them ever asked God for a dream or vision?

13. God's prophets will never deceive people like Ernie has

On July 17, 2009, it was found out that Ernie had made up a testimony of a prostitute named Candace and the study group called the Great Commission Council to help support the validity of his dreams. One critic wrote:

“I sure am glad that I'm not Ernie right now. Jesus said, 'It is impossible but that offences will come: but woe unto him, through whom they come! It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones' (Luke 17:1-2). I cannot judge Ernie's motives. As a mortal being, I cannot read the heart clearly. From my perspective, what started out as the appearance of a sincere individual who wanted to follow the Lord, but who was vulnerable to a tremendous Satanic deception regarding the gift of prophecy, has ended in fraud and deception. Did he know all along that his dreams didn't come from God? Or did he begin to suspect it at some point along the way, but lack the courage to confess, and thus was led to hold out for as long as possible until he was exposed? We may never know until the Judgment.” - *critic*

The truth of Ernie's deception came as a surprise to us and many of his supporters. Our initial response was that a prophet would never deceive people and concluded he was a false prophet. But since studying the Bible, we have found that:

- Abraham lied to Pharaoh and Abimelech. We are told that “he reasoned that he was not guilty of falsehood in representing Sarah as his sister, for she was the

daughter of his father, though not of his mother. But this concealment of the real relation between them *was deception*.”³² And yet Abraham was still a prophet of God.³³

- Jacob deceived his father. “Jacob thought to gain a right to the birthright *through deception*.”³⁴ “*It was not his intention to utter a direct falsehood*, but once in the presence of his father he seemed to have gone too far to retreat, and he obtained by *fraud* the coveted blessing.”³⁵
- David, who was a man after God’s own heart lost his faith in God for a time and “...he thought how unworthy of a servant of Jehovah were the *deceptions to which he had stooped*.”³⁶ He also committed adultery with Bathsheba and had her husband killed to hide his sin and after a time “... excused his own sinful course to himself, until his ways seemed passable in his own eyes.”³⁷ It wasn’t until his sin was publicly made known by Nathan the prophet did David repent of his sin.³⁸
- Peter denied Jesus with cursing and swearing. He later “reflected with horror upon his own ingratitude, *his falsehood, his perjury*.”³⁹

For a more in-depth study of these and other prophets who disobeyed God and yet still remained a prophet, we would recommend our study “By Their Fruits...”⁴⁰

We don’t condone Ernie’s deception, but we do realize he is just as human as all of us. And all of us have fallen short of God’s glory at one time or another and we all struggle against sin. Abraham, Jacob, David and Peter all show us that a prophet is not free from the temptations of Satan, and that sadly, and much to Satan’s joy, they at times fall prey to his devices. In Ernie’s case, he chose to focus on what the critics were saying and Satan was able to lead him to dishonor God by his sin.

³² Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 130.1

³³ See Genesis 20:3-7

³⁴ Christ Triumphant, p. 86.3

³⁵ Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 180.2

³⁶ Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 690.1 - 691.5

³⁷ Spiritual Gifts, Vol. 4A, p. 86.2

³⁸ Spiritual Gifts, Vol. 4A, p. 86.2

³⁹ The Desire of Ages, p. 713.2

⁴⁰ You can find this study at www.4hispeople.info

Questions about Ernie's Dreams

1. How long do we have to test the dreams before accepting them?

“Extreme caution must be exercised before accepting a messenger claiming to have divine revelations. The one receiving the messages should be very cautious before accepting them as from God....These (Ernie's) dreams were accepted as from a divine source without much deep studying and prayerful consideration at the start. The supernatural element was assumed to be from God. This is never a safe assumption. These dreams should not have received endorsement from any godly person until a thorough testing was made for a period of time.” - *critic*

Yes, we need to be cautious of false prophets. Jesus warned us of them. But how long do you suppose we need to wait before we accept Ernie's dreams? How long did the early advent believers wait until they accepted Ellen White's visions as from God?

“After I came out of vision, everything seemed changed; a gloom was spread over all that I beheld. Oh, how dark this world looked to me! I wept when I found myself here, and felt homesick. I had seen a better world, and it had spoiled this for me.

I related this vision to the believers in Portland, who had full confidence that it was from God. They all believed that God had chosen this way, after the great disappointment in October, to comfort and strengthen His people. The Spirit of the Lord attended the testimony, and the solemnity of eternity rested upon us. An unspeakable awe filled me, that I, so young and feeble, should be chosen as the instrument by which God would give light to His people. While under the power of the Lord, I was filled with joy, seeming to be surrounded by holy angels in the glorious courts of heaven, where all is peace and gladness; and it was a sad and bitter change to wake up to the realities of mortal life.” - *Christian Experience and Teachings of Ellen G. White*, p. 61.3

How long did the prophets in the Old Testament wait before they accepted their dreams/visions as of God? How long did the people of Nineveh wait? The record states they believed God straight away and proclaimed a fast and

repented.⁴¹ What about the time of Noah. How long did they wait to test if what Noah said was from God? The record shows they waited too long and as a consequence they lost their lives. In regard to the Spirit of Prophecy we are told:

“Let the Testimonies be judged by their fruits. What is the spirit of their teaching? What has been the result of their influence? ‘All who desire to do so can acquaint themselves with the fruits of these visions. . . .’” - *The Faith I Live By*, p. 296

We would suggest the same test be applied to Ernie’s dreams. What fruit do they bear? In our life they have drawn us closer to Jesus and the same can be said for many others.

2. Has Ernie made false predictions?

“A true prophet’s predictions will come true... At least 2 predictions have not come true, one regarding Doug Batchelor and one regarding _____. These two men do not support Ernie’s dreams. While it may be said that these individuals may yet do so, the longer time passes without such endorsement, the more evident it is that these prophecies from Ernie are false.” - *critic*

Before answering this criticism, we need to ask ourselves what were the predictions that Ernie made? In his dreams, Ernie mentions two people. One is Pastor Doug Batchelor and the other is someone who isn’t named. This second person Ernie was told would one day be working with him. However many of the critics have mistakenly assumed that Pastor Doug Batchelor would also work with Ernie. But, what does Ernie say?

“I turn to my angel and say, “I feel as if there are so few doing the work of God.” He smiles at me and I once again notice his dimples. We turn and quickly go through the corridor into another room. I see many ministers anointed by God. My angel directs me to notice one in particular. I see Pastor Doug Batchelor standing there. I notice as he walks there are angels wearing very bright robes walking in front of him carrying what looks like lamps that light his way. There are other angels around him that carry books, others that walk along to encourage him and direct him in his walk. Surrounding him are many larger angels dressed in battle gear. They

⁴¹ Jonah 3:4,5

encircle the entire group as they move forward. Outside of this group are many, many angels whose robes are black and dirty. They look war-torn and their countenance is not bright. I watch as these angels are constantly trying to attack Pastor Batchelor. Again the angel turns to me and says, "God has many workers in different areas at different levels." I ask him, "Should I share with Pastor Batchelor what I have just seen?" He smiles and says, "It is encouraging to know how the Father watches over you. You do not need to. I am sure he will know. **You both walk a road parallel and your roads will cross.**" I turn to the angel and tell him that I feel very overwhelmed with the depth of the things I am being shown." - *Watch as I Am Coming*, Aug. 2007

Notice that Ernie and Doug Batchelor are walking a road that is parallel, and that these roads will cross. It does not say they will be working together, like many have stated. If we misunderstand the prediction, then it will never be fulfilled and the result will be that Ernie is seen as a false prophet.

In regards to the unnamed person Ernie writes:

"I tell Him that there are so many people who have questions and doubt the dreams and that they don't know who we are. Why are we not reaching many with the messages we are to share? Is there someone **I can be connected with** so that these messages can go out faster? Jesus replies 'Yes, **I will connect you with _____.**'

I turn to see _____ come through the door. I tell _____, 'understand you believe in Acts 2:17.' _____ answers, 'And you have messages that you are to share.' 'Yes,' I reply, 'and I have a hard time sharing because people doubt.' I tell _____ how Jesus was just here and told me that He would connect me with _____. I tell _____ how Jesus and I spoke of how people doubt and are suspicious, how I have trouble reaching His people. Soon many people gather around wanting to hear everything we are talking about. Then before leaving for an appointment, _____ says to me, 'Tell them your story and what Jesus said, then **we need to get started.** We have much to do and little time.'" - *Much to Do*, Oct. 2007

Notice that with this person, Ernie is *connected* with them, and they both work together. Has this prediction failed? We need to remember that many of the prophecies in the Bible took hundreds or even thousands of years to be fulfilled. Jesus said He was coming quickly⁴² but it has been two thousand years. Even

⁴² Revelation 22:12

many of Ellen White's predictions have not yet been fulfilled. Is it fair then to judge Ernie as a false prophet because two of his predictions have not come true within the critics own timeframe?

The critics also like to state that Pastor Doug Batchelor and the unnamed person do not currently support the dreams. However, we have not yet seen a public statement by either of those men to support this.

3. Are Ernie's dreams unclear?

"A vision from God will bring a plain message, so God's people will know what to do...Much about the dreams is unclear. People don't know how to comply. For example, does Jesus like our worship services, or not? How will we know?" - *critic*

We would question whether visions from God are always clear. Who could say there are no unclear parts of Daniel and Revelation? How do we know if Jesus likes our worship services? The answer is simple - understand the context (music styles) and then study the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy. Unfortunately, God's church is currently infatuated with worldly music styles and this is part of the reason why Jesus says "they are your worship services, not mine."

4. Should the dreams be approved by the "brethren" first?

"When 'new light' is proposed, the counsel of many godly men should be sought. It should be studied carefully...Again, no effort was made to counsel with the brethren. In fact, Ernie compared himself to Jesus by explaining that Jesus didn't need to go to the Pharisees for permission to teach the gospel. He explained that since his message was a 'divine' message, he didn't need human approval." - *critic*

First we need to point out Ernie is not presenting "new light." Secondly, it is obvious from the nature of the messages (Love and Rebuke and A Call to Repentance) that the brethren would not accept the dreams. So what would be the point in first getting their approval? John the Baptist didn't get the church rulers' approval before he began baptizing.

"And this is the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who art thou?... And they asked him, and said

unto him, Why baptizest thou then, if thou be not that Christ, nor Elias, neither that prophet?" - John 1:19,25

John's message was a divine message and he didn't need to get human approval. Why would Ernie be any different?

5. Do Ernie's dreams tear down the work of the church?

"A true prophet edifies the church, bringing unity, direction, and focus to God's people. Anything that would tear down the work of the church is not of God...Diverting tithes tears down God's Work. Knowingly accepting tithes is self-edifying." - *critic*

Are the critics suggesting that God's work is being torn down because after reading the dreams, people are choosing to pay their tithes to faithful people who are doing God's bidding? Maybe they first need to check with their conferences just how they are tearing down the work of the church by investing money that has been given to them by faithful people who believed their money was going towards the building up of the kingdom of God. Ernie is not tearing down the church. Among the various aspects of the messages, messages of instruction, hope, encouragement, giving more details about the future, etc., there is a component of rebuke and warning, of a calling to purity, of rejecting this world in favor of what God has promised. Nowhere do the dreams tell us to leave the Seventh-day Adventist church. In fact, "The SDA Church" dream shows the tares will be shaken out of the church. This is hardly tearing it down.

We need to remember the shaking is a painful ordeal. It won't come about by messages of peace. For example, the Spirit of Prophecy reveals:

"Just as long as God has a church, he will have **those who will cry aloud and spare not**, who will be **His instruments to reprove selfishness and sins**, and will not shun to declare the whole counsel of God, whether men will hear or forbear. I saw that individuals would rise up against the plain testimonies. It does not suit their natural feelings. They would choose to have smooth things spoken unto them, and have peace cried in their ears. I view the church in a more dangerous condition than they ever have been. Experimental religion is known but by a few. The shaking must soon take place to purify the church." - *Spiritual Gifts*, Vol. 2, p. 284.1

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“The work was not confined to those present as we have since learned. Some who had remained at home were powerfully convicted. They saw themselves as they have never done before. The angel of God was shaking the place. The shortness of time, the terrors and nearness of coming judgments and the time of trouble, the worldly-mindedness of the church, their lack of brotherly love, and their state of unreadiness to meet the Lord were strongly impressed upon the minds of all. A reform is started; hearty confessions are being made; brethren are coming together.--Ibid.” - *Ellen G. White*, Vol. 2, *The Progressive Years*, p. 333.1

“The shaking of God blows away multitudes like dry leaves.--4T 89 (1876).” - *Last Day Events*, p. 180.1

“Chaff like a cloud will be borne away on the wind, even from places where we see only floors of rich wheat.--5T 81 (1882).” - *Last Day Events*, p. 180.2

“Soon God’s people will be tested by fiery trials, and the great proportion of those who now appear to be genuine and true will prove to be base metal. . . .” - *Last Day Events*, p. 180.3

“When the religion of Christ is most held in contempt, when His law is most despised, then should our zeal be the warmest and our courage and firmness the most unflinching. To stand in defense of truth and righteousness when the majority forsake us, to fight the battles of the Lord when champions are few--this will be our test. At this time we must gather warmth from the coldness of others, courage from their cowardice, and loyalty from their treason.--5T 136 (1882).” - *Last Day Events*, p. 180.4

“The church may appear as about to fall, but it does not fall. It remains, while the sinners in Zion will be sifted out--the chaff separated from the precious wheat. This is a terrible ordeal, but nevertheless it must take place.--2SM 380 (1886).” - *Last Day Events*, p. 180.5

“As the storm approaches, a large class who have professed faith in the third angel’s message, but have not been sanctified through obedience to the truth, abandon their position and join the ranks of the opposition.--GC 608 (1911).” - *Last Day Events*, p. 180.6

6. Do Ernie's dreams confirm Bible doctrine?

“There is a lack of confirming Bible doctrine.” – *critic*

Some critics believe that for Ernie to be a true messenger from God, he needs to confirm Bible doctrine, just as Ellen White did through her writings. However this is not a valid test of a prophet. The Bible says a true prophet will speak in harmony with the Bible. God raises up some like Moses to be leaders and uses them to teach the people. Others like Jonah he raises up to sound a message of warning. Prophets don't always have to fulfill the role of a teacher. However, regarding Ernie's dreams, we wonder just what does the critic mean by a lack of confirming Bible doctrine? As you will see below, there are plenty of Bible doctrines confirmed in Ernie's dreams.

Dreams	Doctrines
1. <i>At the Table</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heaven • Jesus as our Savior
2. <i>The White Blanket</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Righteousness by faith (our protection)
3. <i>A View of Heaven</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Judgment during millennium • Jesus as Creator • Love of God and Christ • Correct type of music • 144,000
4. <i>Old Gray Gate</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shaking time
5. <i>Buildings Falling</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Destruction foretold
6. <i>Call to Repentance</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God's judgments and wrath • Need for repentance
7. <i>Angel on a White Horse</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instruction to share the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy (Ellen White) • Instruction to share God's messages in dreams
8. <i>Go Forth</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work of Holy Spirit • Opposition to truth • Call for God's workers
9. <i>Stand on the Truth</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Importance of the cross
10. <i>Sabbath vs. Sunday</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remember the seventh-day Sabbath
11. <i>Prepare...</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare for God's wrath • Time is short
12. <i>Build an Ark</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not lean on "arm of flesh"

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Dreams	Doctrines
13. <i>The Mailroom</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gospel work • Books of a new order • Four winds held back
14. <i>Creeping Compromise</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reverence in church
15. <i>Keep Going</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work of angels
16. <i>Watch, as I Am Coming</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ellen G. White as a prophet • Importance of overcoming sin • False beliefs exposed • Instruction for the 144,000 • Work of “Elijah”
17. <i>Only One Place to Be</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Importance of being close to God
18. <i>Two Roads</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Admonition to choose Christ
19. <i>If You Love Me</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Danger of evil • Ten Commandments stressed • Work of humble people
20. <i>Sudden Darkness</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional destruction
21. <i>The New Earth</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Description of New Earth • Sabbath on the New Earth
22. <i>The SDA Church</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • False church services • Church triumphant
23. <i>Much to Do</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instruction for ministry
24. <i>The ABC</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instruction on proper books and music
25. <i>Pray for Protection</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Satan’s hatred of God’s messages, especially the book, <i>Great Controversy</i>
26. <i>A Great Work</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health message (diet)
27. <i>The Work Now Begins</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God’s worldwide work • Instruction regarding false dreams
28. <i>Stand Fast</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prayer • Tithe and offerings • First plague • Financial difficulties • Deaths • Martyrs
29. <i>Get Ready</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Satan’s impersonation of Christ • God’s love • Witnessing
30. <i>Love and Rebuke</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God’s rebuke • Angel’s testimony • Nature of Christ

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Dreams	Doctrines
<i>31. Testing the Spirits</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Christ in Most Holy Place • Instruction on testing the spirits
<i>32. The Cross</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lord's Supper • True church services
<i>33. In His Time</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apostasy • Conversion
<i>34. Repent, as I Am Coming</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help the poor • Study God's Word • Be humble • Submit to Christ • Enjoy nature • Inhabitants of unfallen worlds • Second Coming
<i>35. In the Heart of Jesus</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forgiveness • Justification • Sanctification • Overcoming sin and character perfection • Work of Holy Spirit (who is as much a person as God) • Sifting time • God destroys and allows Satan to destroy • Christ as High Priest • Christ in Gethsemane • Godhead (three persons who are one in purpose, mind, and character) • Institution of marriage

7. Hasn't Ernie Knoll himself admitted the dreams are not of God?

Ernie and Becky did send out an email in which they admitted “the dreams were also not from God.” However one needs to take into consideration the circumstances under which they were written. At that time, Ernie was under a lot of stress and his ministry was falling apart because of his actions. In a moment of weakness he rationalized like many of us did, that God could not be the author of his dreams when He had made up the story of Candace and the Great Commission Council. However, by August 5, 2009, after repenting of his sin and carefully reflecting on the way God had led him and receiving dreams that God had forgiven him, Ernie recanted of his early admission and reavowed that the dreams were indeed from God.

When we assess Ernie's situation, we recall Peter's denial of Jesus when under temptation, but later he repented of his weakness. We are also told of the great reformer, Jerome, who denied the protestant faith in a moment of weakness but later recanted of this and died a martyr's death.

“After some months the cruelties of his imprisonment brought upon Jerome an illness that threatened his life, and his enemies, fearing that he might escape them, treated him with less severity, though he remained in prison for one year. The death of Huss had not resulted as the papists had hoped. The violation of his safe-conduct had roused a storm of indignation, and as the safer course the council determined, instead of burning Jerome, to force him, if possible, to retract. He was brought before the assembly, and offered the alternative to recant or to die at the stake. Death at the beginning of his imprisonment would have been a mercy, in comparison with the terrible sufferings which he had undergone; but now, weakened by illness, by the rigors of his prison-house, and the torture of anxiety and suspense, separated from his friends, and disheartened by the death of Huss, Jerome's fortitude gave way, and he consented to submit to the council. He pledged himself to adhere to the Catholic faith, and accepted the action of the council in condemning the doctrines of Wycliffe and Huss, excepting, however, the ‘holy truths’ which they had taught.

By this expedient, Jerome endeavored to silence the voice of conscience and escape his doom. But in the solitude of his dungeon he saw more clearly what he had done. He thought of the courage and fidelity of Huss, and in contrast pondered upon his own denial of the truth. He thought of the divine Master whom he had pledged himself to serve, and who for his sake endured the death of the cross. Before his retraction he had found comfort, amid all his sufferings, in the assurance of God's favor; but now remorse and doubt tortured his soul. He knew that still other retractions must be made before he could be at peace with Rome. The path upon which he was entering could end only in complete apostasy. His resolution was taken: to escape a brief period of suffering he would not deny his Lord.

Soon he was again brought before the council. His submission had not satisfied his judges. Their thirst for blood, whetted by the death of Huss, clamored for fresh victims. Only by an unreserved surrender of the truth could Jerome preserve his life. But he had determined to avow his faith, and follow his brother martyr to the flames.

He renounced his former recantation, and, as a dying man, solemnly required an opportunity to make his defense.” - *The Great Controversy (1888)*, p. 111-112

Answers to common objections

We will now look at the more common objections and accusations raised against the dreams.

1. Do angels reveal their names?

“Throughout her ministry, Ellen White was instructed by one she referred to as ‘my accompanying angel,’ but that angel never identified himself by any specific name. Angels often instructed people in Bible times too, but they never gave themselves names, except one, ‘Gabriel,’ whose name appears only in Daniel 8/9 (in connection with the 70 week/2300 day prophecy) and Luke 1 (in connection with the birth of John the Baptist and Jesus Christ). Because these events were so important, it seems that God felt ‘Gabriel’ should mention his name. But no other angel sent from God has ever done this.” - *critic*

First, let’s look at where Ernie supposedly first identifies the angel’s “name”.

“The angel, still holding my hand, says ‘We must go.’ We turn, and I find myself in the corridor. I notice the horses are gone. I stop and ask the angel his name. He answers, ‘You can call me ‘The Herald’ (he spelled it), but who I am is not important. The Great Adjudicator (he spelled this as well) is the one name we should want to know and speak of.’” - *Watch, as I Am Coming!*, Aug.14, 2007

There are a few points to notice from this quote.

1. The angel does not give his name like the critic tried to suggest.
2. Ernie is the one who asks the angel for his name and not the angel declaring his name.
3. The angel told Ernie to call him the “The Herald” which is a title or job description. What does the word “Herald” mean?

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“Heralds were originally messengers sent by monarchs or noblemen to convey messages or proclamations.”⁴³

It is interesting that when Ernie asks the angel in a later dream whether his name is Gabriel, he is given the following response:

“He smiles at me and says, ‘As I told you before, who I am is not important. The name of the One all should want to know is the Great Judge. That is the one name all should want to know and speak of.’” - *Stand Fast*, Feb. 5, 2008

In still a later dream, we learn:

“The Herald says to turn and look up. The sky rolls apart as a scroll and I watch a scene from the throne of God. I notice the image of the Father command a **most noble angel that stands next to the throne** to go quickly to His Son. I see the angel helping Jesus hold the symbolic cup to His lips. The angel shows Him those that will be saved because of His decision. Jesus knows His choice and for the third time says aloud, ‘Heavenly Father, if it is possible, please let this cup pass from me, but may Your will be done, not mine.’ As the angel stands up, I see his face up close for the first time. I quickly turn to the Herald who tells me, ‘You like I are a messenger. We are to provide messages and care for those we are directed to. Who we are is not important. Remember, the only name that all should have on their lips is Jesus Christ--our Creator and Master, your Savior and Brother.’” - *In the Heart of Jesus*, Sept. 12, 2009

When we compare this description of the Herald with what Ellen White has written, we can only conclude the Herald is Gabriel.

“In this awful crisis, when everything was at stake, when the mysterious cup trembled in the hand of the sufferer, the heavens opened, a light shone forth amid the stormy darkness of the crisis hour, and **the mighty angel who stands in God's presence, occupying the position from which Satan fell, came to the side of Christ**. The angel came not to take the cup from Christ's hand, but to strengthen Him to drink it, with the assurance of the Father's love. He came to give power to the divine-human suppliant. He pointed Him to the open heavens, telling Him of the souls that would be saved as the result of His sufferings. He assured Him that His Father is

⁴³ wikipedia, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Herald>

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greater and more powerful than Satan, that His death would result in the utter discomfiture of Satan, and that the kingdom of this world would be given to the saints of the Most High. He told Him that He would see of the travail of His soul, and be satisfied, for He would see a multitude of the human race saved, eternally saved.” – *The Desire of Ages*, p. 693.3

“Before anyone had reached the sepulcher, there was a great earthquake. **The mightiest angel from heaven, he who held the position from which Satan fell**, received his commission from the Father, and clothed with the panoply of heaven, he parted the darkness from his track. His face was like the lightning, and his garments white as snow.” – *S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, Vol. 5, p. 1110.2

“It was Gabriel, the angel **next in rank to the Son of God**, who came with the divine message to Daniel. It was Gabriel, ‘His angel,’ whom Christ sent to open the future to the beloved John; and a blessing is pronounced on those who read and hear the words of the prophecy, and keep the things written therein. Revelation 1:3.” – *The Desire of Ages*, p. 234.2

There are of course other proofs that help us to reach this conclusion. For example, the Herald is the angel which begins singing when Jesus returns and is the first to stop.

“I hear him [the Herald] begin singing a single note and then this expanding multitude of angels join in. The whole earth is filled with a sound that has not been heard since the first coming of Jesus when He was born from the womb of a virgin.... The Herald is still singing when He suddenly stops and the vast assembly of angels instantly becomes quite.” – *Repent, as I Am Coming*, Nov. 12, 2008

Before Satan sinned and lost his position in heaven, he was the choir leader. Since Gabriel now occupies the position that Satan once held as the highest angel one could reasonably assume that he leads all the other angels in the celestial singing just as Satan did before he fell.

“The hour for joyful, happy songs of praise to God and his dear Son had come. **Satan had led the heavenly choir. He had raised the first note, then all the angelic host united with him**, and glorious strains of music had resounded through Heaven in honor of God and his dear Son.” – *The Spirit of Prophecy*, Vol. 1, p. 28.2

We are also told Gabriel appeared to the prophets. This implies Gabriel could have appeared to many or all of the prophets in the Bible.

“The humble tasks before us are to be taken up by someone; and those who do them should feel that they are doing a necessary and honorable work, and that in their mission, humble though it may be, they are doing the work of God just as surely as was **Gabriel when sent to the prophets.**
- *The Adventist Home*, p. 24.2

The most important point we need to be aware of is that the Herald is a messenger sent from Jesus to wake up His people so that they will be ready for His soon return.

2. Do angels smile?

“In the ABC dream an angel ‘keeps smiling all the time while the machine is smashing and chomping [music] CDs and DVDs.’ Compare this with this. Once EGW saw young people playing bad music. Then she wrote: ‘...such songs were poured forth as made the watching angels weep’ (*Adventist Home*, 514). Thus God’s angels ‘weep’ over bad music. This is nothing to ‘smile’ about.” - *critic*

This popular critic is trying to suggest that Ernie’s dreams are contradicting Ellen White’s writings. However, we really need to read their full context. The context of Ernie’s dream says:

“While they are busy doing this task, the SDA man says to one of the larger angel employees, ‘Please get rid of that.’ He is pointing to the CD, DVD and music stand. I watch as this large angel walks over, wraps his very large arms around the whole display stand and rips it from the wall with ease. We follow as he heads toward the end of the loading dock where a large dumpster sits. He hurls the display into it and smiles at me as he presses a button on the side of the dumpster. He continues smiling as this dumpster, which has a built-in compactor and chipping machine, grinds everything into small bits and then compresses it. He keeps smiling all the time while the machine is smashing and chomping the CDs and DVDs.” - *The ABC*, Oct. 24, 2007

Now let’s look at the context of Ellen White’s statement in *Adventist Home*, p. 514:

“There has been a class of social gatherings in . . . parties of pleasure that have been a disgrace to our institutions and to the church. They encourage pride of dress, pride of appearance, self-gratification, hilarity, and trifling. Satan is entertained as an honored guest, and he takes possession of those who patronize these gatherings.

A view of one such company was presented to me, where were assembled those who profess to believe the truth. One was seated at the instrument of music, and such songs were poured forth as made the watching angels weep. There was mirth, there was coarse laughter, there was abundance of enthusiasm and a kind of inspiration; but the joy was such as Satan only is able to create.” - *The Adventist Home*, p. 514

You will notice the angels here are weeping because God’s professed people are indulging in sin. This situation is very different to what Ernie saw in The ABC dream where the angels are destroying sinful music. This clearly shows that God does not approve of all kinds of music and it shows this critic doesn’t have any real arguments against the dreams, since they felt the need to twist the meaning in both Ernie’s dreams and Ellen White’s writings to make it appear they contradict each other.

3. Is the Herald trying to flatter Ernie?

“EGW wrote: ‘The Holy Spirit flatters no man’ (Signs, Sept. 27, 1899). ‘We cannot praise and flatter any man without doing him a great wrong’ (5T, 75). ‘A man that flattereth his neighbour spreadeth a net for his feet’ (Prov. 29:5). It seems to me that ‘the Herald’s’ comments about Ernie as ‘the bold one’ could easily be part of a well-thought out ‘flattery’ strategy to gain Ernie’s confidence to ‘spread a net for his feet.’” - *critic*

The above counsel concerning flattery is correct, but we need to ask ourselves, is Ernie being flattered in his dreams? Let’s look at all the situations where he is called the “bold one.”

“As he [Jesus] looks down at me and I look up into his eyes, I immediately know who he is. I exclaim, ‘It’s you!’ I start crying and He reaches down and wipes away my tears with His hands. He says, ‘Do not cry as you are the bold one I created you to be.’ - *The Mailroom*, July 24-27, 2007

“He steps back and I suddenly have a feeling of unbelievable happiness. I watch as the angel, who has stood about the same height as me until now, grows to his normal height, which I believe is about 15 feet tall. I watch as

his wings come out from his back and unfold, unfold, and unfold again and he stretches forth his wings. I notice they are curved and remind me of a hawk. I look up at him and I ask, 'Are they real or symbolic?' He smiles and those dimples show even more. He answers, 'You are the bold one, aren't you?' He waves his huge wings one time and is instantly high in the air. He looks at me and says, 'If you remain faithful to your Savior, you will find out.' Then he smiles the biggest smile ever." - *Watch, as I Am Coming!*, Aug. 14, 2007

"I look up at the other angel who is talking all the time and say, 'No, I am not going to walk any further until you tell me my new name.' He says, 'Fine, I will. I know we have said you are the bold one before.' He smiles and a peace comes over me. As I look up at him, I feel as if everything is fine. Then he starts saying a name that I do not recognize. I look straight up and cry aloud, 'My Father! In the name of Jesus, HELP!' Before I can finish the word 'HELP,' the sky rolls apart as if a carpet is being rolled back. Many angels quickly come and stand before me to block the first three angels from being near me." - *If You Love Me*, Sep. 4, 2007

"My angel takes me back into the corridor, smiles a big smile, and says, 'I have a surprise for you. I am now to take you to one more place.' We walk to the other side of the corridor. He holds his right hand on the wall and lets go of my right hand. I try to grab his hand, but he smiles back at me and says, 'Do not worry. This is the way it is to be. Our journey today is finished, but I will see you again soon.' I say, 'But I have questions that need to be answered.' He puts his left hand on my shoulder and says, 'Go through the wall.' I ask, 'Are you coming with me?' He answers, 'Continue to be the bold one.'" - *If You Love Me*, Sep. 4, 2007

The first quote tells us Jesus created Ernie with a bold character. There is nothing wrong with being bold if that boldness is used correctly. The context of the quote also shows us Ernie is not being flattered, but rather encouraged. The second quote reveals Ernie's bold character in asking if the Herald's wings are real. Considering the situation, the angel's response simply acknowledges Ernie's bold character. The third quote shows how the evil angels do try to use flattery to deceive us, but Ernie did not fall for their deception. The last quote is simply encouraging Ernie to remain bold. Ernie was not deceived by anything in this dream.

4. Can evil angels talk to God's people in dreams?

One popular critic wrote:

“In the ‘If You Love Me’ dream, three evil angels were allowed to talk to Ernie. This is most unusual. In no other heavenly dream that I am aware of are evil angels portrayed as talking directly to the receiver of the dream. This is not God’s method of communication. In EGW’s dreams, God often exposed Satan, but he never allowed Satan to talk directly to his servant in a dream.” - *critic*

It would seem the writer of this criticism isn’t aware of the following experience Ellen White had as cited below:

“James was counting the angels, and I stood trembling with fear. My life came up before [me] and looked so full of wrongs I could not see how I should be able to stand. Just then **Satan came where I was and said to me, ‘You are lost; you are now my property [and] will go with me to the dark regions.’** My feelings I cannot describe. To be separated from the Jesus I had loved and to take up my abode with those that I abhorred looked dreadful to me. At the same time, I felt unworthy to be with the lovely Jesus.

While in this dreadful perplexity one of the angels came where I was and said to Satan, ‘She is not your property, for she has been redeemed unto God by the precious blood of Jesus. She is the purchase of His blood.’ Satan fled. My feelings changed. My soul was overflowing with gratitude and thankfulness to God. I saw the saints as there fell [on them] and was reflected from the face of Jesus, light. Their faces would light up as they rose to meet the angels.” - *Manuscript Releases*, Vol. 16, p.171.4

5. Do Ernie’s dreams teach Jesus is only a created being?

“Any message from God will uplift Christ as the divine Son of God, not as a created being...Jesus is called a created being. This is not biblical, nor does it agree with the Spirit of Prophecy” - *critic*

Like many other criticisms, those who use this objection take what the Herald said out of its context and force a meaning that was never intended. Let’s read the full context:

“I watched as Lucifer brought sin onto the world. I watched as the Father, the Son and God’s Spirit laid out a plan to save His created beings. I

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watched as it was decided that Jesus would come to Earth as a created Being. He the Creator would become one of the created. I watched as Jesus our Creator said goodbye to the Father and the Holy Spirit placed Him in the womb as a seed. He was placed in a pure undefiled womb that had never been touched. I heard the silence of heaven because the Creator was no longer on the throne next to the Father. I watched when the Father would look and find the throne next to His empty. I watched as the Father looked forward to the day when His Son would be returned to Him. But yet I saw such love the Father had that He allowed His only Son to give up His place on the throne and become a created Being. Jesus the Creator became a human. He became that which was created in His own image. What more, Jesus would come not only as a man as Adam but Jesus came as Adam in sin. Jesus came with no propensity to sin. Jesus could have sinned, but He did not.” - *Love and Rebuke*, April 12, 2008

The Herald never says Jesus is a created being, but that He became a created being. And to make it even clearer so that we don't misunderstand what he means by that, he says in the very next sentence, “Jesus the Creator became a human.” Jesus is the Creator. He created humanity and we are created beings. Jesus became one of us. In other words, He became a created being. This does not mean He is not divine. The Herald is answering a very specific question in regards to whether Jesus came in the flesh as noted below:

“You ask if I will confess that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. With my testimony and my witness to all that I have seen I do stand before my Creator, the Father, the Holy Spirit, and all of His created beings throughout the universe. I do openly and without reservation declare with my voice, yes, Jesus Christ, Son of the Father, came in the flesh.” - *Love and Rebuke*, April 12, 2008

Notice also what Ellen White wrote regarding Jesus' humanity:

“His human nature must pass through the same test and trial Adam and Eve passed through. **His human nature was created**; it did not even possess the angelic powers. It was human, identical with our own. He was passing over the ground where Adam fell. He was now where, if He endured the test and trial in behalf of the fallen race, He would redeem Adam's disgraceful failure and fall, in our own humanity.” - *Selected Messages Book 3*, p.129

6. Does the Herald teach Jesus was a sinner?

Some critics like to suggest the dreams teach Jesus was born a sinner and support this with the following quote from the “Love and Rebuke” dream.

“Jesus the Creator became a human. He became that which was created in His own image. What more, Jesus would come not only as a man as Adam but Jesus came as Adam in sin.” - *Love and Rebuke*, April 12, 2008

However, in their attempt to find problems with the dreams, they fail to quote the very next sentence as underlined below :

“Jesus the Creator became a human. He became that which was created in His own image. What more, Jesus would come not only as a man as Adam but Jesus came as Adam in sin. Jesus came with no propensity to sin. Jesus could have sinned, but He did not.” - *Love and Rebuke*, April 12, 2008

The point the Herald is trying to make is Jesus came in man’s fallen flesh, with all our weaknesses, so that He could experience fully what we must go through.⁴⁴ The Herald leaves us no doubt regarding whether Jesus sinned or was inclined to sin. He plainly states Jesus had no propensity to sin and He did not sin. This point cannot be stressed enough when we talk about the nature of Christ.

7. Do Ernie’s dreams tell us not to study the Bible?

The critics would like you to think Ernie’s dreams belittle Bible study in exchange for being led by the Spirit. For example:

“Now consider one of the most significant troubles I find in the dreams. Ernie and his believers are led to expect guidance and answers from the Holy Spirit and from angels and from dreams. And where they might be directed to do earnest Bible study or searching of the Testimonies, they are rather directed to seek direction from a more direct communication from heaven. This is sometimes subtle, yet pervasive throughout.

Here is the crux of the matter: Satan fears the effect of earnest Bible study. He has always been gratified if he could lead men to seek for

⁴⁴ See Romans 8:3, 1 John 4:2, Hebrews 4:15

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impressions of the 'Holy Spirit.' Ellen White never cooperated with this hellish aim. Her warnings are filled with calls to earnest Spirit-powered Bible searching.

False messengers of the past have led the people, as we might expect, to seek for spiritual feelings, for the guidance of the 'Holy Spirit.' They confound the feelings for the Spirit." - *critic*

This criticism can be answered by quoting one passage from Ernie's dreams where Jesus quotes from the book *The Great Controversy* on how to test the spirits:

"The Great Controversy, Introduction, vii

The Spirit was not given – nor can it ever be bestowed – to supersede the Bible; for the Scriptures explicitly state that the word of God is the standard by which all teaching and experience must be tested." - *Testing the Spirits*, May 12, 2008

Is there any other evidences from the dreams that reinforce the idea we should be studying our Bibles?

"The Herald and I return to the inside of the store where we notice the SDA man in one of the aisles. He is on his knees cleaning and dusting books. As I get closer I notice it is the area where the Spirit of Prophecy books are kept. He lovingly takes each book off the shelf, removes its old yellowed wrapper and places it back on the shelf. Now the angels place many different Spirit of Prophecy books on the now empty shelves.

My angel and I go to the area where the Bibles are and now see only the King James Version. The angels are hanging banners. One is titled 'Study as if it was your final.' Another has 'Are you looking for answers?' The last one reads 'He is the Word, the Author, the Truth, the Way.'" - *The ABC*, Oct. 24, 2007

"You were told if they do not understand you were to ONLY tell them to take their questions to the One who holds the keys to the Great Storehouse. You were wrong in what you did in sharing your studies. How can others learn and depend on God if you do the studying for them. How can they learn to have a close relationship to the Father if you don't allow them to pray? Each must take their questions and reservations to the Creator. Each must learn to stand by themselves before the Father." - *Love and Rebuke*, April 12, 2008

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“We walk through the front doors and proceed into a classroom. I have been in this classroom as well but do not recall where. He looks at me and says, ‘We are going to study how My people need to test the spirits. My people need to understand that each must study and know who I am and listen to My voice. They need to understand that it is important to test the spirits. There are and will be many who prophesy in My name. But My people of weak mind do not know how to test these spirits. They quickly ask these bright lights to tell them what or who to believe. These bright lights think they know all because they have been placed in a high position. They are deceived in their own thinking. Each has to study to know how to test the spirits. Each has to look for themselves whom I have sent.’” - *Testing the Spirits*, May 12, 2008

“Jesus turns to me and explains that many who have said wrongs against me are not what people think they are. {1} Many people would rather listen to others than to study to know God’s voice. Many will say they speak and perform miracles in His name. Jesus says, ‘I tell you this, I know them not!’ {2} Jesus now begins writing in the sky:” - *In His Time*, July 12, 2008

Even Jesus in the Testing The Spirits dream quotes from the Spirit of Prophecy in how we need to study the Bible.

“Special Testimonies, Series B, No. 17, pp. 25-29

My brethren and sisters, leave all minor tests that you may be tempted to make, and test your spirit by the witness of the Word of God. Study that Word, that you may know the character and will of God. It is positively essential that every believer make the truths of the Bible his guide and safeguard. To every young man and woman, and to those of advanced years, I testify that the study of the Word is the only safeguard for the soul who would remain steadfast unto the end.” - *Testing the Spirits*, May 12, 2008

Ernie’s dreams also point out the importance of the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy.

“He stops and I ask if my wife and I are correct in the way we are sharing the dreams. The angel responds that we are to continue sharing the dreams in the manner that we have been, especially in sharing the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy.” - *Angel on a White Horse*, April 28, 2007

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“In my dream, I find myself standing in what looks like a very large mailroom. I see many people stuffing envelopes while sitting at tables. I look more closely to see them put into an envelope a Bible and a book labeled, Spirit of Prophecy. (I knew this to represent all the Spirit of Prophecy books by Ellen G. White.) Also included is a large blue piece of paper that says, ‘Are you ready? JESUS IS COMING.’” - *The Mailroom*, July 24-27, 2007

“The foreman then leads me to a window and says they had advertised for help. As I look out the window there is no one there to help. He tells me there are very few that believe these envelopes with their contents should be sent out. Many feel enough has been done and more envelopes being sent out are not needed. They doubt the project and say that all three of these items are not necessary. The foreman states there is another company sending out envelopes but there is no Bible, Spirit of Prophecy, or the message that Jesus is coming. He reveals that they are sending out books from another author.” - *The Mailroom*, July 24-27, 2007

“Looking back to the room where I am, I see another man. I know he is a person that picks up trash and cleans bathrooms. He carries a mop and broom. His back is bent from leaning over so much as he cleans. The light comes down brightly on him, and his hair also seems to catch on fire. He drops his mop and broom. Now he is holding a Bible and a Spirit of Prophecy book. His back straightens up and he leaves the room. Many surround him, and he starts sharing things from the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy.” - *If You Love Me*, Sep. 4, 2007

“When you have read these messages did you see any ‘nail holes’? If you did, then did you not question? Have you not been instructed to test all dreams against the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy?” - *The Work Now Begins*, Dec. 14, 2007

“In my dream, I am sitting on a hillside with my back against a tree. In one hand I hold my Bible and in the other hand the book, *The Great Controversy*. After reading, I look up to see a beautiful green valley.” - *In His Time*, July 12, 2008

Notice also in The ABC dream where the angels are directing people:

“The store is now full of customers. The angels work patiently with them, answering questions and pointing to information that is needed. An angel

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sits with children and tells them a Bible story. As other angels are showing different Spirit of Prophecy books, the customers take a great interest in what they are being shown. New customers continue to enter the ABC.” - *The ABC*, Oct. 24, 2007

As we have seen, Ernie’s dreams do not lead us to think we can just rely on feelings in regard to spiritual matters. We need to study to know God’s will. So why do parts of the dreams tell us to rely upon the Holy Spirit for guidance? The answer is simple: because we are told in the Bible the Holy Spirit will guide us into all truth.

“Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.” - John 16:13

The Holy Spirit leads our minds to passages of scripture thus teaching us all truth. The Holy Spirit can also guide us in our everyday walk. Many people can testify of this and praise God for that guidance. In some situations, the Bible doesn’t give us a direct answer to our need and so we need to ask God for guidance. For example, where does God want us to live? The dreams tell us we need to ask God and He will direct us.

God can speak to us in many different ways.

“God speaks to us through his providential workings, and through the influence of his Spirit upon the heart. In our circumstances and surroundings, in the changes daily taking place around us, we may find precious lessons if our hearts are but open to discern them. The psalmist, tracing the work of God’s providence, says, ‘The earth is full of the goodness of the Lord.’ ‘Whoso is wise, and will observe these things, even they shall understand the lovingkindness of the Lord.’ [PS. 33:5; 107:43.]

God speaks to us in his word. Here we have in clearer lines the revelation of his character, of his dealings with men, and the great work of redemption. Here is open before us the history of the patriarchs and prophets and other holy men of old.” - *Christian Education*, p. 56

“Through nature and revelation, through His providence, and by the influence of His Spirit, God speaks to us.” - *Steps to Christ*, p. 93

The critics are right in saying we should not rely upon impressions alone in regards to spiritual matters. However we also need to realize God does impress His people in many different circumstances.

“Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot. And Philip ran thither to him, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, Understandest thou what thou readest?” - Acts 8:29,30

“It is the privilege of the watchmen on the walls of Zion to live so near to God, and to be susceptible to the impressions of His Spirit, that He can work through them to tell men and women of their peril and point them to the place of safety.” - *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 362

“The Lord Jesus standing by the side of the canvasser, walking with them, is the chief worker. If we recognize Christ as the One who is with us to prepare the way, the Holy Spirit by our side will make impressions in just the lines needed.” - *Colporteur Ministry*, p. 107

8. Is there any validity in the criticism regarding the “Build an Ark” dream?

Some people have issues with the ending of the Build an Ark dream. For example one critic says:

“A friend of mine raised some valid questions regarding the ‘what if’ ending of the dream (Build an Ark). But my friend noted that Jesus had promised Eve that of her seed he would raise a Deliverer. Enoch was already in heaven. Would God’s promise to Eve fail?” - *critic*

Although the conclusion of the dream is certainly not Biblical, we need to remember it is trying to teach us a lesson similar to how a parable does. In a similar way, Ellen White and the Apostle Paul both apply a *what if* situation to the earthly mission of Christ which we know is not Biblical.

“Christ passed from this scene of joy to meet the cruel temptations of his adversary. He passed step by step over the ground that man had trodden, and was ‘tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin.’ Where man stumbled and fell, Jesus came off more than conqueror. **Had he failed on one point, in reference to the law, all would have been lost**; he would not have been a perfect offering, nor could he have satisfied the demands of the law; but he conquered where Adam failed, and by loyalty to God,

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under the severest trials, became a perfect pattern and example for our imitation, and he is able to succor those who are tempted. There is enough in this idea to fill our hearts with joy and gratitude every day of our lives. He took our nature upon him that he might become acquainted with our trials and sorrows, and, knowing all our experiences, he stands as Mediator and Intercessor before the Father.” - *The Signs of the Times*, Nov. 24, 1887 par. 10

“For **if** the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: And **if** Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. **Then** they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished.” - 1 Corinthians 15:16-18

Although we know Jesus did not fail his earthly mission, we can't help but wonder what would have happened *if* he did. Ellen White says 'all would have been lost' and Paul says everyone who has died have perished. This certainly would never have happened (even though it was a possibility). In a similar way, *if* Noah had not have obeyed God, the *what if* situation shows events would have turned out differently (even though it would not have really happened the way the dream portrays). We need to remember the dream is trying to teach us who live in the last days the dangers of listening to the 'great educators' and rejecting God's warning.

9. Do Ernie's dreams contradict Matthew 24:24?

One faithful lady who believes Ernie's dreams and tests them to the Bible emailed us the following question:

“This morning it came to mind something I read in Ernie's dream that stuck out last night. It is the first inconsistency I have seen. Top of page five.

‘Yes, even the very elect are deceived.’ vs the Bible Matthew 24:24 ‘For there shall arise false Christ's, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.’”

Let's first look at what Jesus says in Matthew 24:24:

“For there shall arise false Christ's, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.” - Matthew 24:24

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First of all, the context is regarding false prophets that show great signs and wonders. Jesus said if it were possible the very elect shall be deceived. Although we often look at this verse as implying it would not be possible, that is not what Jesus said. "If it were possible" suggests that it can happen if the right circumstances are there. Now if we believe it is not possible for the elect to be deceived, then we will end up believing once saved always saved.

Now in Ernie's dream we are told:

"The Father has seen how the one who calls herself LJ--Laura Lee Jones--follows the observance of feast days and the lunar Sabbaths even though she has been shown that this is wrong. She does not listen to the voice of God the Father but the voice of the father of lies. She misconstrued comments you made and used them against you. God knows how she contacted David Gates and spoke with a lying tongue, convincing him to follow her--a woman that is led by Satan, the prince of deception. Yes, even the very elect are deceived. David Gates then sinned against God by not following the direction he had been shown in Matthew 18:15." - *Repent, as I Am Coming!*, Nov. 12, 2008

The comment about the elect being deceived is in a completely different context to what Jesus was speaking. Whereas Jesus was talking about being deceived by false prophets and their miracles, David has been deceived by a lady who teaches false doctrine. Jesus's words in Matthew look forward to the future and show us if the possibility arises the elect should be deceived, Ernie's dream shows us someone, who most would consider part of the elect, has been deceived. We have had many great men in our history who have been deceived and gone out teaching false doctrine. At one time these men would have been considered part of the elect and Ernie's dreams even shows us (as regards to one person) that God counts them as part of the elect, even though He knows they may turn from Him eventually. Judas was part of the elect, being one of the disciples, but sadly he was deceived.

Based on the above we don't believe Ernie's dreams contradict Matthew 24:24. One is a warning that we should take heed that we are not deceived and the other shows us that someone has been deceived. Ellen White herself made a similar comment:

"Those who walk through the world trampling upon the laws of God and righteousness, and [those who] link up and associate with them, will be

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partakers with their evil doings. Some will fabricate reasons for welcoming them, as inclination to cover their course of action; but it is not a necessity that God creates. 'Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you, and will be a Father to you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.' There is caution to be exercised. Now we cannot come into willing association and intercourse with the workers of evil unless we catch their spirit. They may appear as an angel of light and **deceive the very elect**; but none need in this particular to be deceived." - *Manuscript Releases*, Vol. 18, p. 56.1

Answers to people's opinions

We now turn to look at a number of subjective opinions people are raising regarding Ernie's dreams rather than comparing the dreams with the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy. When people reject the dreams based on objections like those listed in this section, it raises the question as to how will God's professed people will discern the difference between the true and false prophets if they use objections not supported by the Word of God.

1. Angels or people don't walk through walls in the Bible or Spirit of Prophecy

To most people this objection would seem rather silly, but we have heard Bible students use it as one of their reasons for rejecting the dreams. Is there a Bible or Spirit of Prophecy quote that says when a prophet receives a dream or vision they should not walk through walls? We haven't found one yet. If there is no counsel regarding this objection, why then should the dreams be rejected? There are many things mentioned in the Spirit of Prophecy that cannot be found in the Bible. Do we discredit those because the Bible doesn't mention them? No.

2. We only need the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy

We know of no place where we are told that dreams and visions will end with the ministry of Ellen White or with John the Revelator. The Bible does say though:

“And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.” - 1 Corinthians 12:28

“And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions” - Joel 2:28

This is the same objection people use to reject the writing of Ellen White. It is the same objection the critics would have used in the time of the apostles, but instead they would have been saying “we only need the Old Testament.” Accepting this objection denies God will ever raise up another prophet, which as we have been shown from Joel 2:28, contradicts the Bible.

Prior to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians, God sent a number of prophets to warn His people, and to try to get them to turn from their sins. These included Isaiah, Ezekiel and Jeremiah. Why did He not just send one? Because each one reinforced and expanded the message of the prior ones.

3. Ellen White said a prophet should not mix common with sacred things

What did Ellen White actually write in regard to this objection?

“Anna Garmire was thus injured. Her father and mother made her believe that her childish dreams were revelations from God. Her father talked to the child as one chosen of God; all her fancies and dreams were written down as Anna’s visions. She had figures and symbols presented to her, and had reproofs for her mother and for her father. After a scathing reproof, there followed the most flattering representations of the wonderful things the Lord would do for them. These things I was pointed to as spurious, a deception. They descended to the most minute and trifling matters, commingled common, cheap things with important subjects. The imagination was largely developed, there was a mingling of the sacred and the common. The truth of God was belittled, and yet some received these pretended revelations, and carried out their teaching. A little party was formed who were apparently inspired by them, and the visions were declared to be more spiritual than the visions of Sister White....

I have received from God the warning which I now send to you. Anna Phillips should not have been given the encouragement she has had; it has been a great injury to her--fastened her in a deception. I am sorry that any of our brethren and sisters are ready to take up with these supposed revelations, and imagine they see in them the divine credentials. These things are not of the right character to accomplish the work essential for this time. Childish figures and illustrations are employed in describing sacred, heavenly things, and there is a mingling of the sublime and the ridiculous. While the work has an appearance of great sanctity, it is calculated to ensnare and mislead souls....” - *Selected Messages Book 2*, p. 89

So where does Ernie violate this counsel according to the critics?

“As a minor example, he repeatedly mentions the ‘dimples’ of the ‘Herald.’... But when I read his sublime illustration of how God will prepare persons for the end (it is illustrated by the process of baking

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bread), I was surprised to read the Herald speaking regarding a symbolic bakery baking symbolic bread:

He looks at me, smiles, and replies, 'It smells good in here, doesn't it?'

Humor forms no part of angelic communications to men. Much less would an angel distract a man from a solemn spiritual lesson by a reference to a trivial passing aroma." - *critic*

See point 6 in regards to the dimples. Now in regards to the baking of bread: Is it wrong to illustrate a spiritual lesson with everyday tasks? Before we answer that, cast your mind back to the way Jesus taught the people.

"Jesus taught by illustrations and parables drawn from nature and from the familiar events of everyday life. . . . In this way He associated natural things with spiritual, linking the things of nature and the life experience of His hearers with the sublime truths of the written word. And whenever afterward their eyes rested on the objects with which He has associated eternal truth, His lessons were repeated." - *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, p. 140

If Jesus could draw upon "familiar events of everyday life" and not be condemned for mixing common with the sacred, why can't Ernie receive a dream using similar methods? Comparing how God prepares His people with the baking of bread we would hardly call this childish.

Also please note, just because the Herald smiles in this situation does not mean we should treat it as a humorous moment. If you search all of Ernie's dreams you will find he mentions the word "smile" forty-seven times (as of this writing). He is constantly describing the Herald and Jesus as smiling at him. This should not be taken as humor. Rather, it seems to be a way of reassuring Ernie.

4. Angels don't transform themselves into human form

You have to wonder where people get their information from when they raise these kinds of objections. Obviously not from the Bible as it says in Hebrews:

"Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares." - Hebrews 13:2

Now surely we would know if we were entertaining an angel if they looked like an angel. Obviously the text in Hebrews is describing entertaining angels that

appear to be human. How this happens we can't explain, but it can happen as is described in Genesis 18 and 19 when Jesus and two angels appeared to Abraham and later the two angels appeared to Lot in Sodom. These angels didn't look like angels.

5. The Herald could not have watched Jesus grow in the womb of Mary

To some the thought of the Herald watching Jesus grow in the womb of Mary is impossible and a reason to reject the dreams. On what authority can we say what angels can and can't see? If humans can see a baby in the womb through ultrasound, don't you think an angel can see inside the womb as well?

6. Angels don't have dimples

This objection is a favorite with the critics and yet cannot be supported from the Bible or the Spirit of Prophecy. Who are we to say what an angel should look like? And who are we to say what Ernie notices? Describing the look of someone is completely different as compared to mixing the common with the sacred.

7. God's people are not ready for this kind of test

"My first thought is that we are not ready for this kind of test. We are not spiritually mature. We, as a whole, are 'yet carnal.' And spiritual things are spiritually discerned." - *critic*

If God's people are not ready, why not? We have no excuse. God didn't put off the first coming because the Jews were not ready. Do you think He will put off the Second Coming because we are not ready? If that were the case, Jesus would never return.

PART III - Biblical Counsel Regarding Prophets

Biblical Counsel Regarding Prophets

No study like we have undertaken would be complete without considering the counsel and many warnings contained in the Bible concerning prophets.

Beware of false prophets

The Bible warns us to “Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.”⁴⁵ We need to be aware that Satan is doing all he can to lead us astray, and he will use false prophets to do this. Unfortunately, this leads many to reject anyone who God raises up because they are worried they will be deceived. The sad result is that by rejecting God’s messenger, they reject God Himself and the end result is they are deceived by Satan anyway!

We need to be intelligent and know why we receive or reject a messenger. False prophets are out there, and we need to test their message to the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy.

1. False prophets will give false predictions of Jesus’ Second Coming

“Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not. For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. Behold, I have told you before. Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not.” - Matthew 24:23-26

2. A prophet will not contradict the Bible

“To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.” - Isaiah 8:20

3. A prophet will not lead you away from God

“If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder, And the sign or the wonder come to pass, whereof he spake unto thee, saying, Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them; Thou shalt not hearken unto the words of

⁴⁵ Matthew 7:15

that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams: for the LORD your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul. Ye shall walk after the LORD your God, and fear him, and keep his commandments, and obey his voice, and ye shall serve him, and cleave unto him.” - Deuteronomy 13:1-4

4. What a prophet says must come to pass in due time

“But the prophet, which shall presume to speak a word in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods, even that prophet shall die. And if thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the word which the LORD hath not spoken? When a prophet speaketh in the name of the LORD, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the LORD hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him.” - Deuteronomy 18:20-22

5. False prophets do not bear good fruit

“Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit.” - Matthew 7:15-17

6. Prophets will not flatter you with peace and safety

“Thus saith the LORD of hosts, Hearken not unto the words of the prophets that prophesy unto you: they make you vain: they speak a vision of their own heart, and not out of the mouth of the LORD. They say still unto them that despise me, The LORD hath said, Ye shall have peace; and they say unto every one that walketh after the imagination of his own heart, No evil shall come upon you.” - Jeremiah 23:16

The tests of a true prophet

We must remember that the Bible predicted God would have people in the last days who would have dreams and visions. This did not end with the ministry of Ellen White as some like to suggest.

In the last days old men will have dreams, young people will receive visions

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“And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions:” - Joel 2:28

A true prophet will confess Christ came in the flesh

“Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.” - 1 John 4:1-3

Believe in God’s prophets and we will prosper

“...Believe in the LORD your God, so shall ye be established; believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper.” - 2 Chronicles 20:20

Don’t reject God’s prophets, but test them

“Quench not the Spirit. Despise not prophesyings. Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.” - 1 Thessalonians 5:19-21

The Bible gives us enough tests to use to identify a false prophet. Even in Ernie’s dreams, Jesus reveals how we are to test a prophet (see Testing The Spirits). It is also very clear that we should be careful we do not reject God’s prophets. We need to get back to our Bibles and be like the Bereans who:

“..were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.” - Acts 17:11

Conclusion

In this book we have seen briefly how God's prophets have been rejected. Not only were they rejected by unbelievers, but sadly we have seen how the professed people of God are even more guilty of this sin.

Although we need to be on guard against the deceptions of the devil, particularly in these last days, we need to be equally on guard we do not fail to reject God's messages. The only way we can achieve this is to first submit everything to God. This includes our opinions, our time, our means and our very lives. The Bible teaches us in James 4:7 that when we submit to God, we will be able to resist the devil and he will flee from us. When we are in this condition, we can pray with confidence the following prayers:

“Lead me in thy truth, and teach me: for thou art the God of my salvation; on thee do I wait all the day.” - Psalm 25:5

“O send out thy light and thy truth: let them lead me; let them bring me unto thy holy hill, and to thy tabernacles.” - Psalm 43:3

So many people are rejecting Ernie's dreams without any support from the Bible. There used to be a time when we were called the people of the Book. It seems as if that is no longer true. If we can't follow the simple principles laid out in the Bible for testing a prophet, how are we going to fair when the overwhelming surprise comes upon us? We must learn to make our decisions based on the Bible.

“Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.” - Psalm 119:11

“Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.” -Psalm 119:105

Does Ernie fulfill the Bible's counsel regarding a prophet?

To conclude this study, let us quickly run through the Bible verses that teach us how we can test a prophet and compare these verses with Ernie's life and the dreams he has had:

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	Bible Test	Reference	Result
1	Do Ernie's dreams give an accurate account of Jesus' second coming?	Mat 24:23-26	✓
2	Do Ernie's dreams agree with the Bible?	Isaiah 8:20	✓
3	Does Ernie lead us closer to God?	Deuteronomy 13:1-4	✓
4	Does Ernie's work bear good fruit?	Matthew 7:15-17	✓
5	Does Ernie's dreams follow the Bible counsel and not flatter us with peace and safety?	Jeremiah 23:16	✓
6	Does Ernie's dreams confess Jesus came in the flesh?	1 John 4:1-3	✓
7	Does Ernie fulfill the Bible's prediction that old men will dream dreams?	Joel 2:28	✓
8	Does Ernie love Jesus?	John 8:42	✓

Some may object to point number 4 in the table above because of Ernie's deception that was brought to light in July 2009. Although we acknowledge his sin was not bearing good fruit, we also realize many of God's prophets sinned and came short of His glory. We therefore believe that when we apply the fruits test, it should not only be applied to individual acts (that are repented of), but also of the work he has accomplished. We know from our own personal lives (and many others have experienced the same) that Ernie's dreams have drawn us closer to God. In some cases, people have been brought back to or brought to know the truth because of the dreams. Instead of focussing on the messenger, we should look at the messages.

We understand people's reluctance to accept Ernie's dreams in the light of his deception, but sadly, most people had rejected Ernie well before his deception was made known, without any Biblical support. His deception has only solidified their initial rejection. For those who have rejected Ernie since his deception was made know, we appeal to you to carefully study the lives of many of the Bible prophets. You will find they too failed God at times, but went on to obtain the victory.

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God has said that He will not do anything before He reveals it to His prophets first.⁴⁶ The world is fast approaching a time of trouble like it has never faced before and shouldn't we expect God to raise up someone to warn the world?

After studying all of Ernie's dreams, carefully assessing the reason why the critics rejected them, and comparing Ernie's sin with prophets in the Bible, we can honestly recommend the dreams to you. Of course we do add this recommendation with caution, and know that if the dreams are not of God, they will not prevail, but if they are of God, nobody will be able to silence them. By the dreams we know you will be drawn closer to God and prepared for what is about to come upon the earth.

⁴⁶ Amos 3:7