

WRITTEN BY  
SEAN SUTTON



TESTING TWO  
PROPHETS

# TESTING TWO PROPHETS

SEAN SUTTON



**FATHER**  
OF LOVE

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Sean Sutton, 2023

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# Testing the Prophets

## Will There be Prophets After Jesus?

1 Corinthians 12:28 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. (Cf. Eph. 4:8, 11)

Acts 11:27-28 <sup>27</sup> And **in these days came prophets from Jerusalem** unto Antioch. <sup>28</sup> And there stood up one of them named Agabus, and signified by the Spirit that there should be great dearth [famine] throughout all the world: which came to pass in the days of Claudius Caesar. (Cf. Acts 21:9-10)

Joel prophesied concerning the outpouring of God's Spirit in the end days, which shall also consist of prophesying. The prophetic gift would be manifest in the **Remnant Church**:

Joel 2:28-29, 31-32 <sup>28</sup> 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... <sup>31</sup> The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, **before** the great and the terrible **day of the LORD** come. <sup>32</sup> And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be delivered: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the LORD hath said, and in **the remnant** whom the LORD shall call.

According to Christ, God's remnant people will keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus, which is the Spirit of Prophecy:

Rev. 12:17 And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with **the remnant** of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and **have the testimony of Jesus Christ...**

Rev. 19:10 And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for **the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy...**

Rev. 22:8-9<sup>8</sup> And I John saw these things, and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed me these things.<sup>9</sup> Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not: for I am thy fellowservant, and **of thy brethren the prophets**, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God.

## What is the Purpose of Prophets?

One of the main purposes of prophets, and other teachers, is to edify, or build up, the church:

1Cor. 14:4 He that speaketh in an unknown tongue edifieth himself; but he that prophesieth **edifieth the church.**

Eph. 4:11-15<sup>11</sup> And he gave some, apostles; and some, **prophets**; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;<sup>12</sup> **For the perfecting of the saints**, for the work of the ministry, **for the edifying of the body of**

**Christ:** <sup>13</sup> Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: <sup>14</sup> That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; <sup>15</sup> But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:

## We are to Test the Prophets

Matthew 24:4, 11 <sup>4</sup> And Jesus answered and said unto them, **Take heed that no man deceive you...** <sup>11</sup> And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.

1Th. 5:19-21 <sup>19</sup> Quench not the Spirit. <sup>20</sup> **Despise not prophesyings.** <sup>21</sup> **Prove all things;** hold fast that which is good.

1 John 4:1 Beloved, believe not every spirit, but **try the spirits whether they are of God:** because many false prophets are gone out into the world.



## **Biblical Tests of a True Prophet**

1. A True Prophet will (a) not Contradict Prior Revelation & (b) Will Uphold the Law of God.
2. Things Prophets Foretell Must Come to Pass.
3. True Prophets will Exhibit Physical Signs When in Vision.
4. True Prophets will not be Associated with Spiritualism and the Occult.
5. True Prophets will Acknowledge the Incarnation of the Begotten Son of God.
6. True Prophets will Edify the Church and Not Condone Sin.
7. True Prophets will be Known by their Fruits.

## #1. True Prophets will (a) not Contradict Prior Revelation & (b) Uphold the Law of God

1Cor. 14:32-33 <sup>32</sup> And **the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets.** <sup>33</sup> For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.

The Bible says that the teachings of a prophet cannot contradict the teachings of past, validated prophets of the Bible. However, this does not mean that God cannot build upon the past revelations of the prophets, giving new light and understanding to His people. Consider the following examples:

- The NT gave new light on the OT, but did not contradict it.
- Jesus gave new understanding concerning what God had shown the Jews, but rather than contradicting any of the past prophets, He quoted them and told us to study them (see Matt. 24:15).
- God revealed new prophetic information to Daniel, but it was in harmony with what God had shown the previous prophets.

There are many pages of writings from “prophets” that could be compared with Scripture, so it is expedient to only look at a small number of the allegations claiming these people have contradicted the previous revelations of Scripture. When examining supposed contradictions, however, we must examine their works without bias, making sure their quotes are not taken out of context.

Not only will true prophets be in harmony with past revelation, but they will also uphold the law of God:

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

2Kings 17:13 Yet **the LORD testified** [gave testimony] against Israel, and against Judah, **by all the prophets**, and by all the seers, saying, Turn ye from your evil ways, and keep my commandments and my statutes, according to all **the law** which I commanded your fathers, and **which I sent to you by my servants the prophets**.

Matt. 5:17-18 <sup>17</sup> Think not that I am come to destroy **the law**, or **the prophets**: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. <sup>18</sup> For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.

## **#2. Things Prophets Foretell Must Come to Pass**

Jer. 28:9 ... when the word of the prophet shall come to pass, then shall the prophet be known, that the LORD hath truly sent him.

Deut. 18:21-22 <sup>21</sup> And if thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the word which the LORD hath not spoken? <sup>22</sup> 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.

According to the above, the predictions of a true prophet will come to pass. When conducting this test we would do well to consider the following:

- ***The conditional element:*** many prophecies are conditional, meaning the outcome is based on how the people respond to the message. Consider Nineveh. Also see **Jer 18:6-10**; 26:2-6; Deut 4:9; 8:19; 28:1,2,13-15; Zech 6:15; 2 Chron 15:2.
- We must ***give time for the prophecy to come to pass***. Because Daniel prophesied the coming of the Messiah, but because He did not come in his lifetime does not mean Daniel was a false prophet. If a “prophet” says that something will happen at a certain time, and it does not come to pass, they were clearly wrong.

We should also keep in mind that just because a prophet can predict the future, it does not mean that they are a true prophet, for the Bible declares: “<sup>1</sup> If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder, <sup>2</sup> 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; <sup>3</sup> Thou shalt not hearken unto the words of 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. <sup>4</sup> 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.” Deut. 13:1-4. Satan can “prophesy,” or make limited predictions of certain events, as he is often behind many of them. This is essentially the same as me “prophesying” that you will get mugged this week and then paying someone to mug you. When Saul had totally apostatized, Satan had complete control of him, so it was easy for him to predict what would happen to him (1 Sam. 28:6-19). Some false prophets can predict the future, but ***genuine prophets from God will pass every Biblical test for a true prophet.***

### #3. True Prophets will Exhibit Physical Signs When in Vision

Num. 12:6 And he said, Hear now my words: **If there be a prophet among you, I the LORD will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream.**

According to the above, God speaks to prophets through visions and dreams. The Bible records some of the physical attributes of what happens to someone when they are receiving a vision from God. A true prophet will exhibit these signs when they have a genuine vision. When in vision, a true prophet will:

a) *Become **weak***

Dan. 10:7-8<sup>7</sup> And I Daniel alone saw the vision: for the men that were with me saw not the vision; but a great quaking fell upon them, so that they fled to hide themselves.<sup>8</sup> Therefore I was left alone, and saw this great vision, and there remained no strength in me: for my comeliness was turned in me into corruption, and I retained no strength.

b) *Be subsequently **strengthened***

Dan. 10:16-18<sup>16</sup> And, behold, one like the similitude of the sons of men touched my lips: then I opened my mouth, and spake, and said unto him that stood before me, O my lord, by the vision my sorrows are turned upon me, and I have retained no strength.<sup>17</sup> For how can the servant of this my lord talk with this my lord? for as for me, straightway there remained no strength in me, neither is there breath left in me.<sup>18</sup> Then there came again and touched me one like the appearance of a man, and he strengthened me,

c) *Have their **eyes open***

Num. 24:4 The utterance of him who hears the words of God, Who sees the vision of the Almighty, Who falls down, with eyes wide open.

d) *Have **no breath in them/won't breath**, even though they can still speak*

Dan. 10:17 As for me, no strength remains in me now, nor is any breath left in me.

#### #4. True Prophets are not Involved in Spiritualism & the Occult

Deut. 18:10-12 <sup>10</sup> There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch, <sup>11</sup> Or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer. <sup>12</sup> For all that do these things are an abomination unto the LORD: and because of these abominations the LORD thy God doth drive them out from before thee.

The above passage forbids any use of occult and spiritualistic practices. These verses forbid the following:

- **Making your child pass through the fire.** Making your child “pass through the fire” is to sacrifice them to idols. See Ezekiel 23:36-39.
- **Divination.** “The method of obtaining knowledge of the unknown or the future by means of omens.” Some of these “omens” include crystal gazing, automatic writing, astrological signs, hypnosis (mesmerism). (*Encyclopedia of Occultism and Parapsychology*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed., p. 426-427)

- **Observer of times.** Times are determined by the movement of the sun, moon, and stars (Gen. 1:14), thus the implication is that an observer of times is one who “divines” future events through astrology (Is. 47:12-13).
- **Enchanter.** One who influences others through charms, enchantments, spells.
- **Witch.** This term can designate: “(1) the magical/religious practitioners in a variety of third world pre-industrial societies; (2) the Satanism described in the anti-witchcraft books beginning in the late fifteenth century in Europe; (3) the Neopagan followers of Wicca...; and (4) individuals (primarily female) who are reputed to have psychic abilities.” (*Encyclopedia of Occultism and Parapsychology*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed., p. 1678).
- **Charmer.** A charm is “A magical formula, sung or recited to bring about a supposedly beneficial result as part of a spell, or to confer magical efficacy on an amulet. In popular usage the same word is employed to designate the incantation and the object that is charmed.” (*Encyclopedia of Occultism and Parapsychology*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed., p. 273). Thus, a charmer is one who uses or makes charms (i.e. talismans, etc).
- **Familiar Spirits.** Familiar spirits are demons that “live with, travel with, and assist magicians, sorcerers, and witches.” (*Encyclopedia of Occultism and Parapsychology*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed., p. 542).
- **Wizard.** A male witch.
- **Necromancer.** One who uses divination “by means of the spirits of the dead, from the Greek nekrosh (dead), and manteia (divination).” (*Encyclopedia of Occultism and Parapsychology*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed., p. 1095).

## #5. True Prophets will Acknowledge the Incarnation of the Begotten Son of God

Scripture records that a true prophet will **confess the divinity of Jesus Christ** as the **only begotten Son of God**:

1 John 4:15 Whosoever shall **confess that Jesus is the Son of God**, God dwelleth in him, and he in God.

1 John 4:1-3 <sup>1</sup> Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.

<sup>2</sup> Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: <sup>3</sup> 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.

Not only will a true prophet confess that Jesus is divine, but they will confess that God sent His divine Son to our world in the likeness of sinful flesh (Romans 8:3), meaning that Christ “was in all points **tempted like as we are**, yet without sin.” Hebrews 4:15. Christ was born in a fleshly body as us all, having all of the genetic and inherited propensities and desires that make sinful things so alluring to us, yet Christ overcame all temptations, gaining the victory for us all!

However, just because a prophet accepts the divine and human nature of Christ, this does not always mean they are a true prophet, since demons acknowledged that Jesus came in the flesh (Matt. 8:29). True prophets will pass each of the tests.



## #6. True Prophets will Edify the Church & will not Condone Sin

1Cor. 14:3-4 <sup>3</sup> But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification and exhortation, and comfort... <sup>4</sup> but **he that prophesieth edifieth the church.**

Is. 58:1 Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and **shew my people their transgression**, and the house of Jacob their sins.

Lam. 2:14 **Thy [false] prophets** have seen vain and foolish things for thee: and they **have not discovered thine iniquity**, to turn away thy captivity; but have seen for thee false burdens and causes of banishment.

Is. 30:10 Which say to the seers, See not; and to the prophets, **Prophecy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophesy deceits:**

According to Scripture, false prophets will tell people what they want to hear (2 Tim. 4:3) rather than exposing their sins and idols.

## #7. True Prophets will be Known by their Fruits

Matthew 7:15-16 <sup>15</sup> Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. <sup>16</sup> **Ye shall know them by their fruits...**

We are not to “judge” the character of others, but simply to inspect their fruits. We are to inspect the fruit of: (A) The prophet's own life and (B) the prophet's followers. The following considerations should be kept in mind when conducting this test:

- We must give time for fruit to appear.
- We cannot look for sinless perfection, as all prophets (except Jesus) have sinned at some point (Rom. 3:23).
- We don't necessarily look at individual deeds (whether good or bad), but the general direction of the total life and their habits.
- Miracles and signs are not a sign of a true prophet, for Jesus said, “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.” Matthew 24:24.
- Truth according to the Word of God, not feeling, is to be our guide.

# The Two Test Subjects

The two prophets we shall be considering are **Joseph Smith**, first prophet and founder of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (hereafter referred to as Mormonism), and **Ellen G. White**, prophetess and co-founder of the historical Seventh-Day Adventist Church. These two prophets have been chosen to be examined for several reasons:

1. Both of their subsequent movements have a very large following. As of 2016 the Mormon Church consisted of 15,882,417 members<sup>1</sup> while there were about 20,727,347 Seventh-Day Adventists in 2017.<sup>2</sup> The author decided not to apply these tests to **Mary Baker Eddy**, the founder of Christian Science (not to be confused with Scientology), because her movement is not very substantial (though this in and of itself does not discredit her)<sup>3</sup> and we are trying to keep this work brief and beneficial for the largest denominations which adhere to the teachings of a prophet.
2. Both lived during the same era and therefore did not have any advantage over the other which the progression of time would afford.
3. Both lived towards the end of a Biblical time prophecy. When God gives a major prophecy involving time through a prophet, He always raises up another prophet towards the end of that time period. For example, God told Abraham that the Israelites would be held captive by Egypt for 400 years (Gen. 15:13), and right at the end of this time prophecy God raised up the prophet Moses to lead them out of bondage. Jeremiah prophesied

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/liahona/2017/05/saturday-afternoon-session/statistical-report-2016?lang=eng>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.adventist.org/statistics/seventh-day-adventist-world-church-statistics-2016-2017/>

<sup>3</sup> For a good exposé concerning Mary Baker Eddy and the Church of Christian Science, please consult the book *Kingdom of the Cults* by Walter Martin.

that Israel would be in captivity to the Babylonians for 70 years (Jer. 29:10), and towards the end of that time God raised up Daniel (Dan. 9:2). Daniel prophesied that there would be 490 years (70 prophetic weeks) until the anointing of the Messiah by the Holy Spirit at His baptism in 27 A.D. (Dan. 9:25 Acts 10:38), and it was near the end of this prophecy that God raised up John the Baptist (Matt. 3:1-3, 16). Daniel also gave the 2,300 year prophecy (Dan. 8:14) which ends in 1844.<sup>4</sup> In 1844 Joseph Smith died and Ellen White received her first vision.

4. Both movements claim to be worshipping the God of the Bible. The reason we are not examining “prophets” such as **Helena Blavatsky, L. Ron Hubbard, Muhammad, Edgar Cayce**, etc., is because most of these people and their followers do not necessarily identify themselves as “Christians.”
5. Both alluded to themselves as prophets. Joseph Smith claimed to be a prophet while Ellen White never called herself a prophetess due to the stigma behind the word (Joseph Smith died when Ellen White was 17), choosing instead to refer to herself as a “messenger of the Lord.” Others such as **Charles Taze Russell** (founder of the Bible Student movement, the predecessor of Jehovah’s Witnesses), L. Ron Hubbard (Scientology) etc., never claimed to be prophets (though their radical teachings and the wide view of their almost “infallible” nature would indicate otherwise), so it would be unfair to apply a prophetic test to them as they never claimed to be prophets as far as the author is aware of. However, there is more than enough evidence that the other possible candidates, as the ones previously mentioned can very easily fit the bill for false teachers.

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<sup>4</sup> It is not within the scope of this work to examine this prophecy, but to learn more, please contact us or consider these videos for more information: <https://tinyurl.com/49v3azsf>.

## Note:

To keep this work somewhat brief, we shall only look at a small portion of quotations which could be furnished to exemplify the beliefs held by these prophets. We shall endeavor to use original sources when possible, letting the words of these prophets either vindicate or condemn themselves. When more quotations confirming the factual nature of claims made are available, they shall be referenced for the individual to investigate on their own.

Another point to keep in mind is that this work is not an exhaustive study on the doctrines of these people and their subsequent movements. We shall only consider a small number of the doctrines held by these prophets, specifically those doctrines which relate to the tests previously mentioned. It is also important to note that ***this work is not meant to judge or condemn any members of either of these movements or anyone who adheres to the teachings of these prophets.*** The purpose of this work is to simply apply the Scriptural tests of a true prophet to Joseph Smith and Ellen White. This work was also created to act as a *reference guide for those who are considering the claims of any "prophets" from history or modern day.* The tests of a true prophet are timeless, and are as valid today as they were during Daniel's time.

As with any study of spiritual things, we ask that you will **pray before examining these things** and ask for God to send His Holy Spirit to guide you into all truth.

# Testing Joseph Smith & the Mormon Prophets

## #1. Did Joseph Smith Contradict (a) Prior Revelation & (b) Uphold the Law of God?

Since Joseph Smith (1805-1844) claimed to be a prophet of God and declared that the Book of Mormon is “Another Testament of Jesus Christ,” and that each of the successive Presidents of the Mormon Church are likewise prophets, we shall not only look at the writings of Joseph Smith, but we shall also examine statements made by his succeeding prophets along with the Book of Mormon (including *Doctrine and Covenants* and *Pearl of Great Price*). The collective “revelations” of Joseph Smith, his subsequent prophets, and the Book of Mormon will be collectively referred to as “Mormon doctrines”/Mormonism. Most of the men that will be quoted, besides Joseph Smith, were either successive prophets in the Mormon Church or an LDS authority.

### A. *Mormonism’s View of the Bible*

- i. **Mormonism says:** “We believe the Bible to be the word of God as far as it is translated correctly; we also believe the Book of Mormon to be the word of God.” Articles of Faith 1:8

Here we see that the Mormon Church claims that the Book of Mormon is equal to the Scriptures. Let us see how this work compares with the plain teachings of the Bible.

## *B. Do Mormon Doctrines Contradict the Bible?*

### *i. How are we Saved?*

**The Book of Mormon says:** “it is by grace that we are saved, after all we can do.” 2 Nephi 25:23

**The Articles of Faith says:** “We believe that through the Atonement of Christ, all mankind may be saved, by obedience to the laws and ordinances of the Gospel.” Articles of Faith 1:3

**Joseph Smith says:** “... to get salvation we must not only do some things, but everything which God has commanded. Men may preach and practice everything except those things which God commands us to do, and will be damned at last.”<sup>5</sup>

**Joseph F. Smith says:** “One of the most pernicious doctrines ever advocated by man is the doctrine of ‘justification by faith alone,’ which has entered into the hearts of millions since the days of the so-called ‘reformation.’”<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Joseph Smith, *History of the Church of Latter-Day Saints* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1912), vol. 6, p. 223.

<sup>6</sup> Joseph Fielding Smith, *The Restoration of All Things* (Deseret Book, 1973), p. 192.

**Joseph F. Smith says: “... Salvation, however, is based on [human] merit and obedience to divine law and therefore is only obtained through compliance with divine commandments.”<sup>7</sup>**

**The Bible says: “<sup>8</sup> For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: <sup>9</sup> Not of works, lest any man should boast.”**  
Ephesians 2:8-9 (Cf. Gal. 2:16; 3:11; Rom. 3:28; 5:1)<sup>8</sup>

Before we continue, we need to briefly explain the our definition of the word “salvation.” When I use the term “salvation,” I am particularly referring to justification and sanctification, or the process of being made right with God and enabled to live with Him for eternity. Mormons use the term “salvation” in a very broad sense with a number of meanings, as salvation has multiple “ranks,” one could say. Firstly, they say that all people, except the sons of perdition, will be “saved,” (*Doctrine and Covenants* 76:41-44) or live forever:

**“We believe that through the sufferings, death, and atonement of Jesus Christ all mankind, without one exception, are to be completely and fully redeemed, both body and spirit, from the endless banishment and curse to which they were consigned by Adam’s transgression; and that **this universal salvation and redemption** of the whole human family from the endless penalty of the original sin, **is effected without any conditions** whatever on their part; that is, **they are not required to believe or repent, or be baptized, or do anything else, in order to be redeemed from that****

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<sup>7</sup> Joseph Fielding Smith, *Selections from answers to Gospel questions: a course of study for the Melchizedek Priesthood quorums of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: First Presidency, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1972), p. 172.

<sup>8</sup> **Note:** This is not to say that there is no longer any need to obey the law of God, “for not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified.” Rom. 2:13. We are not justified by obedience to God’s laws, but those who are justified will have Christ dwelling in their hearts by faith (Eph. 4:13), and He will work “in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.” Phil. 2:13. Obedience is the fruit of justification, not a requirement for it.



**penalty**; for whether they believe or disbelieve, whether they repent or remain impenitent, whether they are baptized or unbaptized, whether they keep the commandments or break them, whether they are righteous or unrighteous, it will make no difference in relation to their redemption, both soul and body, from the penalty of Adam's transgression."<sup>9</sup>

So the question from the Mormon perspective is not *if* you will be saved, but *where* you will be saved. According to Mormon soteriology, everyone will either live in the Telestial,<sup>10</sup> Terrestrial,<sup>11</sup> or the Celestial Kingdom,<sup>12</sup> depending on their level of faith and works. Christians typically refer to the end result of "salvation" as living with God forever, but in Mormonism, only those who achieve live in the Celestial Kingdom will personally be with God forever. It seems that the quotations given earlier concerning "salvation" are referencing the idea of attaining to the Celestial Kingdom. Therefore, according to the traditional, evangelical view of salvation (which is the Mormon equivalent of citizenship in the Celestial Kingdom), Mormonism affirms that only those who have faith plus works will be "saved."

The Mormon Church often uses theological double talk, saying that salvation is by grace alone, and then saying it is by grace and works. For instance, in an official church publication we read that "All men are saved by grace alone without any act on their part... In addition to this redemption from death, all men, by the grace of God, have power to gain eternal life. This is called salvation by grace coupled with obedience to the laws and ordinances of the gospel [he then quotes 2 Nephi 25:23]..."<sup>13</sup> In like manner, their official website teaches the same:

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<sup>9</sup> Orson Pratt, in James E. Talmage, *The Articles of Faith*, p. 477–478.

<sup>10</sup> The lowest Kingdom for those who commit sins of commission.

<sup>11</sup> The middle Kingdom for those who commit sins of omission.

<sup>12</sup> The highest Kingdom where those who commit neither sins of commission or omission and experience Exaltation, or Godhood. This Kingdom also has levels within it, the highest being "exaltation" or godhood.

<sup>13</sup> Bruce R. McConkie, *What the Mormons Think of Christ*, p. 27-33, quoted in Walter Martin, *Kingdom of the Cults*, p. 221,

“The help or strength He gives us through the love of Jesus Christ is called grace. The things we must do are called works. **To gain eternal life, we need both grace and works...** before He will forgive us, **we must repent—that’s our part, our works.** Besides repentance, our works also include receiving ordinances, keeping covenants, and serving others. While these **works are necessary for salvation**, they aren’t *sufficient*.”<sup>14</sup>

Here repentance is counted as human merit, but the Bible says that even repentance is a gift from God (Acts 5:31; 2 Tim. 2:25), just like faith (Rom. 12:3; Gal. 5:22), thereby showing God—not us—is doing the work in every step of justification and sanctification.<sup>15</sup> The emphasis of repentance and faith as coming from human effort and will-power places merit on these things, and thus salvation in the Mormon religion, like the Catholic religion, is based on grace through faith + works.

This is contrary to Scripture, which explains that the repentant sinner is to first accept God’s gracious gift of His Son through faith, coming to God just as he is. Once he allows God to come into the heart, He will then “worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.” Philippians 2:13. *Works and obedience to God’s law is the fruit of genuine salvation, not the means of obtaining, or meriting, it.* Thus, it appears that **the prophets of Mormonism disagree with the most crucial doctrine found in the Scriptures.**



<sup>14</sup> <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/new-era/2005/03/tough-topics-are-you-saved-by-grace-or-works?lang=eng>

<sup>15</sup> To see Ellen White’s view of the nature of repentance, faith, and effort, see footnote 63 on p. 52.

ii. *Did Joseph Smith see God the Father?*

**Joseph Smith says:** “<sup>16</sup> ... I saw a pillar of light exactly over my head, above the brightness of the sun, which descended gradually until it fell upon me. <sup>17</sup> It no sooner appeared than I found myself delivered from the enemy which held me bound. When the light rested upon me I saw two Personages, whose brightness and glory defy all description, standing above me in the air. One of them spake unto me, calling me by name and said, pointing to the other—This is My Beloved Son. Hear Him!” History 1:16-17

**Bible says:** “And he said, Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live.” Exodus 33:20

**Bible says:** “No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.” John 1:18 (Also see John 5:37; 6:46; 1 Tim. 6:16; 1 John 4:12)

Joseph Smith, in his first vision, claimed to have seen and spoken with both Jesus and God the Father, however the Bible says that no one has seen the Father at any time, except His only begotten Son.

**This is a contradiction.**



iii. *Where was Jesus Born?*

**The Book of Mormon says:** “And behold, he shall be born of Mary, at Jerusalem which is the land of our forefathers, she being a virgin, a precious and chosen vessel, who shall be overshadowed and conceive by

the power of the Holy Ghost, and bring forth a son, yea, even the Son of God." Alma 7:10

**The Bible says:** "... Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king..." Matthew 2:1

How this could logically be reconciled is hard to imagine, as Jerusalem is several miles from Bethlehem. **This appears to be a contradiction of the Scriptures.**



*iv. Can the Soul Die?*

**The Book of Mormon says:** "Therefore, as the soul could never die, and the fall had brought upon all mankind a spiritual death as well as a temporal, that is, they were cut off from the presence of the Lord, it was expedient that mankind should be reclaimed from this spiritual death." Alma 42:9

**The Bible says:** "Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, it shall die." Ezekiel 18:4

**The Bible says:** "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." Matthew 10:28

The Bible says that the soul can be destroyed, but the Book of Mormon says that the soul could never die. This teaching revealed to and taught by Joseph Smith is **inconsistent with Scripture.**



Countless additional Mormon doctrines could be shown here along with the necessary Scripture which contradicts them, but we shall refrain and only show seven more:

- **Mormonism says** Moses was translated<sup>16</sup> while **the Bible says** he was dead and buried.<sup>17</sup>



- **Mormonism says** that the spirits of the dead can return to communicate with us,<sup>18</sup> even though **the Bible says** it is an abomination any attempt to communicate with the dead.<sup>19</sup>



- **Mormonism says** humans can save the deceased by proxy,<sup>20</sup> though **the Bible says** only Christ can save us.<sup>21</sup>



- **Mormonism says** humans existed as spiritual beings before inhabiting our bodies,<sup>22</sup> but **the Bible says** that our spiritual bodies do not exist until after the resurrection of the dead.<sup>23</sup>




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<sup>16</sup> Joseph F. Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, vol. 2, p. 107.

<sup>17</sup> Deuteronomy 34:5-6.

<sup>18</sup> Doctrine and Covenants 27:7-8. Also see

<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/liahona/2013/03/youth/what-happens-after-we-die?lang=eng>




<sup>19</sup> Deuteronomy 18:10-12; also see Ecclesiastes 9:5-6 and Psalm 146:4.

<sup>20</sup> Joseph F. Smith, *The Way to Perfection* (Salt Lake City: Genealogical Society of Utah, 1931), p. 325.


<sup>21</sup> Psalm 49:7; 1 Timothy 2:5; Philippians 2:12.

<sup>22</sup> Moses 3:5-7.

<sup>23</sup> 1 Corinthians 15:42-46

- **Mormonism says** God the Father was once a man who became God.<sup>24</sup> **The Bible says** that the Father has been God “from everlasting to everlasting.”<sup>25</sup> 
- **Mormonism says** Adam is both Michael the Archangel and God—the Ancient of Days<sup>26</sup> but **the Bible says he is just a man.**<sup>27</sup> 
- **Mormonism says** we can earn Godhood<sup>28</sup> but **the Bible says** there is one God, the Father.<sup>29</sup> 

### C. *Did Joseph Smith Uphold God’s Law?*

As was seen in the section concerning Mormon doctrine and salvation, the Mormon church overemphasizes the law to the point where they make it the means of gaining salvation rather than the fruit thereof. On the one hand it appears that Joseph Smith upheld God’s law. On the other hand, it is seen that Joseph Smith practiced and taught that God will sometimes command man to partake of polygamy with married women, which is a violation of the 7<sup>th</sup> commandment (see test #6). Smith also attempted to defend himself from being murdered by a mob by shooting a gun at them (see test #7), which is not following the 6<sup>th</sup> commandment nor the example Christ (Phil. 2:5-8) and His apostles exemplified, as almost all of them died the death of a martyr without fighting back. Thus, we see that **Smith upheld the law in word but not in deed.** 

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<sup>24</sup> *History of the Church*, vol. 6, p. 305-306; *Journal of Discourses*, vol. 7, p. 333, <https://jod.mrm.org/7/331>, etc.

<sup>25</sup> Psalm 90:2.

<sup>26</sup> *Journal of Discourses*, vol. 1, p. 50, <https://jod.mrm.org/1/46>, *Deseret News*, June 18, 1873, p. 308.

<sup>27</sup> Genesis 2:7, 21-22.

<sup>28</sup> *Journal of Discourses*, vol. 6, p. 3-4, <https://jod.mrm.org/6/1>; *Journal of Discourses*, vol. 3, p. 93, <https://jod.mrm.org/3/80>, etc.

<sup>29</sup> 1 Corinthians 8:6; Ephesians 4:6.

## #2. Did the things Joseph Smith Foretell Come to Pass?

There are many prophecies which Joseph Smith made, but we shall endeavor to briefly examine only those which seem to have a concrete fulfillment or concrete failure. This is because most of the predictions which seem to not have been fulfilled are usually explained away through the ambiguity or different interpretations of terms used. For instance, Smith said that Zion and its temple will be built at Independence, Missouri “in this generation” (Doctrine and Covenants 84:1-5), but the “Temple Lot” remains vacant. This appears to be a failed prediction, but many Mormons interpret the phrase “in this generation” as a non-literal statement which refers to the “gospel dispensation.” This seems like a stretch, but depending on how you interpret Jesus’ use of the phrase “this generation” (Matthew 12:41-42; 23:36; 24:34), their explanation is plausible. Other valid rebuttals against “false predictions” include (1) the fact that some statements made by Smith were not intended to be prophetic in nature or direct revelation from God, but were rather personal opinions; (2) some statements have not been verified; (3) not all prophecies are literal; (4) some prophecies are conditional; (5) some prophecies are yet to be fulfilled, but could be fulfilled in due time. Such justifications for supposed false predictions are prevalent among the Mormon people, and are legitimate rebuttals. Other “spiritual predictions,” such as Christ supposedly appearing at the Kirkland Temple in 1836, cannot be verified, and will not be considered here. Therefore, as mentioned, we shall only attempt to examine the two prophecies with concrete fulfillments. We shall venture to keep these principles in mind when testing the predictions of both prophets. If you wish to examine more of Smith’s predictions, see the Wikipedia page entitled “List of prophecies of Joseph Smith.”

## 1) *The Civil War*

Joseph Smith gave a prophecy concerning the Civil War on December 25, 1832, which is very convincing and reads as follows:

“<sup>1</sup> Verily, thus saith the Lord concerning the wars that will shortly come to pass, beginning at the rebellion of South Carolina, which will eventually terminate in the death and misery of many souls; <sup>2</sup> And the time will come that war will be poured out upon all nations, beginning at this place. <sup>3</sup> For behold, the Southern States shall be divided against the Northern States, and the Southern States will call on other nations, even the nation of Great Britain, as it is called, and they shall also call upon other nations, in order to defend themselves against other nations; and then war shall be poured out upon all nations.” Doctrine and Covenants 87:1-3

The above statements indeed seem to be history written in advance. **Joseph Smith’s prediction came to pass with great accuracy.**



## 2) *Stars Fall from Heaven*

According to Philo Dibble:

“On one occasion Joseph was preaching in Kirtland in the fall of the year 1833 [October 5]. Quite a number of persons were present who did not belong to the Church; and one man, more bitter and skeptical than the others, made note with pencil and paper of the prophecy uttered on that occasion, wherein



Joseph said that 'Forty days shall not pass and the stars shall fall from heaven.'<sup>30</sup>

39 days after Joseph made these remarks the Leonids Meteor Shower occurred, which was one of the most remarkable showers in modern history. Jesus indeed declared that the stars would fall from heaven as figs, fall from a tree, acting as a sign before his coming (Matthew 24:29) and this seems to have been at least a partial fulfillment of what Jesus said would happen. If this account is accurate, then **Joseph Smith indeed predicted this event before it came to pass.**



Some of these prophecies made by Smith have had striking fulfillments. However, we have seen that Smith has already failed the first test of a true prophet, thus making him a false prophet. The question is, would God allow a false prophet to predict things that would come to pass? The Bible answers this question so we need not wonder: <sup>1</sup> If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder, <sup>2</sup> 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; <sup>3</sup> Thou shalt not hearken unto the words of 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." Deuteronomy 13:1-3. God allows false prophets to make predictions in order to try His people, to see if they will follow God with all of their heart.

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<sup>30</sup> George Q. Cannon, "Recollections Of The Prophet Joseph Smith," *The Juvenile Instructor*, (Salt Lake City: George Q. Cannon & Sons Co., 1892), p. 23, Parry Edwin, "Philo Dibble Narrative," *Stories about Joseph Smith* (Salt Lake City, 1934).

### #3. When in Vision, Did Joseph Smith Exhibit the Appropriate Physical Signs?

It has been difficult finding any first-hand accounts describing Joseph Smith while in vision, so if anyone reading this has any information concerning this topic, please feel free to reach out and share. With the lack of information, **we shall give him the benefit of the doubt and assume he exhibited all of the physical signs a true prophet displays when in vision.**



### #4. Was Joseph Smith Involved in Spiritualism and the Occult?

When one examines the background of Joseph Smith, it will be found that he and his family have a strong connection to the occult practices. In America, during the time he lived, many thought that pirates had buried treasure all along the coast. The Smith family claimed to be able to use magic to divine where these treasures were buried. Smith claimed to be able to do the same using his *divining rod* and *seer stones*. Using a seer stone back then was also known to occultists as “screaming,” and is commonly thought of today as “*crystal ball gazing*.” He supposedly used these seer stones to translate the golden plates given to him by the angel Moroni. As we saw in the introduction, crystal ball gazing is a form of **divination**, and is forbidden according to Scripture (Deut. 18:10-12). The LDS official website likewise informs us that Cowdery and Smith also used divining

rods.<sup>31</sup> What could have been the source of Smith’s knowledge of divination? According to Lance S. Owens:

“The historical record witnesses that Joseph Smith had some intercourse with at least three important manifestations of the alternative and non-orthodox religious traditions that blossomed in the Renaissance and post-Renaissance period, traditions sometimes labeled as ‘**the occult**’: **ceremonial magic, Masonry, and Kabbalah**. These associations extended throughout his life, and his liaison with each constituted more than casual acquaintance.”<sup>32</sup>

Could Smith’s occult connection to ceremonial magic be a reason why he first encountered the angel Moroni on September 21 (History 1:29), which was the autumn equinox and one of the 8 wiccan holidays, known as Mabon? Smith went back to the woods on this pagan holy day each year for three years to meet his angel, until he revealed the golden plates, known today as *The Book of Mormon*. It is curious that Smith was only allowed to show a small number of people these plates, which were written in “reformed Egyptian,” a dialect unknown in the realms of archaeology and academia. Some researchers believe that his “prayers” to “summon” Moroni were ritualistic in nature. This information could possibly be why the Mormon church seems to have white-washed the official story of Smith’s encounters with Moroni.

According to an affidavit signed by Willard Chase, a fellow treasure digger of the prophet, Smith’s father informed him that there were certain requirements his son had to fulfill in order to receive the golden plates from Moroni. He had to,

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<sup>31</sup> <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/history/topics/divining-rods?lang=eng>

<sup>32</sup> Lance S. Owens, “Joseph Smith and Kabbalah: The Occult Connection”, *Dialogue: A Journal Of Mormon Thought* 27, no. 3 (1994), p. 188, <https://scholarlypublishingcollective.org/uip/dial/article/27/3/117/243267/Joseph-Smith-and-Kabbalah-The-Occult-Connection>.

on the autumn equinox, go to his meeting place in the woods, wear all black, ride a black horse with a switch tail, and use a certain phrase when asking for the plates.<sup>33</sup> Chase also recounts how Smith's father informed him that when his son opened the stone box containing the untranslated Book of Mormon, "He saw in the box something like a toad, which soon assumed the appearance of a man, and struck him on the side' of his head."<sup>34</sup> D. Michael Quinn asserts that the toad, in American folk traditions, associate this amphibian with "Satanism, black magic, sorcery, and witchcraft... If anything changed from the appearance of a toad to the appearance of a person, that thing was an evil spirit, or a witch, or a bewitched person."<sup>35</sup> Quinn considers himself a Mormon and wrote a book entitled *Early Mormonism and the Magic World View*, in which "Quinn argues that Smith's early religious experiences were inextricably intermingled with ritual, supernaturalism, and white magic."<sup>36</sup>

As Owens mentioned above, Smith was also associated with Freemasonry, as he writes in his *History of the Church*, that on Tuesday, March 15, 1842, he "received the first degree in Freemasonry in the Nauvoo Lodge, assembled in my general business office."<sup>37</sup> Some researchers have found that Smith was raised to the 32<sup>nd</sup> degree/level of Sublime Master of the Royal Secret the very next day,<sup>38</sup> which is very rare. Soon after Smith was initiated into Freemasonry he created the Mormon Temple Endowment ceremony, which seems to be a carbon copy of the Masonic initiation, only with special features to adapt it to his Church. The Mormon Endowment ceremony is even complete with aprons, altars, secret handshakes, oaths, etc. Even the special Mormon underwear have a square and

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<sup>33</sup> E.D. Howe, *Mormonism Unveiled: or, a faithful account of that singular imposition and delusion, from its rise to the present time...* (Painesville, E.D. Howe, 1834), p. 242.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Quinn, D. Michael, *Early Mormonism and the Magic World View* (Salt Lake City, Utah: Signature Books, 1998), p. 152.

<sup>36</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/D.\\_Michael\\_Quinn](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/D._Michael_Quinn)

<sup>37</sup> Joseph Smith, *History of the Church*, vol.4, p. 550, 551.

<sup>38</sup> Gary Kah, *En Route to Global Occupation*, p. 111.

compass on them, just like the main Masonic logo! Some speculate that Smith was recruited to transform his new religion into a “front organization” for Freemasonry, as Masonry was on the decline since the murder of ex-Freemason Captain William Morgan, who was murdered for revealing the secrets of the first three degrees of Freemasonry in 1826.<sup>39</sup> It is also worth mentioning that Smith was not the only prophet of the Mormon Church who was a Freemason, but the first five of their prophets, at least, were all Freemasons.<sup>40</sup>

Why was Smith initiated into the highest Masonic degree, the Sublime Master of the Royal Secret? It must have been because he knew and believed this “Royal Secret.” And what is the “Royal Secret” of Freemasonry? According to Sovereign Grand Commander of the Supreme Council, Scottish Rite (Southern Jurisdiction) and Luciferian<sup>41</sup> Albert Pike, the “Royal Secret” is that the soul “by intense study, arrived at the knowledge [i.e. gnosis] of the elements and principles of Nature, it attains unto the place of The Eternal...”<sup>42</sup> The grand secret of Freemasonry is that of the ancient mystery religions, namely Gnosticism: the idea that by gnosis, or knowledge, our immortal souls can go back to, and become one with, the Deity. The doctrines of Joseph Smith emulate these teachings perfectly. He likewise states that if our immortal souls (Alma 42:9) gain the right knowledge, or intelligence, we can become Gods: “... **you have got to learn how to be Gods yourselves**, ...the same as all Gods have done before you.”<sup>43</sup> Bruce R. McConkie

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<sup>39</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William\\_Morgan\\_\(anti-Mason\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Morgan_(anti-Mason)).

<sup>40</sup> <https://www.ldsliving.com/Mormons-and-Masons-5-Fascinating-Connections/s/80329?page=1#story-content>

<sup>41</sup> Albert Pike, *Morals and Dogma Of The Ancient And Accepted Scottish Rite Of Freemasonry* (Charleston: The Supreme Council of the Southern Jurisdiction, 1905), p. 321. Also see Albert Pike, “Instructions to the 23 Supreme Councils of the World” (July 14, 1889), quoted in Abel Clarin de La Rive, *La Femme Et L'enfant Dans La Franc-Maçonnerie Universelle; Loges D'adoption, Triangles Lucifériens, Baptêmes De Louveteaux, Reconnaissances Conjugales, Pompes Funèbres Maçonniques, D'après Les Documents Officiels De La Secte (1730-1893)* (Paris: Delhomme et Briguët, 1894), p. 588-589.

<sup>42</sup> Pike, *Morals and Dogma*, p. 851.

<sup>43</sup> *Journal of Discourses*, vol. 6, p. 3-4, <https://jod.mrm.org/6/1>. Also see *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith (1843-44)*, p. 346-47.

(Mormon 'General Authority') informs us that by intelligence (i.e. gnosis), Jesus became God: "[Jesus] is the Firstborn of the Father. **By obedience and devotion to the truth he attained that pinnacle of intelligence which ranked Him as a God,** as the Lord Omnipotent while yet in His preexistent state."<sup>44</sup> This idea is taught under a mound of complicated wording in Doctrine and Covenants 93:11-14, 27-28; 76:50, 52, 56-58. The foundation of the doctrine of the natural immortality of the soul and the apotheosis of mankind is from the mouth of the serpent who told Eve that if she ate of the tree of knowledge of good and evil that she would not die, but would become as god (Genesis 3:1-6).

The main "intelligence," and gnosis, the Masons revere is the Kabbalah,<sup>45</sup> an occult system of Jewish and Babylonian magic. A number of researchers affirm that Smith likewise had a knowledge of the Kabbalah, as it is said that his family had a number of occult artifacts, which they carefully preserved (though the LDS church craftily says there is no evidence they were ever *used*), including magic parchments, a dagger, and a Jupiter talisman Smith carried with him until his death.<sup>46</sup> On both the parchments and talisman, Hebrew characters from the Kabbalah can be seen.<sup>47</sup>

Not only does speculation concerning the nature of the Smith families occult artifacts lead us to the belief Joseph was involved with the occult, but many of the ways he interpreted the Scriptures is based off Kabbalistic texts and philosophies. For instance, Smith, in his infamous *King Follett Discourse*, redefines the first words of the Bible *Bereshith bara Elohim*, as meaning "the Head God brought forth the Head Gods in the grand, head council."<sup>48</sup> This view is impossible to any literate reading of Hebrew. One of the only known places which

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<sup>44</sup> *Mormon Doctrine* (1958), p. 129. Also see *The Mortal Messiah*, vol. 4, p. 109.

<sup>45</sup> Pike, *Morals and Dogma*, p. 741.

<sup>46</sup> Richard L. Anderson, "The Mature Joseph Smith and Treasure Searching," *Brigham Young University Studies* 24, no. 4 (1984), p. 541. This talisman was sold by Charles Bidamon, who swore in an affidavit that Smith had this in his pocket when he was murdered.

<sup>47</sup> Owens, "Joseph Smith and Kabbalah: The Occult Connection," p. 161.

<sup>48</sup> Larson, '*King Follett Discourse*,' p. 202.

contains this interpretation is found in the Kabbalistic treaties known as the Zohar (Zohar 1:15a). It appears that the idea of a number of Gods creating the God of the Bible originated with the occult Kabbalah. But it also appears that his contact with the occult found its way into other doctrines of Mormonism:

“The Mormon cosmology constructed by Joseph Smith was as optimistic as Renaissance hermeticism and shared with it a startling number of common themes... [Smith] reproduced the three heavens of the Cabala and hermeticism in the three Mormon heavens, the telestial, terrestrial, and celestial kingdoms. Both hermeticism and Mormonism celebrate the mutuality of spiritual and material worlds, precreated intelligences, free will, a divine Adam, a fortunate, sinless Fall, and the symbolism and religious efficacy of marriage and sexuality. And, as in hermeticism, Adam, ‘the father of all, prince of all, that ancient of days,’ would occupy a central position in Mormon cosmology... Joseph Smith gave Mormon hierarchy the same authority that the hermetic alchemist assumed: human means to immortality, indeed divinity.”<sup>49</sup>

Smith was obviously knowledgeable of occult doctrines and most likely partook of some occult practices including, but not limited to: *divination* (with his divining rod and seeing stone), being an *enchanter* (with his Jupiter talisman), a “*warlock*”/*sorcerer* (participating in occult rituals), a *necromancer* (communicating with deceased “saints”), and a *consulter of familiar spirits* (Moroni, etc.). Some of these practices could potentially be justified, but it is impossible for *all* of these facts to be disregarded. **Thus he fails this test.**




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<sup>49</sup> John L. Brooke, *The Refiner's Fire: The Making of Mormon Cosmology, 1644 - 1844* (New York; Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 13.

## #5. Did Joseph Smith Acknowledge the Incarnation of the Begotten Son of God?

According to the Book of Mormon, Jesus is the pre-existent, literal, only begotten Son of God. This, on the surface, agrees with the Bible. However, when one digs deeper, we learn that Mormons believe we were all (including Jesus) literal children of God. Joseph Smith said:

**“We were first begotten as spirit babies in heaven and then born naturally on earth”** *Journal of Discourse*, vol. 4, p. 218

With this in mind, Christ could not be the only begotten Son of God before He came to earth, as we are all pre-existent, begotten sons and daughters of God. Mormons believe that Christ is the only begotten Son of God in the flesh—according to them, God the Father had intimate sexual relations with Mary and literally fathered Christ in the flesh. However, the teaching that Christ became the only begotten Son of God when He was born on earth is not Scriptural. John 3:16 says that God “gave his only begotten Son...” He did not send one of His sons, but He sent His only true Son! This fact shows the love of God, as John explains: “In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.” 1 John 4:9. God did not send a son to become begotten, but He sent His already begotten Son!

The truth of the matter is that Christ is divine because He is the actual only begotten Son of God—He was brought forth from His Father’s substance, and therefore has the same nature as His divine Father.<sup>50</sup> Simon Peter confessed his

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<sup>50</sup> For more information on the Sonship of Christ and His divinity, please watch the series, *Theos: Search for the One True God*, on YouTube here: <https://tinyurl.com/2p84aeph>, or visit [https://fatheroflove.info/book\\_theme/view/who-is-god](https://fatheroflove.info/book_theme/view/who-is-god).



belief in the divinity of Christ when he said, “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.” Matthew 16:16.

Mormonism does not deny the divinity of Christ, but they marginalize it by stating that all humans were literal sons of God, which would in fact make us all divine beings! They state that we have not received of the fulness of the glory of God (intelligence, D&C 93:36) and become fully divine, but we can develop our divine qualities, just like Jesus did, and become Gods by realizing our inerrant divine nature. Official Mormon curriculum states:

“Because we are the spiritual children of our heavenly parents, we have inherited the potential to develop their divine qualities.” *Gospel Principles* (2011), p. 14

“[Jesus] is the Firstborn of the Father. By obedience and devotion to the truth he attained that pinnacle of intelligence which ranked Him as a God, as the Lord Omnipotent while yet in His preexistent state.” *Mormon Doctrine* (1958), p. 129

Though *Mormonism marginalizes the divinity of Jesus*, it is fair to say that **they do believe Christ was the divine Son of God who came in the flesh.**



## #6. Did Joseph Smith Edify the Church and Not Condone Sin?

It is a well-known fact that Joseph Smith taught and practiced polygamy early on in the history of Mormonism. According to the LDS official website, monogamy “is the Lord’s standing law of marriage. In biblical times, the Lord commanded some of His people to practice plural marriage—the marriage of one man and more than one woman. Some early members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints also received and obeyed this commandment given through God’s prophets.”<sup>51</sup> This contradicts the Bible, as Jesus said that God’s plan is to have “a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh” (Matt. 19:5). Notice how Jesus said a man shall be married to his wife, not his wives. 1 Timothy 3:12 likewise says that deacons are to be husbands of ONE wife.

History records that Smith, after receiving his new “revelation” concerning “plural marriage” (i.e. polygamy), that he began teaching these things to his close associates. The official LDS essay, cited above, states that this message was officially written down in 1843, and history shows that Joseph had anywhere between 27 and 49 wives! See the Wikipedia page entitled “List of Joseph Smith’s wives” for more information. Not only that, but at least 11 of them were already married, which is blatantly a violation of the 7<sup>th</sup> commandment. Smith’s teaching on this subject had been spread to 29 men and 50 women by the time he died in 1844, and by 1847 at least 196 men and 521 women had begun to practice polygamy! Thus, we see that **Joseph Smith condoned adultery in certain instances.**

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<sup>51</sup> <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/manual/gospel-topics-essays/plural-marriage-in-kirtland-and-nauvoo?lang=eng>

More could be said in this section, such as the fact that the Book of Mormon says it was a good thing that Adam and Eve disobeyed God and listened to the serpent,<sup>52</sup> but the reader should easily see that **Smith did not edify the Church according to the standard of God’s Word.**



## #7. What Fruits did Joseph Smith and his Movement Bear?

### *a) What Fruits did Joseph Smith’s Life Bear?*

Early member of the Mormon Church, Emily D. Partridge Young, states that Smith “was a prophet of God, and a friend of man. His was a noble character. All who knew him can testify to that assertion. He was all that the word gentleman would imply—pure in heart, always striving for right, upholding innocence, and battling for the good of all.”<sup>53</sup> Is this true, that all who knew him could testify that Smith was a man which possessed these traits?

It seems the courts of South Bainbridge, New York would disagree with Young, as Smith was arrested in 1828 in his early 20’s for being a “**disorderly person,**” in his attempts at money-digging. This is interesting as Smith claimed to have had his first vision in his early teens. This, however, was only one of his many run ins with local law enforcement, even though the Scriptures declare that “<sup>1</sup> ... every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. <sup>2</sup> Whosoever therefore resisteth the

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<sup>52</sup> 2 Nephi 2:22-23; Moses 5:10-11.

<sup>53</sup> Emily P. Young letter, Salt Lake City, Utah to Lulu Clawson Young, 1897 June 27, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.” Romans 13:1-2.

One of the things that led to his multiple run ins with the law was his formation of a group known as the Danites, who acted as a “Mormon militia” formed by Smith and his followers between 1834 and 1838, in order to “possess the kingdom” (Daniel 7:18)—evidently by force. In an affidavit signed by John N. Snapp, a former member of the Danites, he swore that members must **take an oath** stating they will “**cowhide [beat] any person or persons, who may say aught against Joseph Smith and Lyman Wight, and if that will not prevent them from speaking about said Smith and Wight, then they are to assassinate them.**”<sup>54</sup> Sapp also indicated that if their commune did not earn enough money to maintain it, they would steal the rest from those of other denominations in Missouri. These Danites went so far as to threaten to kill the Justice of Daviess County along with his family if he continued to advance any legal processions against the Mormons. These statements and facts are recorded in government documents relating an inquiry concerning “the Trial of Joseph Smith, and Others, for High Treason and Other Crimes Against the State,” cited in the previous footnote.

When one examines the evidence, it seems clear that Joseph Smith did indeed commit high treason, as he ran for President in 1844 and, like Hitler, sought to usher in the thousand year millennium of peace on earth, even though the Bible describes the millennium occurring in heaven after the resurrection of the righteous (Revelation 20:4-6). As such, Smith not only created one of the largest standing militia’s in America at the time (the Nauvoo Legion), but he also created a secret organization during his campaign called the “Council of Fifty.” An article from “Religion & Politics” entitled *The Mormon Council of Fifty: What Joseph*

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<sup>54</sup> Fayette, Missouri: U.S. Government Printing Office, *Document Containing the Correspondence, Orders &c. in Relation to the Disturbances with the Mormons; And the Evidence Given Before the Hon. Austin A. King, Judge of the Fifth Judicial Circuit of the State of Missouri, at the Court-House in Richmond, in a Criminal Court of Inquiry, Begun November 12, 1838, on the Trial of Joseph Smith, and Others, for High Treason and Other Crimes Against the State* (Fayette, Missouri: 1841), p. 17, <https://archive.org/details/documentcontaini00miss/page/n41/mode/2up?q=>.

*Smith's Secret Records Reveal* gives us a glimpse of what the purpose of this group was:

“It was designed to be a theocratic government-in-embryo-a ‘literal kingdom of God,’ in Smith’s own words, that would govern the world based on divine dictates and prophetic authority... Members were ‘bound to eternal secrecy,’ prohibited from mentioning it ‘even to our wives,’ and warned that anyone ‘who broke the rule **should lose his cursed head...** After a lengthy preface, the first article [of his proposed Constitution] declared God the ruler of heaven and earth, the second articulated **God’s prophet as His mouthpiece in governance,** and the third dictated that God would retain the ‘power to appoint Judges and officers in my kingdom.’...”<sup>55</sup>

It is plain to see that Smith was an early advocate of communism (under the guise of the Law of Consecration) who intended to take over the government and establish himself as the Pope of America. As such, Smith was later arrested for treason and subsequently murdered in jail. However, even at death’s doorstep Smith seems to have been living outside of God’s law.

Smith was in the jail at Carthage, Illinois, not only for treason, but also because he ordered his followers to destroy the local newspaper because they had criticized the Mormons for their practice of polygamy. When in jail, the prophet had a gun smuggled in for him, which he unloaded on the mob which ultimately put him in the grave. I am unfamiliar with any of the prophets who, when facing persecution, started fighting back. Imagine if Stephen started throwing stones back on those who were attempting to stone him to death. After all the time in the world for the fruit of Joseph’s life to mature, we do not see him

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<sup>55</sup> <https://religionandpolitics.org/2016/09/09/the-mormon-council-of-fifty-what-joseph-smiths-secret-records-reveal/>, accessed May 20, 2022.

go out as a lamb led to the slaughter, like Christ, but rather went out like he was in the Alamo.

One of Smith's contemporaries, E.D. Howe, did much research concerning Smith and his history. Howe was able to obtain a statement by 62 residents who were acquainted with the Smith family, which reads as follows:

"We, the undersigned, have been acquainted with the Smith family, for a number of years, while they resided near this place [Palmyra, New York], and we have no hesitation in saying, that we consider them destitute of that moral character, which ought to entitle them to the confidence of any community. They were particularly famous for visionary projects, spent much of their time in diggings for money which they pretended was hid in the earth; and to this day, large excavations may be seen in the earth, not far from their residence, where they used to spend their time in digging for hidden treasures. **Joseph Smith, Senior, and his son Joseph, were in particular, considered entirely destitute of moral character, and addicted to vicious habits.**"<sup>56</sup>

It seems clear that **Smith did not bear good fruit at the beginning, middle, or end of his life.**



### *b) What Fruits did the Mormon Movement Bear?*

I have not met many Mormons in my short life, but the few I have met were very nice and courteous people. I know that most Mormons are very genuine, but Mormonism has a very dark past, and the ramifications for certain doctrines such as polygamy (which is currently not practiced openly), salvation by grace *and* works, self-deification, etc. must be incredibly destructive in the private

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<sup>56</sup> Howe, *Mormonism Unveiled*, p. 261.

lives of many families. One of the cruelest doctrines taught by the Mormon Church is that concerning “blood atonement.” The idea behind this is that there are some eternal sins that the blood of Jesus cannot atone for. In these instances, the blood of the sinner is required to be shed to atone for himself. Brigham Young put it as follows:

“Suppose you found your brother in bed with your wife, and put a javelin through both of them, you would be justified, and they would atone for their sins, and be received into the kingdom of God. I would at once do so in such a case; and under such a circumstances, I have no wife whom I love so well that I would not put a javelin through her heart, and I would do it with clean hands...

“There is not a man or woman, who violates the covenants made with their God, that will not be required to pay the debt. **The blood of Christ will never wipe that out, your own blood must atone for it**; and the judgments of the Almighty will come, sooner or later, and every man and woman will have to atone for their covenants... All mankind love themselves, and let these principles be known by an individual, and he would be glad to have his blood shed... I could refer you to plenty of instances where men have been righteously slain, in order to atone for their sins... This is loving our neighbor as ourselves; if he needs help, help him; and **if he wants salvation and it is necessary to spill his blood on the earth in order that he may be saved, spill it.**”<sup>57</sup>

It is doctrines like this that resulted in the Mormon culture of violence in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. One of the worst massacres was when the Mormon people slaughtered 120 pioneers in the “Mountain Meadows Massacre.”

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<sup>57</sup> *Journal of Discourses*, vol. 3, p. 247, <https://jod.mrm.org/3/243>, vol. 4, p. 219-220, <https://jod.mrm.org/4/215>.

Another instance of extreme violence was due to some of the racist beliefs found in the Book of Mormon. This book teaches that during the reign of Zedekiah, God commanded a Jewish prophet named Lehi to move to the Americas. Two of Lehi's sons were named Nephi and Laman, who subsequently spawned the Nephites and the Lamanites. Essentially, the Nephites were the righteous Native Americans (who are actually Jews) while the Lamanites fell into apostasy and become the wicked Native Americans. Because of the Lamanites' sins, God set a mark on them, which is explained in the Book of Mormon:

**“6 And the skins of the Lamanites were dark, according to the mark which was set upon their fathers, which was a curse upon them because of their transgression and their rebellion against their brethren, who consisted of Nephi, Jacob, and Joseph, and Sam, who were just and holy men. <sup>7</sup> And their brethren sought to destroy them, therefore they were cursed; and the Lord God set a mark upon them, yea, upon Laman and Lemuel, and also the sons of Ishmael, and Ishmaelish women. <sup>8</sup> And this was done that their seed might be distinguished from the seed of their brethren, that thereby the Lord God might preserve his people, **that they might not mix and believe in incorrect traditions which would prove their destruction.**”**  
Alma 3:6-8

**“And he had caused the cursing to come upon them, yea, even a sore cursing, because of their iniquity... as they were white, and exceedingly fair and delightful, that they might not be enticing unto my people **the Lord God did cause a skin of blackness to come upon them.**”** 2 Nephi 5:21

The result of these racist teachings brought about violence and the massacre of many Native Americans. One can easily learn about all of this on the Wikipedia page entitled “Mormonism and Violence.” It seems clear that **the fruit of Mormonism is less than favorable.**





The chart below summarizes our findings which indicates that

# Joseph Smith

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## False Prophet

Harmony with the Law and Testimony	Predict -ions Came to Pass	Exhibits Physical Signs in Vision	Acknow- ledges the Incarnation of Christ	Points Out Sin	Not Involved with Occult	Bears Good Fruit
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For resources explaining more of the doctrines of Mormonism in light of Scripture, please visit the following ministry websites:

- Mormonism Research Ministry (<https://www.mrm.org/>)
- LDS Facts (<https://ldsfacts.org/>)

If you are a Mormon reading this, I ask you to look at this information with an honest heart and mind, asking God to show you the truth, no matter what it is. If you truly desire to know the truth and to draw closer to God, He shall reveal it to you *through His word*. We cannot trust supernatural *experiences* to confirm if something is true or not, we must test everything according to God's word. Satan has the ability to cause you to *feel* a certain way, or to have a supernatural experience, but he cannot change the truth of God's word.

# Testing Ellen White

Ellen White (1827-1915) is the prophetess and co-founder of the Seventh-Day Adventist Church. She and her family were Methodists who became Adventists after hearing the prophetic sermons by William Miller, who incorrectly thought that Jesus was coming back in 1844. After the Great Disappointment the Adventists experienced, most of the former believers left the movement, but the few who remained sought to understand how they were mistaken. During this time the 17 year old Ellen White claimed to have had a vision from God to comfort and help guide the Advent people back on track. From this point, Ellen had over a thousand visions concerning a wide range of subjects. These visions helped the Adventists become who they are today.

## **#1. Did Ellen White Contradict (a) Prior Revelation & (b) Uphold the Law of God?**

### *A. Ellen White's View of the Bible*

“The written testimonies [her writings] are not to give new light, but to impress vividly upon the heart the truths of inspiration already revealed... **The Testimonies are not to belittle the word of God, but to exalt it and attract minds to it, that the beautiful simplicity of truth may impress all.**”<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 7.

“The Lord desires you to study your Bibles. **He has not given any additional light to take the place of His Word.** This light [her own ministry] is to bring confused minds to His Word, which, if eaten and digested, is as the lifeblood of the soul.”<sup>59</sup>

*i. Ellen White’s view on salvation*

“There is not a point that needs to be dwelt upon more earnestly, repeated more frequently, or established more firmly in the minds of all than **the impossibility of fallen man meriting anything by his own best good works. Salvation is through faith in Jesus Christ alone...**”<sup>60</sup>

“... We must center our hopes of heaven upon Christ alone, because He is our Substitute and Surety. We have transgressed the law of God, and by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified. **The best efforts that man in his own strength can make are valueless to meet the holy and just law that he has transgressed; but through faith in Christ he may claim the righteousness of the Son of God as all-sufficient.** Christ satisfied the demands of the law [a life of selfless love] in His human nature. He bore the curse of the law for the sinner, made an atonement for him, ‘that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.’ **Genuine faith appropriates the righteousness of Christ, and the sinner is made an overcomer with Christ; for he is made a partaker of the divine nature, and thus divinity and humanity are combined.**

**“He who is trying to reach heaven by his own works in keeping the law is attempting an impossibility. Man cannot be saved without obedience, but his works should not be of himself; Christ should work in**

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<sup>59</sup> Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, book 3, p. 29.

<sup>60</sup> Ellen G. White, *Faith and Works*, p. 19, 20.

**him to will and to do of His good pleasure.** If a man could save himself by his own works, he might have something in himself in which to rejoice. The effort that man makes in his own strength to obtain salvation is represented by the offering of Cain. All that man can do without Christ is polluted with selfishness and sin; but that which is wrought through faith is acceptable to God. When we seek to gain heaven through the merits of Christ, the soul makes progress. ‘Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith,’ we may go on from strength to strength, from victory to victory; for through Christ the grace of God has worked out our complete salvation.”<sup>61</sup>

“More than this, Christ changes the heart. **He abides in your heart by faith. You are to maintain this connection with Christ by faith and the continual surrender of your will to Him; and so long as you do this, He will work in you to will and to do according to His good pleasure.** So you may say, ‘The life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me.’ Galatians 2:20. So Jesus said to His disciples, ‘It is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you.’ Matthew 10:20. **Then with Christ working in you, you will manifest the same spirit and do the same good works—works of righteousness, obedience.**”<sup>62</sup>

According to Ellen White, we are justified by a relational faith in Christ (Rom. 3:28)—not by works. We are not saved (justified) by obeying the law (Gal. 3:11), but the saved (justified) will obey the law (Rom. 2:13). When we exercise faith unto justification, we are opening our hearts to Christ, and He will subsequently “dwell in your hearts by faith” (Eph. 3:17). Thus Christ, the Seed (Gal. 3:16), is

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<sup>61</sup> Ellen G. White, *Review and Herald*, July 1, 1890, par. 10-11.

<sup>62</sup> Ellen G. White, *Steps to Christ*, p. 31.

“planted” (Rom. 6:5) in the soil of the heart. After Christ is planted in the heart, He will subsequently cause us to “will and to do His good pleasure” (Phil. 2:13), “That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” Romans 8:4. We cannot bring forth the fruit of righteousness, or obedience to God’s laws, by our own effort, or merits,<sup>63</sup> but once Christ is planted and kept in the heart, He will naturally bring forth righteousness and obedience to His Father’s laws, for God’s law of love is within His heart (Ps. 40:8). According to our estimation, **Ellen White is in agreeance with the Scriptures on how man is saved.**



### *B. Did Ellen White Contradict the Bible?*

Some claim that Ellen White contradicted the Bible 50+ times, but there is not enough space in this short work to examine each of these specific charges. That being said, we shall examine a number of the instances sited by some websites online.

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<sup>63</sup> It is important to note that Ellen White, unlike Mormonism, believed that things like sincere effort and the exercising of repentance and faith, originate with God instead of ourselves. Thus, when these things are manifested in our lives, we are not demonstrating our own merit (for we have none to give), but we are seeing the merits of Christ and His righteousness, which are appropriated to us by dying to self, or submitting the will, or power of choice, to God. In a *Review and Herald* article from April 1, 1890, par. 5, Ellen White says that repentance, “lies beyond the reach of our own powers to accomplish; it is obtained only from Christ, who ascended up on high, and has given gifts unto men. *Christ is the source of every right impulse.*” Regarding faith, she wrote that “There is danger in regarding justification by faith as placing merit on faith,” going on to state that faith is simply yielding the mind, or opening the door of the heart, to Christ’s Spirit which is seeking entrance into every heart (see *Faith and Works*, p. 25). Concerning the lack of merit in human effort, see *Steps to Christ*, p. 18, 27, 67.

i. *Who Spoke to Cain?*

**Ellen White says:** “Through an angel messenger the divine warning was conveyed: ‘If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted?’”<sup>64</sup>

**The Bible says:** “Then the Lord said to Cain, ‘Why are you angry? Why is your face downcast? If you do what is right will you not be accepted?’... So Cain went out from the Lord's presence” Genesis 4:6, 7, 16

This appears to be a contradiction as the Bible says that the Lord spoke to Cain, but she said it was an angel who delivered that message. However, when one looks at the context of the sentence immediately preceding the one quoted, this supposed contradiction holds no weight. In context she says:

“And the Lord said unto Cain, ‘Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen?’ Through an angel messenger the divine warning was conveyed...”<sup>65</sup>

With this context in mind, we see that she is in harmony with the Scriptures on this account, as she declares that the Lord spoke to Cain. However, we also see she is giving more detail concerning the medium of how the Lord spoke to Cain, which in and of itself is not a contradiction. If this added detail is a contradiction, then the Bible is full of contradictions. For instance, Exodus 3:2 declares that the “angel of the Lord” appeared to Moses in the burning bush, while verse 4 says that it was God who “called unto him out of the midst of the bush.” The Bible has plenty of examples where the “Angel” of the Lord is used synonymously with God Himself (see Gen. 16:7, 13; 22:11-18; 31:11-13; 48:15,16; Ex. 3:2-6, Acts 3:25; 7:30-32;

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<sup>64</sup> Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 73.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid.



Num. 22:21-23:5; Judges 6:11-40; 13:3-22). **This is not a contradiction of Scripture.**

ii. *Was Israel Destroyed by Gluttony?*

**Ellen White says:** “God granted their desire, giving them flesh, and leaving them to eat till their gluttony produced a plague.”<sup>66</sup>

**The Bible says:** “But while the meat was still between their teeth and before it could be consumed, the anger of the Lord burned against the people, and he struck them with a severe plague.” Numbers 11:33

Some claim that the above is a contradiction, as Ellen White indicates the plague occurred after Israel had eaten the flesh, while the Scripture seems to suggest that the plague broke out before the flesh was eaten. On the surface this appears to be a contradiction, but is it really? Question: can over a million nomads take their first bite of food in unison? The food was “still between their teeth” for some of the people, but clearly not all. Some may have not had a serving while others most likely had multiple. The Bible says that God sent the plague before the meat “could be consumed.” Does this mean that no individual had consumed any meat, or does it mean that the supply of meat had not yet been consumed? It seems most logical that the Israelites were still in the process of eating (“still between their teeth”) when the plague broke out. However, we do not have to figure this out on our own, for further revelation was given to the prophet David:

**The Bible says:** “He caused an east wind to blow in the heaven: and by his power he brought in the south wind. He rained flesh also upon them as

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<sup>66</sup> Ellen G. White, *Counsels on Diet and Foods*, p. 148.

dust, and feathered fowls like as the sand of the sea: And he let it fall in the midst of their camp, round about their habitations. So they did eat, and were well filled: for he gave them their own desire; They were not estranged from their lust. But while their meat was yet in their mouths, The wrath of God came upon them, and slew the fattest of them, and smote down the chosen men of Israel." Psalm 78:26-31

But what caused the plague? Israel's gluttony or God? Is it one or the other, or did God strike them with a plague by allowing them to reap what they sow? The answer seems to be the latter, as *God is often described as doing what He allows*. Not only that, but the Bible typically describes God's "wrath" and "anger" as being expressed in His allowing Israel to choose their own destructive path and "giving them up" to and not sparing them from the natural consequences of their actions (Rom. 1:18–19, 24–26; Is. 54:7-8; Deut. 31:16-18; 2 Pet. 2:4-6).<sup>67</sup>

When looking at the whole of Scripture, we see that **Ellen White's claim do not contradict past revelation.**<sup>68</sup>




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<sup>67</sup> For a good introduction to the topic of God's character, please read or listen to the book *Acts of Our Gentle God*, by Jay A. Schulberg, available at <https://fatheroflove.info/book/view/acts-of-our-gentle-god>.

<sup>68</sup> To see 50 "contradictions" and rebuttals, please visit: <https://adventistdefenseleague.com/2022/02/a-response-to-ellen-white-contradicts-the-bible-over-fifty-times.html>. According to this article, **all alleged contradictions can be categorized in one of seven categories: (1) typographical error or factual mistake; (2) insufficient study of the Bible or history; (3) overlooked context; (4) semantical argument; (5) misunderstanding of the context; (6) doctrinal difference; and (7) new details.**



iii. *Did Jesus Faint 3 Times While Carrying the Cross?*

**Ellen White says:** “He was weak and feeble through pain and suffering, caused by the scourging and blows which he had received, yet they laid on him the heavy cross upon which they were soon to nail him. But Jesus fainted beneath the burden. Three times they laid on him the heavy cross, and three times he fainted.”<sup>69</sup>

**The Bible says:** “As they were going out, they met a man from Cyrene, named Simon, and they forced him to carry the cross” Matthew 27:32

The above is again cited as a contradiction, though it simply appears to be added information. There must have been a reason that Simon was forced to carry the cross, and Jesus fainting from pain is a highly likely reason.

When one examines the many “contradictions” found in Ellen White’s writings, they are almost always the case of added details which, as mentioned, is not necessarily a contradiction. If new details concerning something which had been partially revealed in the past were a contradiction, then almost all the prophets would be contradicting each other. For instance, is it a contradiction when Moses wrote that the Messiah would be born of a woman (Genesis 3:15), while Isaiah said He would be born of a virgin (Isaiah 7:14)? The answer is an obvious no. When a prophet claims to be giving new “details” concerning something revealed by the past prophets, we must always prayerfully examine and consider what they have said and see if it is in harmony with the whole of Scripture.

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<sup>69</sup> Ellen G. White, *Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 1, p. 57.

In this case these new details do not contradict the Scriptures but give us new information. **We cannot verify if this assertion is true or not from Scripture alone**, but if she passes all of the Scriptural tests for a prophet, we would do well to accept her "new light," or new details, as true and a further revelation from God. However, if she does not pass all the tests then we must throw out all of her added details and only accept what was revealed in the past. That being said, we shall consider Mrs. White innocent until proven guilty and assume her writings are in harmony with the Word of God until we see evidence of the contrary.



### *C. Did Ellen White Uphold God's Law?*

"Jesus, the express image of the Father's person, the effulgence of His glory; the self-denying Redeemer, throughout His pilgrimage of love on earth, **was a living representation of the character of the law of God**. In His life it is made manifest that **heaven-born love, Christlike principles, underlie the laws of eternal rectitude**. 'Till heaven and earth pass,' said Jesus, 'one jot or one tittle shall in nowise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.' By His own obedience to the law, Christ testified to its immutable character and proved that through His grace it could be perfectly obeyed by every son and daughter of Adam. On the mount He declared that not the smallest iota should pass from the law till all things should be accomplished—all things that concern the human race, all that relates to the plan of redemption. **He does not teach that the law is ever to be abrogated**, but He fixes the eye upon the utmost verge of man's horizon and assures us that until this point is reached the law will retain its authority so that none may suppose it was His mission to abolish the precepts of the law. So long as heaven and earth continue, the holy principles of God's law will remain... Because the law of the Lord is perfect,

and therefore changeless, **it is impossible for sinful men, in themselves, to meet the standard of its requirement.** This was why Jesus came as our Redeemer. It was His mission, by making men partakers of the divine nature, to bring them into harmony with the principles of the law of heaven. When we forsake our sins and receive Christ as our Saviour, the law is exalted. The apostle Paul asks, 'Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.' Romans 3:31. **The new-covenant promise is, 'I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them.'** Hebrews 10:16."<sup>70</sup>

Here, as well as in many other places, it is plain to see that **Ellen White did uphold the law of God.**



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<sup>70</sup> Ellen G. White, *Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, p. 49-50. Also see Ellen G. White, *Early Writings*, p. 118.

## #2. Did the things Ellen White Foretell Come to Pass?

Many claim Ellen White falsely predicted the Second Coming of Christ in 1844 and is subsequently labelled as a false prophet. However, as we have already seen, William Miller was the one who taught that Christ would return this year. Now that this is out of the way, let's examine some of the things she foretold.

### 1) *San Francisco Earthquake*

Ellen White had claimed to have received a number of warnings concerning impending judgments upon San Francisco, such as the following:

“On September 1, 1902, Mrs. White wrote:

“Well equipped tent meetings should be held in the large cities, such as **San Francisco**; for not long hence these cities **will suffer under the judgments of God**. San Francisco and Oakland are becoming as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the Lord will visit them in wrath.”<sup>71</sup>

On April 16, 1906, she received her most detailed vision on this subject:

“While at Loma Linda, California, **April 16, 1906**, there passed before me a most wonderful representation. During a vision of the night, I stood on an eminence, from which I could see **houses shaken like a reed in the wind. Buildings, great and small, were falling to the ground.** Pleasure resorts, theaters, hotels, and the homes of the wealthy were shaken and shattered.

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<sup>71</sup> Ellen G. White, *Life Sketches of Ellen G. White*, p. 412.

**Many lives were blotted out of existence**, and the air was filled with the shrieks of the injured and the terrified.”<sup>72</sup>

History records that there were no signs of anything out of the ordinary until the morning of the 18<sup>th</sup>, two days after Mrs. White had her vision, at 5:12 a.m. It was at that time that the San Andreas fault slipped over almost 300 miles, destroying the very foundations of the city. The earthquake destroyed around 490 city blocks, 28,000 buildings, which were destroyed either by earthquake or fire, more than 227,000 people homeless, and over 3000 dead. It seems that **Ellen White’s prediction came to pass** as she declared.



## 2) *The Civil War*

On January 12, 1861, three months before the Civil War, Ellen White had a vision at a Seventh-Day Adventist meeting house in Parkville, Michigan, in which she described the coming Civil War.

“There is not a person in this house who has even dreamed of the trouble that is coming upon this land. People are making sport of the secession ordinance of South Carolina, but **I have just been shown that a large number of States are going to join that State, and there will be a most terrible war**. In this vision I have seen large armies of both sides gathered on the field of battle. I heard the booming of the cannon, and saw the dead and dying on every hand. Then I saw them rushing up engaged in hand-to-hand fighting [bayoneting one another]. Then I saw the field after the battle, all covered with the dead and dying. Then I was carried to prison, and saw the suffering of those in want, who were wasting away. Then I was

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<sup>72</sup> Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 9, p. 92.

taken to the homes of those who had lost husbands, sons, or brothers in the war. I saw their distress and anguish.' ... Then she looked around the room to those who were with her and said... 'There are those in this house who will lose sons in that war.'"<sup>73</sup>

South Carolina was the first state to secede from the Union, which occurred on December 24, 1860, and the general consensus among the populace was that this succession would come to naught and that war was unlikely. However, **Ellen White's prediction was fulfilled with great accuracy.**



### 3) World War I & II

In 1861 Ellen White wrote:

"I was shown the inhabitants of the earth in the utmost confusion. There was war, bloodshed, want, privation, famine and pestilence, in the land... My attention was then called from the scene. There seemed to be a little time of peace. Then the inhabitants of the earth were again presented before me, and everything was in the utmost confusion again. Strife, war and bloodshed, with famine and pestilence, raged everywhere. Other nations were engaged in this confusion and war. War caused famine. Want and bloodshed caused pestilence. And then men's hearts will fail them for fear, 'and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth.'"<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> Ellen G. White, Remarks at Parkville, Michigan, General Conference Daily Bulletin, January 31, 1893, Art. A. As a confirmation that Mrs. White said this on this specific day, non-Adventist, Martha V. Ensign, signed a sworn statement affirming such, recorded in J.N. Loughborough, *The Great Second Advent Movement: Its Rise and Progress*, p. 337-339.

<sup>74</sup> Ellen G. White, *Review and Herald*, August 27, 1861.

Here she claims to have been “shown” a vision by God where she saw a devastating war, a little time of peace, and then another war. It is claimed that this predication was fulfilled in the first world war, which was followed by a “little time of peace” (1918-1933), after which was another war which involved more nations than the first. This would be correct as there were at least twenty-eight nations which fought in World War I, and at least fifty-eight in World War II. She also claimed that these wars would cause famine, and subsequently pestilence, or disease. Lizzie Collingham in her work *Taste of War: World War II and the Battle Food* informs us that because of World War II “at least 20 million people died just such a terrible death from starvation, malnutrition and its associated diseases...” **This prophetic statement likewise seems to have been fulfilled.**



#### 4) 9/11

In 1901 Ellen White had a vision concerning a future event in New York City:

“On one occasion, when **in New York City**, I was in the night season called upon to behold **buildings rising story after story** toward heaven. These buildings were **warranted to be fireproof**, and they were erected to glorify the owners and builders. Higher and still higher these buildings rose, and in them the most costly material was used... The scene that next passed before me was **an alarm of fire**. Men looked at the lofty and supposedly fire-proof buildings and said: ‘**They are perfectly safe.**’ But **these buildings were consumed as if made of pitch. The fire engines could do nothing to stay the destruction.** The firemen were unable to operate the engines.”<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 9, p. 12, 13.

Here Mrs. White describes (1) skyscrapers being built in New York, successively getting taller and taller, (2) these buildings being claimed as fireproof, (3) people thinking these buildings are perfectly safe, even when an alarm of fire was sounding, (4) the skyscrapers being burned as pitch, (5) the firemen not being able to stop the destruction, and (6) the buildings subsequently falling. It is also worth mentioning that this prophecy follows an introduction warning of the evils of the future and the subsequent judgements of God which will be poured out. The warnings preceding this prophecy of 9/11 are found in ***Testimonies for the Church, volume 9, page 11.***

History records that one of the tallest buildings in the world was the 26 story Manhattan Life Building in New York City, which was erected in 1894. Subsequently, a race to erect the tallest building began, until in 1973 the World Trade Center's twin towers held the title (though only for a short while). These new buildings were essentially considered fireproof as they were created using steel and reinforced concrete, which do not burn. The complete collapse of these buildings caught everyone by surprise, as no one thought the fires would bring them down. When the initial explosion impacted the building, the public address system in the building began saying "Repeat, building two is secure, repeat, building two is secure... Stay where you are. This is a secure area. Please remain in the building. Stay where you are."<sup>76</sup> The buildings were clearly consumed as pitch when they collapsed, and the smoke went on for months until it was finally put out in December. The firemen could not do anything to put the fires out and stop more destruction, as it took about 100 days of spraying water on the site to extinguish the flames. The fire engines could not be operated to stop this kind of massive fire. Not only that, but afterwards the Fire Department of New York had 91 apparatus and vehicles destroyed along with 130 more being damaged.

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<sup>76</sup> <https://www.cnn.com/2001/US/10/10/rec.tower.evacuation/index.html>.





With all of the above information in mind, it is plain to see that **the falling of the skyscrapers on 9/11 was in line with what she had predicted.**

### 5) *The Ecumenical Movement*

“How **the Roman church** can clear herself from the charge of idolatry we cannot see.... And this is the religion which Protestants are beginning to look upon with so much favor, and which **will eventually be united with Protestantism**. This union will not, however, be effected by a change in Catholicism, for Rome never changes. She claims infallibility. **It is Protestantism that will change**. The adoption of liberal ideas on its part will bring it where it can clasp the hand of Catholicism.”<sup>77</sup>

The Catholic Church lost its power in 1798, when Napoleon’s General Berthier stormed the Vatican, and deposed and exiled Pope Pius VI. At this point, most of Europe thought the Papacy was dead. All throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century, especially during the Second Great Awakening, prominent Protestant ministers took a hard stand against Catholicism, as had the founders of their denominations.

“Wycliffe, Tyndale, Luther, Calvin, Cranmer; in the seventeenth century, Bunyan, the translators of the King James Bible and the men who published the Westminster and Baptist confessions of Faith; Sir Isaac Newton, Wesley, Whitefield, Jonathan Edwards; and more recently Spurgeon, Bishop J.C. Ryle and Dr. Martin Lloyd-Jones; these men, among countless others, **all saw the office of the Papacy as the Antichrist.**”<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> Ellen G. White, *The Review and Herald*, June 1, 1886.

<sup>78</sup> Michael De Semlyen, *All Roads Lead To Rome* (Bucks, England: Dorchester House Publications, 1991), p. 205.

However, in 1886 Ellen White wrote that this popular conception of Rome among the Protestant churches would change in the future and that Protestantism would cease to protest the Papal power. How has this claim aged? One needs only to look at how the Protestant churches view the Papacy as opposed to their predecessors to see that Mrs. White was correct.

Most Protestants today no longer view the office of the Pope as the seat of the Antichrist power,<sup>79</sup> rather they accept the Futurist interpretation of prophecy, which was created by Jesuit priests. Francisco Ribera, S.J., (1537-1591) created the prophetic school known as Futurism in order to take the heat off of the Reformation's accusation of Antichrist off of Rome. Instead of seeking to Protest the unbiblical practices of the Roman Church, most Protestant leaders are seeking to "clasp the hand of Catholicism:

"I really do feel that these people are brothers and sisters in God's family. **I am looking to build bridges** with the Orthodox Church, looking to build bridges **with the Catholic Church**, with the Anglican church, and say 'What can we do together that we have been unable to do by ourselves?'"<sup>80</sup>  
 – Rick Warren, Southern Baptist Pastor and Author

"I believe that **the Catholic Church and the Christian church are going to come together.**"<sup>81</sup>  
 – "Prophet" Todd White, Prosperity Gospel Preacher

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<sup>79</sup> For more information concerning this historical and Biblical view of prophecy, please see the studies by Kevin Mullins, available at <https://tinyurl.com/23t2653h>.

<sup>80</sup> Ann Rodgers, "Pastor urges Anglicans to unite and care for poor," *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, (November 12, 2005).

<sup>81</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qBNdh9ELX1Q>

**“It is time for us Protestants to go to the Holy Father in Rome and ask him how we can come home.”<sup>82</sup>**

– Robert Schuller, Televangelist

Indeed, many influential “Protestant” leaders today would agree with Kenneth Copeland and Tony Palmer when they proclaimed that “the protest is over.” These “Protestant” leaders are bringing about the merger of Catholicism and Protestantism such as has never been seen before. With this in mind, it is very clear that **Ellen White was correct concerning the ecumenical movement.**<sup>83</sup>



### **#3. When in Vision, Did Ellen White Exhibit the Appropriate Physical Signs?**

A number of people claim all sorts of misrepresentations concerning the visions of Ellen White. For instance, in one vision Ellen White saw two groups of people, representing the Church and the world, in heaven bowing before the throne of God and Christ. Later in that vision she sees the Father and Son get up from the throne and go into the Holy of Holies in heaven, and subsequently sees Satan sitting on the throne they had left, trying to deceive the people bowing before it.<sup>84</sup> Many who oppose Ellen White and the Advent movement use this passage out of context to show how she teaches that Satan is in heaven on God’s throne. However, if this vision teaches that Satan is in heaven, then it must also

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<sup>82</sup> Robert Schuller, as quoted in Kevin Morgan, *Sabbath Rest* (TEACH Services Inc., 2002), p. 72.

<sup>83</sup> To see a short video showing this, see the video “THE PROTEST IS OVER - Excerpt from 'Ellen G. White: Prophet or Pretender?’” which can be seen at the link on the next page: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FCIbAojES10&list=PLc8xRKKt2Bwm7nYadJGpVnkjRrbdR\\_Omo&index=1&t=1s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FCIbAojES10&list=PLc8xRKKt2Bwm7nYadJGpVnkjRrbdR_Omo&index=1&t=1s)

<sup>84</sup> See *Early Writings*, p. 54-56.

teach that the church and the world are in heaven too! This is clearly not the meaning which she believed the vision was trying to convey. Fifty-two of the most common objections to Ellen White's visions can be answered by her contemporary Uriah Smith, in his book *The Visions of Mrs. E.G. White*. Many of the visions she had can be read in her book *Early Writings*.

We shall not here examine the content of her visions, as they all correspond to what she believed and taught, which has been briefly considered in section 1. Here we shall examine the physical attributes she had when in vision to see if they correspond to the description of prophets in vision as seen in the Bible. Let's look at a few eyewitness descriptions of Ellen White when she was in vision. The first is given by J.N. Loughborough, who had first seen her in vision on October, 1852, which lasted over an hour. Since then, he saw her in vision more than 50 times. He describes the physical attributes of her in vision as follows:

“In passing into vision, she gives three enrapturing shouts of ‘Glory!’ which echo and re-echo, the second, and especially the third, fainter but more thrilling than the first, the voice resembling that of one quite a distance from you, and just going out of hearing. For about four or five seconds **she seems to drop** like a person in a swoon, or **one having lost his strength**; she then seems to be instantly **filled with superhuman strength**, sometimes rising at once to her feet and walking about the room. There are frequent movements of the hands and arms, pointing to the right or left as her head turns. All these movements are made in the most graceful manner. In whatever position the hand or arm may be placed, it is **impossible for anyone to move it**. **Her eyes are always open**, but she does not wink; her head is raised, and she is looking upward, not with a vacant stare, but with a pleasant expression, only differing from the normal in that she appeared to be looking intently at some distant object.

**She did not breathe**, yet her pulse beats regularly. Her countenance is pleasant, and the color of her face as florid as in her natural state.”<sup>85</sup>

Here we see him describe Ellen White (1) falling down weak, (2) being raised up and strengthened with superhuman strength, so much so that it is impossible for anyone to move her, (3) having her eyes open the whole time, and (4) not breathing the whole time, though she still speaks on occasion. Loughborough also recorded the testimonies of a number of other eyewitnesses who all affirm the same signs shown while she was in vision. The first eyewitness source he quotes is M.G. Kellogg, M.D, describing how he saw Ellen not breath while in vision, as confirmed by a physician:

“Sister White was in vision about twenty minutes or half an hour. As she went into vision every one present seemed to feel the power and presence of God, and some of us did indeed feel the Spirit of God resting upon us mightily. We were engaged in prayer and social meeting Sabbath morning at about nine o’clock. Brother White, my father, and Sister White had prayed, and I was praying at the time. There had been no excitement, no demonstrations. We did plead earnestly with God, however, that he would bless the meeting with his presence, and that he would bless the work in Michigan. As Sister White gave that triumphant shout of ‘Glory! g-l-o-r-y-! g-l-o-r-y-!’ which you have heard her give so often as she goes into vision, Brother White arose and informed the audience that his wife was in vision. After stating the manner of her visions, and that **she did not breathe while in vision**, he invited any one who wished to do so to come forward and examine her. Dr. Drummond, a physician, who was also a First-day Adventist preacher, who (before he saw her in vision) had declared her visions to be of mesmeric origin, and that he could give her a

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<sup>85</sup> Loughborough, *The Great Second Advent Movement*, p. 204, 205.

vision, stepped forward, and after a thorough examination, turned very pale, and remarked, 'She doesn't breathe!'

**"I am quite certain that she did not breathe at that time while in vision, nor in any of several others which she has had when I was present.**

The coming out of the vision was as marked as her going into it. The first indication we had that the vision was ended, was in her again beginning to breathe. She drew her first breath deep, long, and full, in a manner showing that her lungs had been entirely empty of air. After drawing the first breath, several minutes passed before she drew the second, which filled the lungs precisely as did the first; then a pause of two minutes, and a third inhalation, after which the breathing became natural.' Signed, 'M. G. Kellogg, M.D., Battle Creek, Mich., Dec. 28, 1890.'"<sup>86</sup>

A most interesting account is also found of a spirit medium, named Doctor Brown, witnessing Ellen White in vision, which is worth consideration. Loughborough recounts:

"He [Doctor Brown] had said that her visions were the same as spirit mediumship, and that if she had one where he was, he could bring her out of it in one minute. An invitation was given for any who desired to do so to come forward, and by examination satisfy themselves as to her condition while in vision. The doctor came forward, but before he had half completed his examination, he turned deathly pale, and shook like an aspen leaf. Elder White said, 'Will the doctor report her condition?' He replied, 'She does not breathe,' and rapidly made his way to the door. Those at the door who knew of his boasting said, 'Go back, and do as you said you would; bring that woman out of her vision.' In great agitation he grasped the knob of the door, but was not permitted to open it until

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<sup>86</sup> Ibid., p. 206.

inquiry was made by those near the door, ‘Doctor, what is it?’ He replied, ‘God only knows; let me out of this house;’ and out he went.

“It was evident that the spirit that influenced him as a medium was no more at rest in the presence of the power that controlled Mrs. White in vision than were the demoniacs in the days of the Saviour, who inquired, ‘Art thou come hither to torment us before the time?’

“A similarity is seen in this circumstance to that recorded in the experience of Daniel the prophet. As he went into vision by the Spirit of the Lord, the Chaldeans who were present—heathens who knew not that Spirit—were greatly terrified, and ‘fled to hide themselves.’”<sup>87</sup>

Loughborough cites 11 individuals who saw Mrs. White in vision and signed their names to testify to the authenticity of what is recorded. All these records are in harmony with each other, none contradicting one or another. It appears that **Ellen White had the same physical signs while she was in vision as are described in the Scriptures.**




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<sup>87</sup> Ibid., p. 210-211.

## #4. Was Ellen White Involved in Spiritualism and the Occult?

How did Ellen White view spiritualism and the occult? There is no evidence that she ever endorsed, let alone practiced the occult, so let us hear her thoughts on the matter:

**“The teachers of Spiritualism come in a pleasing, bewitching manner to deceive you, and if you listen to their fables you are beguiled by the enemy of righteousness, and will surely lose your reward. When once the fascinating influence of the arch-deceiver overcomes you, you are poisoned, and its deadly influence adulterates and destroys your faith in Christ's being the Son of God, and you cease to rely on the merits of His blood.** Those deceived by this philosophy are beguiled of their reward through the deceptions of Satan. They rely upon their own merits, exercise voluntary humility, are even willing to make sacrifices, and debase themselves, and yield their minds to the belief of supreme nonsense, receiving the most absurd ideas through those whom they believe to be their dead friends. Satan has so blinded their eyes and perverted their judgment that they perceive not the evil; and they follow out the instructions purporting to be from their dead friends, now angels in a higher sphere.”<sup>88</sup>

She not only warned of the dangers of spiritualism in general, but she also warned of the dangerous doctrines of Mary Baker Eddy's Christian Science and Helena Blavatsky's Theosophy—the teachings of which are today labelled as “New Age.”

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<sup>88</sup> *Testimonies For The Church*, vol. 1, p. 297, 298.



“Men today may not pay homage to heathen gods, yet thousands are worshipping at Satan's shrine as verily as did the king of Israel. The spirit of idolatry is rife, although it has assumed forms more refined and attractive than when Ahaziah sought to the god of Ekron... The **mysteries of heathen worship are replaced by the obscurities and wonders of spiritistic mediums**. The disclosures of these mediums are received by thousands who refuse to accept light from God's Word. Many who shrink from the thought of consulting spirit mediums are attracted by more pleasing forms of spiritism. Others are led astray by **Christian Science** and by the mysticism of **Theosophy** and other **Oriental religions**.”<sup>89</sup>

There are many more sources where she voices the same thought concerning spiritualism, divination, astrology, necromancy, familiar spirits, etc.—that it is all evil and forbidden by God. It is safe to say that **Ellen White was very much against spiritualism and the occult**. It is also worth mentioning that she discouraged any connection to secret societies such as the Jesuit Order, Freemasonry, etc., for a number of reasons. For more information on why she discouraged being affiliated with secret societies, please read the chapter linked below.<sup>90</sup>




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<sup>89</sup> Ellen G. White, *From Splendor to Shadows*, p. 111.

<sup>90</sup> *Selected Messages*, book 2, chapter 13, entitled *Should Christians be Members of Secret Societies?*, <https://tinyurl.com/bdhr4v79>.

## #5. Did Ellen White Acknowledge the Incarnation of the Begotten Son of God?

“... for ‘God so loved the world, that **he gave his only-begotten Son,**’—not a son by creation, as were the angels, nor a son by adoption, as is the forgiven sinner, but a **Son begotten in the express image of the Father’s person**, and in all the brightness of his majesty and glory, one equal with God in authority, dignity, and divine perfection. In him dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.”<sup>91</sup>

In the above passage we see that Mrs. White confessed that Christ is the literal and divine Son of God, which is important to note as John says that “Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God.” 1 John 4:15.

“As one of us He was to give an example of obedience. For this **He took upon Himself our nature, and passed through our experiences.** ‘In all things it behooved Him to be made like unto His brethren.’ Hebrews 2:17. If we had to bear anything which Jesus did not endure, then upon this point Satan would represent the power of God as insufficient for us. Therefore **Jesus was ‘in all points tempted like as we are.’** Hebrews 4:15. He endured every trial to which we are subject. And He exercised in His own behalf no power that is not freely offered to us. As man, He met temptation, and overcame in the strength given Him from God...

“By His humanity, Christ touched humanity; by His divinity, He lays hold upon the throne of God. As the Son of man, He gave us an example of obedience; as the Son of God, He gives us power to obey. It was Christ who

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<sup>91</sup> Ellen G. White, *Signs of the Times*, May 30, 1895, par. 3.

from the bush on Mount Horeb spoke to Moses saying, 'I AM THAT I AM.... Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.' Exodus 3:14. This was the pledge of Israel's deliverance. So when He came 'in the likeness of men,' He declared Himself the I AM. The Child of Bethlehem, **the meek and lowly Saviour, is God 'manifest in the flesh.'** 1 Timothy 3:16. And to us He says: 'I AM the Good Shepherd.' 'I AM the living Bread.' 'I AM the Way, the Truth, and the Life.' 'All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth.' John 10:11; 6:51; 14:6; Matthew 28:18. I AM the assurance of every promise. I AM; be not afraid. 'God with us' is the surety of our deliverance from sin, the assurance of our power to obey the law of heaven."<sup>92</sup>

Here we see that she declares that Christ, the divine Son of God, became a man, taking on our fleshly, human nature with all our genetic and sinful propensities, as He was tempted in all ways that we were, yet did not sin! "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 4:3.

Ellen White always sought to uplift Christ in all of her works—the love of God as revealed in the life of Christ was the central theme of all of her writings. Consider the following statements and see how she stressed the importance of a personal relationship with Christ:

"Make Christ first and last and best in everything. Constantly behold Him, and your love for Him will daily become deeper and stronger as it is submitted to the test of trial."<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 24.

<sup>93</sup> Ellen G. White, *Testimonies to the Church*, vol. 7, p. 46.

“The object of all ministry is to keep self out of sight, and to let Christ appear. The exaltation of Christ is the great truth that all who labor in word and doctrine are to reveal.”<sup>94</sup>

It is easy to see that **Ellen White both believed Christ was the divine Son of God and that He took on humanity, being tempted as we are, yet remaining sinless.**



## #6. Did Ellen White (a) Edify the Church and (b) Not Condone Sin?

Edification of the church consists of reproofing error, leading men and women in the steps of Christ, and encouraging the people. Did Ellen White strive to do this?

“I said that **I did not claim to be a prophetess**. I have not stood before the people claiming this title, though many called me thus. I have been instructed to say, ‘**I am God’s messenger, sent to bear a message of reproof to the erring and of encouragement to the meek and lowly.**’ With pen and with voice, I am to bear the messages given me. **The word given me is, ‘You are faithfully to reprove those who would mar the faith of the people of God.** Write out the things which I shall give you, that they may stand as a witness to the truth till the end of time.’”<sup>95</sup>

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<sup>94</sup> Ellen G. White, *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 16, p. 295.

<sup>95</sup> Ellen G. White, *Review and Herald*, January 26, 1905.

Part of edification, as mentioned, includes reproofing sin. What did Ellen White teach concerning sin?

“But let none deceive themselves with the thought that God, in His great love and mercy, will yet save even the rejecters of His grace. **The exceeding sinfulness of sin can be estimated only in the light of the cross.** When men urge that God is too good to cast off the sinner, let them look to Calvary. It was because there was no other way in which man could be saved, because without this sacrifice it was impossible for the human race to escape from the defiling power of sin, and be restored to communion with holy beings,—impossible for them again to become partakers of spiritual life,—it was because of this that Christ took upon Himself the guilt of the disobedient and suffered in the sinner's stead. **The love and suffering and death of the Son of God all testify to the terrible enormity of sin and declare that there is no escape from its power, no hope of the higher life, but through the submission of the soul to Christ.**”<sup>96</sup>

Uriah Smith, a lifelong associate of Ellen White, gave the following testimony in regards to her prophetic ministry and how it edified the Church:

“Every test which can be brought to bear upon such manifestations [of her prophetic gift], proves them genuine. **The evidence which supports them, internal and external, is conclusive.** They agree with the word of God, and with themselves...

“Their fruit is such as to show that the source from which they spring is the opposite of evil.

“**1. They tend to the purest morality.** They discountenance every vice, and exhort to the practice of every virtue. They point out the perils

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<sup>96</sup> Ellen G. White, *Steps to Christ*, p. 31.

through which we are to pass to the kingdom. They reveal the devices of Satan. They warn us against his snares. They have nipped in the bud scheme after scheme of fanaticism which the enemy has tried to foist into our midst. **They have exposed hidden iniquity**, brought to light concealed wrongs, and laid bare the evil motives of the false-hearted. They have warded off dangers from the cause of truth upon every hand. They have aroused and re-aroused us to greater consecration to God, more zealous efforts for holiness of heart, and greater diligence in the cause and service of our Master.

“2. **They lead us to Christ.** Like the Bible, they set Him forth as the only hope and only Saviour of mankind. They portray before us in living characters His holy life and His godly example, and with irresistible appeals they urge us to follow in His steps.

“3. **They lead us to the Bible.** They set forth that book as the inspired and unalterable word of God. They exhort us to take that Word as the man of our counsel, and the rule of our faith and practice. And with a compelling power, they entreat us to study long and diligently its pages, and become familiar with its teaching, for it is to judge us in the last day.

“4. **They have brought comfort and consolation to many hearts.** They have strengthened the weak, encouraged the feeble, raised up the despondent. They have brought order out of confusion, made crooked places straight, and thrown light on what was dark and obscure.”<sup>97</sup>

Here we see that **Ellen White indeed sought to edify the church and reprove sin.** But the question is, what was the fruit of her edification?




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<sup>97</sup> Ellen G. White, C. C. Crisler, *Life Sketches of Ellen G. White* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1915), p. 469-470. This work was begun by Ellen White, but was finished after her death by Crisler, W. C. White, and D. E. Robinson. The portion above was included by these latter gentlemen, not Ellen White.

## #7. What Fruits did Ellen White and her Movement Bear?

### Her Writings

One of the fruits of Ellen White’s life is her writings. She wrote an incredible amount of material during her lifetime, and her writings have led countless millions into a deeper walk with Christ. However, some claim that Ellen was a fraud and plagiarist. Thus, we shall briefly consider the Biblical precedence for literary borrowing, the charges made by critics, the facts of the matter, and then see how Mrs. White’s writings have affected the hearts of her readers.

One of the reasons plagiarism claims abound is because Mrs. White quoted several historians and authors at length but did not cite them, sometimes using the same words of these various authors, but most often paraphrasing them. However, if this is the definition of plagiarism—borrowing words from other authors without citing them—then those who helped write the Bible would likewise be “plagiarizers,” since Scripture is clear that many who penned various books of the Bible used numerous “sources” to write their works. Luke himself makes this clear in the introduction to his account of the Gospel:

Luke 1:1–4 (YLT) <sup>1</sup> Seeing that **many did take in hand to set in order a narration of the matters** that have been fully assured among us, <sup>2</sup> as **they did deliver to us** [the narration of the matters], who from the beginning became eye-witnesses, and officers of the Word,— <sup>3</sup> **it seemed good also to me**, having followed from the first after all things exactly, **to write to thee in order**, most noble Theophilus, <sup>4</sup> that thou mayest know the certainty of the things wherein thou wast instructed.

When one reads the synoptic Gospels side by side, it is clear that Matthew and Luke “borrowed from” Mark (which most historians and scholars agree was the first account recorded), as is evident from a cursory glance of these works (for a brief example read Luke 4:31-38 with Mark 1:21-29 side by side).<sup>98</sup> Some researchers say that Matthew and Luke used 91% of Mark. The same thing is seen with the book of Jude (v. 6-18) and 2 Peter (2:4-3:3).

Some argue that the authors of Scripture only ever borrowed from *inspired sources*, unlike Ellen White who borrowed from *uninspired sources*. If one takes this stance, however, then it would be necessary to accept many works of literature which are not included in the Bible as “inspired,” such as books from the apocrypha, pseudepigrapha, and the works of various philosophers. Consider the following examples:

2 Peter 2	Jude 6	1 Enoch 10:4-6, 54:3
<p><sup>4</sup> For if God spared not <u>the angels that sinned</u>, but cast <i>them</i> down to hell, and delivered <i>them</i> into <b>chains of darkness</b>, <i>to be</i> reserved unto judgment;... <sup>9</sup> the Lord knoweth <i>how</i> to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust <b>unto the day of judgment to be</b> punished:</p>	<p>Jude 6 <sup>6</sup> <u>And the angels which kept not their first estate</u>, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting <b>chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.</b></p>	<p><sup>10:4</sup> ... the Lord said to Raphael: ‘Bind <u>Azâzêl</u> [a fallen angel] hand and foot, and cast him into the <b>darkness...</b> and <b>cover him with darkness...</b></p> <p><sup>10:6</sup> And on <b>the day of the great judgement</b> he shall be cast into the fire... <sup>54:3</sup> And there mine eyes saw... <b>iron chains...</b></p>

<sup>98</sup> Here is a good site to do this on: <http://sites.utoronto.ca/religion/synopsis/meta-4g.htm>



Romans 9:21	Wisdom of Solomon 15:7
<p><sup>21</sup> Hath not <b>the potter</b> power over the clay,</p> <p><b>of the same lump</b></p> <p><u>to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?</u></p>	<p><sup>7</sup> For <b>the potter</b>, tempering soft earth, fashioneth every <i>vessel</i> with much labour for our service:</p> <p>yea, <b>of the same clay</b> he maketh both the <u>vessels that serve for clean uses,</u> and likewise <i>also</i> all such as serve to <u>the contrary...</u></p>

Acts 26:14 (RSV)	Agamemnon, line 1620 <sup>99</sup>
<p>And when we had all fallen to the ground, I heard a voice saying to me in the Hebrew language, ‘Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me? <b>It hurts you to kick against the goads.</b>’</p>	<p><b>Do not kick against the goads lest you strike to your own hurt.</b></p>

Luke 15:18–19	The Story of Ahikar 8:24b <sup>100</sup>
<p><sup>18</sup> I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, <b>Father, I have sinned against</b> heaven, and before <b>thee,</b></p>	<p><b>Father, I have sinned unto thee.</b></p> <p>Forgive me,</p>
<p><sup>19</sup> and am no more worthy to be called thy son: <b>make me as one of thy hired servants.</b></p>	<p>and <b>I will be to thee a slave</b> henceforth forever.</p>

<sup>99</sup> Part of Aeschylus’ Orestean trilogy.

<https://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.01.0004%3Acard%3D1617>

<sup>100</sup> From the Armenian translation. 8:34 in the Syriac and 8:29 in the Arabic.

The fact that different penmen of the Bible used the words from various intertestamental books or other philosophers (such as Epimenides [Titus 1:12], Aratus [Acts 17:28], and Menander [1 Cor. 15:33]), does not necessarily mean that these authors are directly inspired by God. However, it should show that:

“... **originality is not one of the tests of a prophet.** God does not need to use supernatural means to impart to His prophets ideas that they can get through natural means. Unless we are ready to discard the New Testament, I suggest that we accept the extensive use of uninspired sources as a typical phenomenon of inspiration.”<sup>101</sup>

God can reveal wonderful truths to us through any channel He desires, but if He goes this route, He will help us discern things which are not in harmony with what He has revealed to us in His Word. Scripture informs us that Solomon did this as well:

Ecclesiastes 12:9–11 <sup>9</sup> And moreover, because the Preacher was wise, he still taught the people knowledge; yea, he gave good heed, and **sought out, and set in order many proverbs.** <sup>10</sup> The Preacher **sought to find out acceptable words:** and **that which was written was upright, even words of truth.** <sup>11</sup> The words of the wise *are* as goads, and as nails fastened *by* the masters of assemblies, *which* are given from one shepherd.

When one examines Proverbs 22:17-23:14 (sometimes known as the “Thirty Sayings”), it appears that Solomon knew of and utilized the Egyptian *Teachings of Amenemope*.<sup>102</sup> Solomon, the wisest man on earth, “sought to find out acceptable words” which he could use to communicate many valuable truths from heaven.

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<sup>101</sup> <https://www.ministrymagazine.org/archive/1986/02/does-inspired-mean-original>.

<sup>102</sup> Duane A. Garrett, “The Poetic and Wisdom Books,” in *Holman Concise Bible Commentary*, ed. David S. Dockery (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1998), p. 240.

If the wisest man to walk the earth needed to use sources like this, then how much more would the meek Ellen White, who lacked the benefit of a formal education, likewise need to search out “acceptable words” to communicate the heaven-sent truths which God revealed to her. Her son, W.C. White, confirms that she used the same method as Solomon:

“In her early experience when **she was sorely distressed over the difficulty of putting into human language the revelations of truths that had been imparted to her**, she was reminded of the fact that all wisdom and knowledge comes from God and she was assured that God would bestow grace and guidance.

“She was told that in the reading of religious books and journals, she would find **precious gems of truth expressed in acceptable language**, and that **she would be given help from heaven to recognize these and to separate them from the rubbish of error** with which she would sometimes find them associated.”<sup>103</sup>

“Notwithstanding all the power that God had given her to present scenes in the lives of Christ and His apostles and His prophets and His reformers in a stronger and more telling way than other historians, yet **she always felt most keenly the results of her lack of school education. She admired the language in which other writers had presented to their readers the scenes which God had presented to her in vision**, and she found it both a pleasure, and a convenience and an economy of time to use their language fully or in part in presenting those things which she

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Daniel P. Bricker, “Proverbs, Book Of, Critical Issues,” in *The Lexham Bible Dictionary*, ed. John D. Barry et al. (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2016).

<sup>103</sup> W.C. White and D.E. Robinson, “Brief Statements Regarding the Writings of Ellen G. White,” 1933, p. 6.

knew through revelation, and which she wished to pass on to her readers.”<sup>104</sup>

Unfortunately, many who examine these facts have a simplistic view on inspiration and assume that inspiration = originality, but as we have seen, this is not necessarily the case.

One of the many critics who has taken a simplistic view concerning inspiration and has jumped to unfounded and skewed conclusions is Walter T. Rea, author of *The White Lie*. When Rea learned that Mrs. White borrowed material from other authors, he came to the conclusion that she did not receive any of her views from divine inspiration. But are there many other possible conclusions which could have been considered—are the only two options: (a) all of her writings were verbally inspired and original, or (b) none of her writings were divinely inspired—it was all copied from other human sources? A good researcher will consider all of the possible hypotheses, because if you have a limited number of explanations your conclusions will become skewed—which is what happened with Rea. So, what are all of the possible hypotheses for the writings of Ellen White? Below is a paraphrase of four hypotheses explained in the fascinating book *The Prophet and Her Critics*, by Leonard Brand and Don S. McMahon (p. 17):

Hypothesis A1: All of her writings were verbally inspired and original.

Hypothesis A2: Not verbally inspired—she used her own words, but all was original and not from any human source.

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<sup>104</sup> W.C. White letter to L.E. Froom, recorded in Selected Messages, bk. 3, appendix C, p. 460, par. 3.

Hypothesis A3: God gave her concepts and ideas which she expressed in her own words, sometimes using other sources to help her express what she wanted to say (this is how Ellen White described her writings).

Hypothesis A4: Not divinely inspired; she simply copied from human sources.

Rea apparently held to hypothesis A1 when he was an Adventist, but after learning that she borrowed from other sources he jumped to hypothesis A4. Let us briefly consider some of the data he presents in his book and then see if his conclusion is logical.

*The White Lie* has 153 pages of exhibits which compare material she wrote with books which were found in her library. The first three exhibits consist of his most convincing evidence, as they show that Ellen did indeed use almost verbatim wording as her sources. These pages contain descriptive information, in which she uses the words of others to describe Zurich Switzerland and the surrounding area, the Waldenses, and the history of William Miller. If a majority of Rea's evidence was like these examples, then there is definitely a case for hypothesis 4; however, the rest of his exhibits differ dramatically. The rest of his exhibits show very different levels of borrowing from other authors, as the similarities typically consist of several scattered lines on a page. Often times Rea made great use of ellipsis [...] in order to make the similarities look much more dramatic than the context reveals, as one would have to search through many pages to find these similarities.

With this in mind, how does his data affect our hypotheses? It is safe to say that Rea's data negates hypotheses A1 and A2, as it is evident that her writings were not verbally inspired, and she indeed used some of the words of other authors. However, instead of considering hypothesis A3 (which is how Ellen White described her writings), Rea jumped to hypothesis A4.

“Rea’s conclusion is justified only if his data can distinguish between hypothesis A3 and A4 and can falsify A3, which portrays her as using some material from human sources but selecting that material under the influence of divine inspiration. The evidence we have examined so far is completely compatible with A3. So there’s a serious problem in the logic Rea used in *The White Lie*. This major lapse in research design appears to destroy his argument against the divine inspiration of Mrs. White’s work.”<sup>105</sup>

At this point I am sure you are wondering: how much did Ellen White borrow from other sources? Kevin L. Morgan, an Adventist researcher, examined and considered the charges of plagiarism which were brought forth in Rea’s research, and subsequently responded to his theses and evidence in his own work, which is appropriately titled, *White Lie Soap*. In this work he mentions a very interesting fact:

“In a set of marked volumes in his office at the Ellen G. White Estate, Tim Priorier keeps track of the literary parallels that critics and supporters have located and reported to him. The listing is fittingly named ‘Project Surprise’ since **the current number of lines with literary parallels in all of Ellen White’s writing now stands—surprise!—at less than four percent.**”<sup>106</sup>

To see this working list, please consult Appendix C1.

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<sup>105</sup> Leonard Brand and Don S. McMahon, *The Prophet and Her Critics* (Nampa, Idaho: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 2005), p. 18,

<https://archive.org/details/prophethercritic0000bran/mode/1up>.

<sup>106</sup> Kevin L. Morgan, *White Lie Soap* (Millers Creek, North Carolina: Honor Him Publishing, 2013), p. 65-66. For a good introduction to the general idea of Morgan’s work, watch these short video series entitled “The Plagiarism Charge Refuted: A Response to ‘Testing the Adventist Prophet’”:

<https://youtu.be/rB-Wt5dVDKk> (introduction), [https://youtu.be/fVWxH\\_0KGZs](https://youtu.be/fVWxH_0KGZs) (part 1),

<https://youtu.be/WjPvu6Xvl-g> (part 2).

One of the main plagiarism charges is directed towards her work *Sketches from the Life of Paul*, where critics claim she “copied a large part” of Conybeare and Howson’s book entitled *The Life and Epistles of St. Paul*. Let us pause and ask a question: if Ellen White attempted to secretly reproduce Conybeare and Howson’s book in order to pass it off as her own [which is the essence of plagiarism], do you think she would publicly endorse the book, purposefully circulating it among her people? Of course not, this would be incredibly foolish and would get you caught immediately. However, when one looks at the history of this book, the truth seeker will find that her church offered Conybeare and Howson’s book to new subscribers of their periodical in January of 1883<sup>107</sup>, five months before she published her book on the life of Paul! In February of that same year, she openly endorsed this book to her fellow believers, most all of which read her writings. She publicly wrote:

“*The Life of St. Paul*, by Conybeare and Howson, I regard as a book of great merit, and one of rare usefulness to the earnest student of the New Testament history.”<sup>108</sup>

It should be clear that she did not play the part of an insidious and crafty plagiarist.<sup>109</sup>

A later examination of this topic was revived in 1981 and is known as the Ramik Report. The study was conducted by Vincent L. Ramik, a Roman Catholic

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<sup>107</sup> *Signs of the Times*, “Magnificent Premium Offer with the Sings of the Times,” January 11, 1883, vol. 9, no. 2, p. 12, <https://documents.adventistarchives.org/Periodicals/ST/ST18830111-V09-02.pdf>.

<sup>108</sup> *Signs of the Times*, “A Valuable Book on an Important Subject,” February 22, 1883, vol. 9, no. 8, p. 96, <https://documents.adventistarchives.org/Periodicals/ST/ST18830222-V09-08.pdf>.

<sup>109</sup> For more information concerning the plagiarism charges, please see: Francis D. Nichol, *Ellen G. White and Her Critics* (Takoma Park, Washington, D.C.: *The Review and Herald Publishing Association*, 1951), ch. 28-30, <https://archive.org/details/F.D.NicholEllenG.WhiteAndHerCritics1951/page/n402/mode/1up?view=theater>. Also see

with no positive bias for Adventism and senior partner of Diller, Ramik & Wight, Ltd., a firm specializing in patent, trademark, and copyright law. Though Ramik went into his research with a neutral bias towards Ellen White, after some of the works of those criticizing and those defending her, he came out of it with a new bias that he informs us of:

“Well, I came back thinking that Mrs. White was, if I may use the expression that has been used by others, a literary borrower.’ And that she had borrowed a lot and that she had borrowed with something less than candor and honesty! In other words—and this was before I had delved into her works themselves—I **became actually biased against her** in the sense that **I thought she was what some people**, such as her latest critic, Walter Rea, **had alleged—guilty of plagiarism.**”<sup>110</sup>

However, after actually reading *The Great Controversy* for himself, he states in the same interview that he “gradually turned 180 degrees in the other direction. **I found that the charges simply were not true.** But I had to get that from her writings; I did not get that from either the people who said she was a plagiarist, or the people who said she was not. I simply had to read her writings and then rid my mind of the bias I had already built into it—prejudice. And, in the end, she came out quite favorably. But it took more than 300 hours of reading—including case law histories, of course.” His final verdict concerning if Ellen White was a plagiarist was as follows:

“Based upon our review of the facts and legal precedents... **Ellen White was not a plagiarist, and her works did not constitute copyright**

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<sup>110</sup> *Was Ellen G. White a Plagiarist? A Reprint of Articles Published in the Adventist Review, September 17, 1981, Featuring an Interview With Attorney Vincent L. Ramik, Senior Partner of Diller, Ramik & Wight, Ltd., Washington, D.C., p. 3, <https://adventistbiblicalresearch.org/wp-content/uploads/plagiarist.pdf>.*



**infringement/piracy...** If the issues had been court-tested between 1850 and 1915, Ellen G. White emphatically would not have been convicted of copyright infringement... If I had to be involved in such a legal case, I would much rather appear as defense counsel than for the prosecution. **There simply is no case!**” (p. 2, 5)

Commenting on the possibility of Mrs. White being inspired by God, Ramik went on to say:

“I have been asked whether I thought Ellen White was ‘inspired.’ Well, inspiration is a theological word, not a legal word; and I am more at home with legal words than I am with theological words. I don’t know whether she was inspired, in the theological sense. **I do believe that she was highly motivated. And if it wasn’t God who motivated her, then I don’t know who it could have been...** Now, I, personally, could not be disturbed by the thought that God may have inspired her to select something from a certain book. **And if God inspired her to select something that was written better by someone else than she could have written it herself, so what?** Actually, in the final analysis, I think **it all comes down to a question of faith**. And, for myself, I have no trouble in accepting what she wrote as a matter of faith. **The bottom line is: What really counts is the message of Mrs. White, not merely the mechanical writings—words, clauses, sentences—of Mrs. White.** Theologians, I am told, distinguish here between verbal inspiration and plenary inspiration. Too many of the critics have missed the boat altogether. And it's too bad, too!” (p. 5)

The complete interview with Ramik, found in a footnote on the previous page, is short but very insightful and definitely worth the quick read.

When Ramik was asked thoughts concerning her writings, he said that **“Mrs. White moved me! In all candor, she moved me.** I am a Roman Catholic; but,

Catholic, Protestant, whatever—she moved me. And I think her writings should move anyone, unless he is permanently biased and is unswayable... Mrs. White has made me understand Him [God] a bit better. And for that, I think I'm a better person today than when I started this project." (p. 3)

Mr. Ramik has not been the only one who has grown closer to Christ through the writings of Mrs. White, but his personal testimony seems to be the testimony of untold millions of people across the world! The Institute of Church Ministry at Andrews University did a study in 1980 where they surveyed more than 8,200 Adventists in North America, dividing the group between 2,848 people who read the writings of Ellen White, and 5,375 nonreaders, asking each person a series of questions concerning their spiritual life. Here are some of their findings:

**“Relationship with Jesus Christ.** Here is a striking difference, for 85 percent of the readers chose one of the two strongest possible responses to indicate that their relationship with Jesus Christ was intimate. Only 59 percent of the nonreaders did so, a difference of 26 percent. **Certainly readers [of Ellen White’s writings] see their relationship with Christ as closer and more intimate than do nonreaders...**

**“Personal Bible study.** Several questions dealt with areas of everyday Christian living, and it is in these areas that some of the strongest differences between readers and nonreaders are found. For example, 82 percent of the readers usually or always have daily personal Bible study, while only 47 percent of the nonreaders do. This is a 35 percent difference the strongest of any item in the study. **Readers [of Ellen White’s writings] are much more likely to be Bible students than are nonreaders.**”<sup>111</sup>

Here is a call to action for you, dear reader: pick up one of Ellen White’s books, such as *Steps to Christ* or *The Desire of Ages*, and read it alongside your

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<sup>111</sup> <https://www.ministrymagazine.org/archive/1982/10/who-reads-ellen-white>.

Bible each day with an open heart and mind. See if her writings truly present the love of God as seen in the face of Jesus, for this is the whole purpose of *The Desire of Ages* according to Ellen White:

**“It is the purpose of this book to set forth Jesus Christ as the one in whom every longing may be satisfied.** There is many a ‘Life of Christ’ written, excellent books, large funds of information, elaborate essays on chronology and contemporaneous history, customs, and events, with much of the teaching and many glimpses of the many-sided life of Jesus of Nazareth.

“It is not, however, the purpose of this work to set forth a harmony of the gospels, or even to give in strictly chronological order the important events and wonderful lessons of the life of Christ; **its purpose is to present the love of God as revealed in his Son, the divine beauty of the life of Christ, of which all may partake, and not to satisfy the desires of the merely curious nor the questionings of critics.**”<sup>112</sup>

## **Prophetess of Health**

Another fruit of Ellen White’s ministry can be seen physiologically in those who follow her counsels—particularly her counsels concerning health principles. Along with vegetarianism, Ellen White taught many health principles which modern science is only now catching up with. Nutritionist Paul Harvey sums up the matter concerning Ellen White’s councils regarding diet and lifestyle very well:

“Once upon a time, a hundred years ago, there lived a young lady named Ellen White. She was a frail as a child, **completed only grammar**

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<sup>112</sup> Ellen White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 17.

**school**, and had **no technical training**, yet she lived to write scores of articles and many books on the subject of healthful living.

“Remember, this was in the days when doctors were still blood-letting and performing surgery with unwashed hands. **This was in an era of medical ignorance bordering on barbarism.** Yet Ellen White wrote with such profound understanding on the subject of nutrition that all but two of the many principles she espoused have been scientifically established...

“Perhaps we should reread what she has taught: ‘The oil, as eaten in the olive, is far preferable to animal oil or fat.’ Today we know about **cholesterol.**

“She knew: ‘Fine flour white bread is lacking in nutritive elements to be found in bread made from whole wheat.’ Today **we have enriched our bread.**

“She wrote: ‘Do not eat largely of salt.’ Now we know we should keep the **sodium intake** low...

“We have come to accept wisdom of such advice so completely that **it is difficult for us to realize how revolutionary her theories were almost a century ago.** (Seventh-day Adventists consider her knowledge divinely inspired.)...

“She urged: ‘Pure air, sunlight, abstemiousness, rest, exercise.’

“She wrote: ‘Tobacco is a slow, insidious, but most malignant poison. It is all the more dangerous because its effects are slow and at first hardly perceptible.’ **‘Divinely inspired’ or not, Ellen White was, indeed, ahead of her time.**”<sup>113</sup>

National Geographic researcher, Dan Buettner, along with a team of demographers, scientist and anthropologists, discovered that there were five places in the world where people consistently live over 100 years old—these

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<sup>113</sup> Paul Harvey, “Nutritionist White Ahead of Her Time,” *The Lima (Ohio) News*, Aug. 11, 1960.

communities were dubbed “**Blue Zones.**” The only Blue Zone in America was located in Loma Linda, California, which is home to some 9,000+ Seventh-Day Adventists. What Dan and his team discovered is that Adventists are the longest living people in the United States because of their lifestyle choices.

The unique lifestyle of Adventists is what led to a survey funded by the National Institute of Health, known as the **Adventist Health Study-1 (AHS-1)**, which examined about 34,000 Adventists in California between 1974 and 1988. The Adventists are a good group to do a large cohort study on since a vast majority of them avoid tobacco and alcohol, but some within the Church follow Ellen White’s health counsels while some do not. One of the main focuses of this study was the relationship between disease and the adoption of a plant-based diet. Some of the conclusions of this study include the following:

“There are a lot of things in AHS-1 to hang our hats on... First, **we can say with certainty that Adventists live longer.**’ In California, the study showed, a 30-year-old Adventist male lives 7.3 years longer than the average 30-year-old white California male. A 30-year-old Adventist female lives 4.4 years longer than the average 30-year-old California white female. ‘If you go to Adventists who are vegetarian,’ said Fraser, ‘it becomes 9.5 years longer for men and 6.1 years longer for women. It is not surprising why this is so. About two-thirds of people either die of heart disease or cancer, and the Adventists do a number of things to protect themselves from heart disease and different cancers.’

“One of the key discoveries of the AHS-1 survey was that approximately half of the Adventists were vegetarians or rarely ate meat, which gave Fraser and Butler a solid demographic foundation to look at the advantages of a plant-based diet. ‘We learned that **nonvegetarian Adventists had about twice the risk of heart disease as vegetarian**

**Adventists,**' Fraser said, 'particularly men but also younger and middle aged women.'"<sup>114</sup>

The AHS-1 was later followed up by the **Adventist Health Study-2 (AHS-2)**,<sup>115</sup> which surveyed 96,000 Adventists from the United States and Canada. And what were the results of this study?

"Results showed that **eating a plant-based diet incrementally lowered one's risk of high blood pressure, obesity and diabetes.**

"Studies also found that eating brown rice, cooked green vegetables, beans (including chickpeas, split peas, lentils), and dried fruit was associated with **decreased risk of colorectal polyps.** In the U.S., colon cancer is the second leading cause of cancer death, but in some parts of the world, like Uganda, it is nearly non-existent.

"In the AHS-2 study, the largest of its kind, researchers sought to determine whether a plant-based diet was protective against diabetes. They noted as much as a **78% lower prevalence of diabetes** among those eating a strictly plant-based diet. Protection accrued incrementally as people transitioned from eating meat to eating less meat or just fish and then no meat, and then finally to eating no meat, eggs or dairy.

"The Adventist diet compares favorably to the **traditional Okinawan diet**, which consists of less than 1% each of fish, meat, dairy and eggs. The long-lived Okinawans' highly anti-inflammatory diet was 96% plant-based, yet **the Adventist vegetarians in California, with a 100% meat-free diet, enjoy an even higher life expectancy of 87 for men and**

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<sup>114</sup> Dan Buettner, *The Blue Zones* (Washington D.C.: National Geographic, 2008), p. 129.

<sup>115</sup> Two other similar cohort studies in different groups found many of the same results as the Adventist Health Studies. These studies include the EPIC-Oxford study (65,000 participants from the UK, beginning in 1993) and the Tzu Chi Health Study (6,000 Buddhists from Taiwan, beginning in 2007).

**nearly 90 for women** when they abstain from smoking and exercise regularly. This is **10 to 14 years longer than the life expectancy of the general population.**"<sup>116</sup>

The health benefits which people have received because they have listened to the health councils of Ellen White are incredible! This indeed appears to be good fruit!

However, some critics, such as Ron Numbers in his work *Prophetess of Health*, have claimed that her accuracy with health reform was not divinely inspired by God, but rather that it was copied by the other health reformers during her time, since many of these people advocated all the things Ellen White advocated. One thing Numbers appears to have overlooked is the fact that these other health reformers taught *many* more principles which have not been verified by modern science, most of which Ellen White did not borrow. Dr. Clive McCay, Professor of Nutrition at Cornell University, explains this point quite well:

"... her basic concepts about the relation between diet and health have been verified to an unusual degree by scientific advances of the past decades. **Someone may attempt to explain this remarkable fact by saying: 'Mrs. White simply borrowed her ideas from others.'** But how would she know which ideas to borrow and which to reject out of the bewildering array of theories and health teachings current in the nineteenth century? She would have had to be a most amazing person, with knowledge beyond her times, in order to do this successfully!...

"In spite of the fact that the works of Mrs. White were written long before the advent of modern scientific nutrition, **no better over-all guide is available today.**"<sup>117</sup>

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<sup>116</sup> <https://nutritionfacts.org/topics/adventist-health-studies/>.

<sup>117</sup> <https://media2.ellenwhite.org/docs/1630/1630.pdf>

This is a great point brought up. How would Ellen White know which things to accept and which to reject from the writings of others?

**“However, merely showing that the other health reformers of Ellen White’s day were publishing many or even all of the health principles she promoted will not refute the hypothesis of supernatural communication.** The possibility exists that God intended the entire health-reform movement of the 1800s to pave the way for Ellen White’s health message. **To have a valid test, we must also compare the relative correctness of the health principles she promoted to that of the other reformer’s principles.** If her message is no more correct than theirs is, then it would appear that the hypothesis of divine communication has been refuted. But if significantly more of her principles are correct, then her correctness will require an explanation.”<sup>118</sup>

Indeed, if the health principles Ellen White advocated had a similar level of accuracy as the other health reformers of her time, that would be evidence that she was not inspired of God. However, if the health principles taught by Mrs. White are significantly more accurate than those of her contemporaries, that would be evidence that she was divinely inspired by God, because how else would she have known which principles to adopt and which to discard?

Thankfully someone has already done much of this research for us. Australian Don McMahon, M.B.B.S., F.R.A.C.S., D.L.O., has rounded up the health principles taught by Ellen White and her supposed sources, and subsequently compared them with modern science to discover the accuracy of the different authors. McMahon found 46 health principles in her 1864 work *Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 4 (one of her earliest works detailing health principles she claimed God revealed

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<sup>118</sup> Leonard Brand and Don S. McMahon, *The Prophet and Her Critics*, p. 50.



to her in 1863), and when he compared those principles with modern medical science, he found:

- Only two of the forty-six principles Ellen White taught have yet to be verified, giving her an **accuracy rating of 96%**.<sup>119</sup>

This is an incredible accuracy rate, as the other health reformers were not anywhere close to the 96% accuracy which Ellen White achieved! For instance:

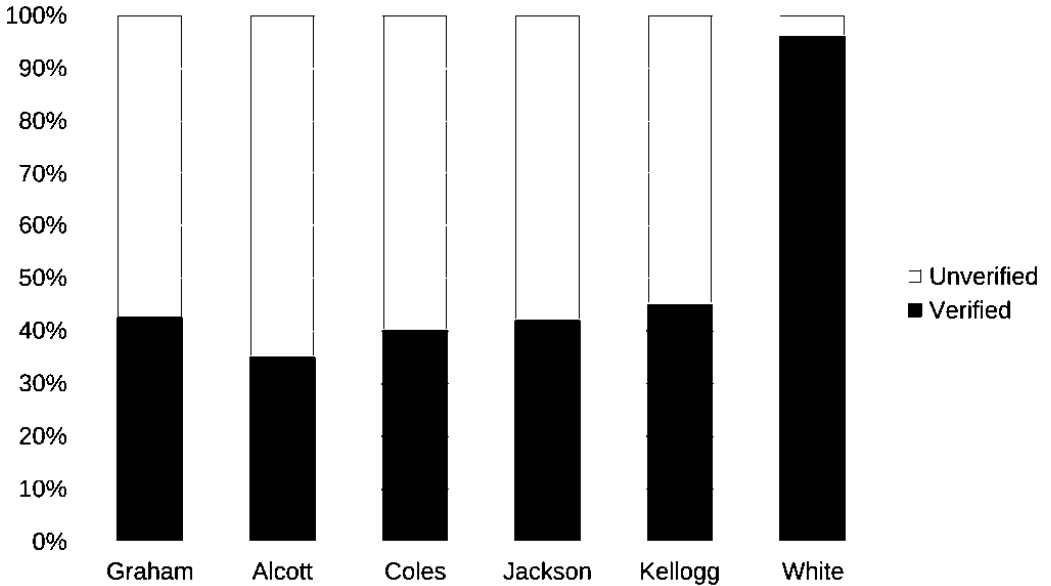
- Sylvester Graham advocated 100+ health principles, but only 42.5% has been verified.
- William A. Alcott taught 150+ principles, of which the accuracy rate is only 35%.
- Larkin B. Coles advocated around 70 principles, but 39.7% has been confirmed.
- James Caleb Jackson promoted close to 100 principles, and only 42% has been verified.
- John Harvey Kellogg promoted over 100 health ideas, but 45% is all that has been verified.<sup>120</sup>

Below is a chart which visually shows the difference in accuracy between the things taught by other health reformers versus Ellen White's principles found in *Spiritual Gifts*:

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<sup>119</sup> This does not necessarily mean the other two statements are wrong, because if she was truly inspired by God to give these health principles, then modern science could still be "catching up" to what God had revealed.

<sup>120</sup> Mrs. White wrote *Spiritual Gifts* before Kellogg had even begun his health education, so it's obvious that he could not have influenced her thoughts at that point.



How likely is it that Ellen cherry-picked only the correct health principles out of this sea of uncertainty? **The statistical probability of Mrs. White trying to cherry pick only these correct ideas would be like trying to find a specific grain of wheat in Australia... with Australia having 50 miles of wheat on top of it!**<sup>121</sup> This is very strong evidence that Ellen White received supernatural inspiration, as a purely human explanation for this fact. For more information, please consult McMahon's work, *Acquired or Inspired?: Exploring the Origins of the Adventist Lifestyle*, which comes with a CD-ROM detailing his extensive research.

<sup>121</sup> Don McMahon, *Acquired or Inspired?: Exploring the origins of the Adventist lifestyle*, p. 135.

## Character of Ellen White

It is evident that countless Adventists have extolled the Christ-like character and life of Ellen White, but what of those who were not part of the Adventist movement around her? After her death in 1915, the New York's *Independent* opined that she was “**absolutely honest in her belief in her revelations**. Her life was worthy of them. She showed **no spiritual pride and she sought no filthy lucre**. She lived the life and did the work of a worthy prophetess.”<sup>122</sup> Another local newspaper in Saint Helena, California wrote soon after her death:

“The life of Mrs. White is an example worthy of emulation by all... She was a humble, devout disciple of Christ and ever went about doing good... She was honoured and respected by all who appreciate noble womanhood, consecrated to unselfish labour for the uplifting and betterment of mankind. Her death marks the calling of another noted leader of the religious thought and one whose almost 90 years were full to overflowing with good deeds, kind words, and earnest prayers for all mankind.”<sup>123</sup>

Even those who disagreed with her confess that she was a true Christian woman. One of her most vocal and harshest critics was D.M. Canright, a former Seventh-day Adventist who left the church after 28 years. He had at the first accepted her prophetic ministry, and during this time he wrote concerning the character of Ellen White:

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<sup>122</sup> “AN AMERICAN PROPHETESS,” *The Independent*, August 23, 1915.

<sup>123</sup> *Star*, St. Helena, CA: July 23, 1915.

“As to the Christian character of Sister White, I beg leave to say that I think I know something about it. I have been acquainted with Sister White for eighteen years...

“I know Sister White to be an unassuming, modest, kind-hearted, noble woman. These traits in her character are not simply put on and cultivated, but they spring gracefully and easily from her natural disposition. She is not self-conceited, self-righteous, and self-important, as fanatics always are. I have frequently come in contact with fanatical persons, and I have always found them to be full of pretensions, full of pride, ready to give their opinion, boastful of their holiness, etc. But I have ever found Sister White the reverse of all this. Any one, the poorest and the humblest, can go to her freely for advice and comfort without being repulsed. **She is ever looking after the needy, the destitute, and the suffering, providing for them, and pleading their cause. I have never formed an acquaintance with any persons who so constantly have the fear of God before them. Nothing is undertaken without earnest prayer to God. She studies God's word carefully and constantly.**

“I have heard Sister White speak hundreds of times, have read all her Testimonies through and through, most of them many times, and **I have never been able to find one immoral sentence in the whole of them, or anything that is not strictly pure and Christian; nothing that leads away from the Bible, or from Christ; but there I find the most earnest appeals to obey God, to love Jesus, to believe the Scriptures, and to search them constantly.** I have received great spiritual benefit times without number, from the Testimonies. Indeed, I never read them without feeling reproved for my lack of faith in God, lack of devotion, and lack of earnestness in saving souls. If I have any judgment, any spiritual discernment, **I pronounce**

**the Testimonies to be of the same Spirit and of the same tenor as the Scriptures.”<sup>124</sup>**

And what were his thoughts concerning her character after he left the movement? Even after leaving the Adventist movement, he still went to her funeral, and passed the open casket not once, but twice. D.M. Canright’s brother noted that he “rested his hand upon the side of the casket, and with tears rolling down his cheeks, he said brokenly, ‘There is a noble Christian woman gone.’”<sup>125</sup> Walter R. Martin, author of *Kingdom of the Cults*, likewise states the following after reading her works:

“After reading the publications of the Seventh-day Adventist denomination and almost all the writings of Ellen G. White, including her *Testimonies*, the writer believes that **Mrs. White was truly a regenerate Christian woman who loved the Lord Jesus and dedicated herself unstintingly to the task of bearing witness for Him as she felt led... no one can dispute the fact that her writings conform to the basic principles of the historic principles of the historic Gospel, for they most certainly do.**”<sup>126</sup>

Despite having the ability to live an extravagant life off the royalties of her written work, she passed much of it on to spread the gospel and advance the kingdom of God. She financially supported church projects, helping students

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<sup>124</sup> “A Plain Talk to Murmurers,” *Review and Herald*, April 26, 1877, <https://www.ministrymagazine.org/archive/1933/11/a-plain-talk-to-murmurers>, accessed May 14, 2022.

<sup>125</sup> W.A. Spicer, *Our Day in Light of Bible Prophecy* (Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1937), p. 127.

<sup>126</sup> Walter R. Martin, *Kingdom of the Cults* (Minneapolis, Minnesota: Bethany House Publishers, 1985), p. 446.

attend Christian schools, and much more.<sup>127</sup> **The fruit of her personal life appears in harmony with the fruit of the Spirit.**



Ellen White was not only a teacher, but she also did much missionary work all around the world, helping establish missions everywhere she could. The fruit of these efforts is seen in the fact that the Adventist Church is one of the most widespread Protestant denominations on the earth. The SDA Church sponsors over 5,000 schools and 350 academies and colleges and has established a worldwide health ministry that supplies healthier food to multitudes of people and sponsors over 200 hospitals in cities and areas which are often hard for people to access certain treatments and services. The current Adventist Church, however, has steadily been listening less and less to the writings of Ellen White, and have adopted beliefs which she condemned,<sup>128</sup> but that is a different topic entirely. When one examines the general fruit of her life and the lives she has touched, **a plentiful amount of good fruit is found.**



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<sup>127</sup> For more answers to questions and attacks raised by critics concerning Mrs. White's finances, please see **Nichol, *Ellen G. White and Her Critics***, ch. 33, <https://archive.org/details/F.D.NicholEllenG.WhiteAndHerCritics1951/page/n515/mode/1up?view=theater>.








<sup>128</sup> This is why we refer to her movement as "Historic Seventh-Day Adventism."

The chart below summarizes our findings which indicates that

# Ellen White

## =

# True Prophet

Harmony with the Law and Testimony	Predict -ions Came to Pass	Exhibits Physical Signs in Vision	Acknow- ledges the Incarnation of Christ	Points Out Sin	Not Associated with Occult	Bears Good Fruit
						

There is no doubt that many will disagree with the findings shown here, but we should pray and ask God if Mrs. White was a true messenger of His, because if she was, we would all do well to listen. I encourage you to prayerfully read some of her works, such as *Steps to Christ*, *The Desire of Ages*, *The Great Controversy*, *Christ Object Lessons*, etc. with an open heart and mind, and see if it brings you closer to God or not. Her writings can be read for free at [egwwritings.org](http://egwwritings.org). If you are interested in hearing what the people who accept her historic teachings believe, please visit any of these independent ministries:

- [fatheroflove.info](http://fatheroflove.info)
- [maranathamedia.com](http://maranathamedia.com)
- [lastmessageofmercy.com](http://lastmessageofmercy.com)

# Appendix

## Appendix A: Comparison Chart

	<i>Joseph Smith</i>	<i>Ellen White</i>
<i>#1. Harmony with the Law and Testimony</i>		
<i>#2. Predictions Came to Pass</i>		
<i>#3. Exhibits Physical Signs in Vision</i>		
<i>#4. Not Associated with Spiritualism</i>		
<i>#5. Acknowledges the Biblical Incarnation</i>		
<i>#6. Edifies the Church &amp; Condemns Sin</i>		
<i>#7. Bears Good Fruit</i>		



## Appendix B: A Note on Inspiration

Understanding how the process of inspiration works can help give us some insight as to how we should view and interpret the writings of Ellen White. 2 Timothy 3:16 states that “All scripture is given by inspiration of God.” The phrase “given by inspiration of God” comes from a single Greek word, *theopneustos*. This word is a combination of *theos*, meaning God, and *pneuma*, meaning breath, or spirit. This is where we get the idea of inspiration—in spirit!

The Bible equates the spirit of man to the mind of man. For instance, when someone’s mind is troubled, the Bible will say that their spirit was troubled (Gen. 41:8; Ps. 77:3; Dan. 2:1; 7:15; John 11:33; 13:21). The Bible also informs us that man has a spirit, but God likewise has a Spirit (1 Cor. 2:11), but unlike man, God’s Spirit is HOLY. As man’s spirit is equated with his mind, so is the Spirit of God equated with His mind (compare Is. 40:13 and Rom. 11:34). And how does one convey their mind? by their words! This is why Jesus could say in John 6:63 “the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.”

Knowing the above makes it much easier to understand what it means when the prophets say, “the Spirit of the Lord fell upon me.” When a prophet is inspired by God, the mind of man is being combined with God’s divine Mind/Spirit. When this happens, the thoughts of man are in complete harmony with the thoughts of God since they are allowing the Spirit of God to work in them. Inspiration works on individuals, not on their words. However, when a person speaks in this state, their utterances are as the very word of God. Inspired people are not acting as the mere *pen of God* through a mode of mechanical inspiration (i.e. verbal inspiration); they are rather the *penmen of God*, acting as a “ghost writer,” in a sense. God gives them His thoughts and messages, and the prophet writes or speaks these thoughts in their own language (this is known as thought inspiration). This is why we can discern the various styles of writing between the different apostles and prophets. The language of man is not the language of heaven, nor is it a perfect language, having a specific word for each thought. For

instance, the English language only has one word to convey the idea of “love,” but the Greek language has many words for “love,” such as *agape*, which indicates unconditional love, and *éros*, which is a term used to convey the idea of sexual passion. Thus, God’s message is infallible, but the messenger is fallible.

We should also keep in mind the fact that not everything a prophet says is a message directly given to them by God. For instance, the grocery list written down by a prophet would not be an inspired message from God. It seems that there may also be common verses similar to this in the Bible, like when Paul asked Timothy to bring his cloak and books back to him from Troas (2 Tim. 4:13). In the same way, not everything Ellen White wrote was intended to be regarded as a revelation from God. However, when a prophet uses phrases like “I was shown,” “I saw,” “the Lord revealed to me,” etc., we can be sure that the information following is something incredibly important from God. That being said, this does not mean that these messengers do not have vital insights, wisdom, or truth to share, for they most often do have information which we would do well to consider! Therefore, we must do what we can to discern between the sacred and the common.

When seeking to correctly interpret the writings of inspired people, we must also consider things such as the historical context, literary forms used, the language used, etc. If we ignore these factors, along with others, we can easily make anything from the Scriptures or writings of Ellen White seem contradictory. With this in mind, we must have the proper understanding of revelation / inspiration and hermeneutics. For more information concerning these topics I highly recommend checking out the short works “Issues on Revelation and Inspiration,” by Angel Manuel Rodríguez<sup>129</sup> and “Basic Principles of Understanding Ellen G. White’s Writings,” by Herbert E. Douglass.<sup>130</sup>

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<sup>129</sup> <https://www.adventistbiblicalresearch.org/materials/issues-on-revelation-and-inspiration/>

<sup>130</sup> <https://egwwritings.org/read?panels=p679.2&index=0>

# Appendix C: The Plagiarizing Prophet?

## C1. How Much Borrowing is There?

“In response to questions concerning the extent of Ellen White’s use of literary sources, the Ellen G. White Estate staff, in 1983, decided to begin a marking project in which a complete set of Ellen White’s published writings would be highlighted to indicate passages documented as being verbally dependent upon a prior non-Ellen White and non-biblical literary source.

“A significant part of the identification of such passages was done by Ron Graybill and Tim Poirier, both members of the White Estate staff, and Warren H. Johns, who at that time was in the Ministerial Association of the General Conference. In addition to their independent work, they marked all parallels that had come to their attention from earlier studies, regardless of whether they were from parties supportive of Ellen White or the church. The entire set of books used for this project is accessible at the office of the Ellen G. White Estate.

“Only **parallels demonstrating a clear verbal connection were marked, including paraphrasing**; that is to say, mere thought parallels were not marked because of the impossibility of proving dependency in this area. In anticipation of Dr. Fred Veltman’s research, completed in 1988, *The Desire of Ages* was not included in the study, so as to avoid duplication of effort. Also, Ellen White compilations not indexed in the *Comprehensive Index* were not included.

*It is important to understand that this report does not represent a final total of the extent of Ellen White’s use of literary sources and it is not intended as such.* The project’s purpose is to identify those passages that are *presently known* to indicate literary dependency, as evidenced by proper documentation. This distinction is important. The project is an on-going one and the percentages presented are subject to revision in accordance with new information. The White Estate desires this project to be as thorough as possible and requests that

additional parallels be forwarded to its Silver Spring, Maryland, office, with proper documentation, that is, a photocopy of the prior source and its bibliographic information.

“The percentages presented have been calculated by totaling the number of lines of text per book that have been documented as being dependent upon a prior author, and dividing this figure by the total estimated number of lines in the book. The percentages also reflect a considerable amount of repetition of material found in the compilations published since Ellen White’s death, and, to a lesser extent, throughout the writings published in her lifetime.”<sup>131</sup>

As of the date of this writing, this list was last updated on October 7, 2019.

<b>Title</b>	<b>Parallel Lines</b>	<b>% of Book</b>
Great Controversy (credited citations)	3241	15.11
Great Controversy (additional uncredited parallels)	1084	5.05
Sketches From the Life of Paul	1342	12.33
Steps to Christ	211	6.70
Acts of the Apostles	426	3.05
Faith and Works	73	2.97
Testimonies for the Church, vol. 5	656	2.91
Messages to Young People	282	2.67
Patriarchs and Prophets	548	2.28
Selected Messages, book 1	235	2.03
Testimonies for the Church, vol. 4	398	1.89
Prophets and Kings	265	1.59
My Life Today	126	1.33
Testimonies for the Church, vol. 3	206	1.12

<sup>131</sup> <https://whiteestate.org/legacy/issues-parallel-html/>.

Life Sketches	58	1.00
Welfare Ministry	73	0.99
Testimonies for the Church, vol. 8	82	0.97
Fundamentals of Christian Education	159	0.91
Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers	133	0.89
Education	71	0.88
Gospel Workers	99	0.81
Sanctified Life	17	0.81
Christian Service	60	0.80
Counsels on Stewardship	58	0.80
Ministry of Healing, The	99	0.79
Testimonies for the Church, vol. 7	56	0.77
Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing	29	0.76
Christ's Object Lessons	70	0.60
Testimonies for the Church, vol. 1	135	0.60
Testimonies for the Church, vol. 6	62	0.52
Child Guidance	61	0.50
Counsels on Health	86	0.49
Counsels to Parents, Teachers and Students	64	0.49
Counsels on Diet and Foods	62	0.45
Adventist Home, The	55	0.41
Temperance	25	0.37
Medical Ministry	34	0.36
Counsels to Writers and Editors	14	0.34
Counsels on Sabbath School Work	13	0.32
Evangelism	50	0.30
Testimonies for the Church, vol. 9	18	0.28
Testimonies for the Church, vol. 2	46	0.22
Selected Messages, bk. 2	20	0.17
Early Writings	10	0.14

## C2. The Life of Christ Research Project

Ellen White wrote massive amounts of material during her life, so the process of tracking all the literary parallels between her writings and her sources is ongoing. However, after Rea published his findings, a research project (known as *The Life of Christ Research Project*) was launched with the goal of getting a realistic understanding on the extent of Ellen White's literary borrowings. This project was intended to be a six-month study of Ellen's work, *The Desire of Ages*, but this project lasted eight years (1980-1988)! Since examining every sentence of the 87 chapters of this book would take too long, 15 chapters (5 short, 5 medium, and 5 long) were randomly selected and studied, sentence by sentence, comparing them with a number of the sources Mrs. White had in her library. Of the 1,200 books found in Ellen's library, around 75 of them related to the Gospels in some way, and 50 of them were devotional books. However, over the eight years of this study, the researchers obtained more than 500 works!

When the researchers would find a literary parallel, they would then categorize that sentence according to the **level of dependency** and assign a rating to it. Below are the categories, criteria, and ratings they developed (adapted from a chart in *White Lie Soap*):

Category	Criteria <sup>132</sup>	Rating
<b>Verbatim (V1)</b>	Sentences <sup>133</sup> that exactly duplicate all words in a source.	<b>7</b>
<b>Modified Verbatim (V2)</b>	Sentences made up of mostly the same words, allowing for slight modifications.	<b>6</b>
<b>Strict Paraphrase (P1)</b>	Sentences with a phrase or two from the source with modified wording but same meaning as the source.	<b>5</b>
<b>Simple Paraphrase (P2)</b>	Sentences saying basically the same thing as a source, but may have an additional thought.	<b>4</b>
<b>Loose Paraphrase (P3)</b>	Sentences expressing a similar thought, though not always in the same order or with verbatim words as source.	<b>3</b>
<b>Source Bible (B1)</b>	Sentences which use Scripture in a similar way as the source.	<b>2</b>
<b>Partial Independent (I2)</b>	Sentences that present an original thought, though containing an allusion to a source.	<b>1</b>
<b>Strict Independent (I1)</b>	Sentences with no parallel.	<b>0</b>
<b>Bible Quotations (B2)</b>	Quotations from the Bible that are essential to the story.	<b>0</b>

<sup>132</sup> For a more explicit description of the criteria for each category, see Fred Veltman, *Life of Christ Research Project* (1988), p. 61-63, <https://archive.org/details/FredVeltmanLifeOfChristResearchProject1988/page/n74/mode/1up>.

<sup>133</sup> Or independent clauses.

Chapter	# of Dep. Sentences	% of Dep. Sentences	# of Ind. Sentences	% of Ind. Sentences	Avg. Rate of Dependence for Dependent Sentences <sup>134</sup>	Avg. Rate of Dependence for all non-Bible sentences
3	59 / 130	45.38%	67 / 130	51.54%	2.3 for 59s	1.08 for 126s
10	35 / 231	15.15%	166 / 231	71.86%	2.89 for 35s	.50 for 201s
13	8 / 127	6.30%	110 / 127	86.66%	2.1 for 8s	.14 for 118s
14	100 / 250	40.00%	132 / 250	52.80%	3.12 for 100s	1.34 for 232s
24	32 / 153	20.92%	112 / 153	73.20%	2.8 for 32s	.63 for 144s
37	59 / 217	27.19%	146 / 217	67.28%	3.2 for 59s	.92 for 205s
39	39 / 158	24.68%	107 / 158	67.72%	3.4 for 39s	.92 for 146s
46	38 / 89	42.70%	48 / 89	53.93%	3.7 for 38s	1.6 for 86s
53	26 / 193	13.47%	142 / 193	73.58%	3.31 for 26s	.51 for 168s
56	1 / 97	1.03%	96 / 97	98.97%	1.0 for 1s	.01 for 97s
72	40 / 201	19.90%	136 / 201	67.66%	3.75 for 40s	.75 for 176s
75	168 / 351	47.86%	168 / 351	47.86%	3.63 for 168s	1.8 for 336s
76	55 / 173	31.79%	115 / 173	66.47%	3.47 for 55s	1.12 for 170s
83	68 / 116	58.62%	39 / 116	33.62%	3.41 for 68s	2.17 for 107s
84	95 / 138	68.84%	28 / 138	20.29%	3.66 for 95s	2.83 for 123s
<b>AVG.</b>		<b>30.92%</b>		<b>62.23%</b> <sup>135</sup>	<b>3.52</b>	<b>1.26</b>

<sup>134</sup> Does not factor in Strict Independent Sentences.

<sup>135</sup> This figure does not include the 7.2% of Bible Quotations.



On the previous page is a condensed chart from *The Life of Christ Research Project*, showing the results of their study by chapter. From left to right we have columns displaying: the chapter, number of sentences which have some degree of dependence, the percent of dependent sentences in that chapter, the average rate of dependence for the dependent sentences, and the average rate of dependence for all non-Bible sentences.

Below is a chart showing the results of their study by category, displaying the category and rating assigned to said category, the number of sentences in that category next to the 2,624 sentences in the 15 chapter sample, and a percentage showing how much of each category was used in the 15 chapters:

<b>Rating—Category</b>	<b># of sentences in category / total sentences in sample.</b>	<b>% of category found in sample.</b>
<b>7—Verbatim (V1)</b>	0	0%
<b>6—Modified Verbatim (V2)</b>	29 / 2,624	1.11%
<b>5—Strict Paraphrase (P1)</b>	183 / 2,624	6.97%
<b>4—Simple Paraphrase (P2)</b>	256 / 2,624	9.76%
<b>3—Loose Paraphrase (P3)</b>	93 / 2,624	3.54%
<b>2—Source Bible (B1)</b>	84 / 2,624	3.20%
<b>1—Partial Independent (I2)</b>	178 / 2,624	6.78%
<b>0—Strict Independent (I1)</b>	1612 / 2,624	61.43%
<b>0—Bible Quotations (B2)</b>	189 / 2,624	7.20%

With the above information in mind, we can see that the sampling, which is indicative of the whole book, is approximately **75% independent (I1, B2) or virtually independent (I2) from any outside source**, while **25% has some level of dependency** with an average dependency rating of about 3.5 (not including the independent sentences), which is in between a loose paraphrase (P3) and simple paraphrase (P2). Essentially, when Ellen White did borrow from others she typically paraphrased things which other writers had said, sometimes including additional thoughts, though not always in the same order or with verbatim words as source. This would be expected as the topic of Christ's life is a topic which has been written about for 2,000 years, most of which covers similar ground, topics, and themes.<sup>136</sup>

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<sup>136</sup> For a great summary of the 2,200-page *Life of Christ Research Project*, I highly recommend this article by Kevin Morgan: <http://www.sdanet.org/atissue/white/morgan.htm>.



# ARE THERE ANY TRUE PROPHETS?

WHEN ONE HEARS THE WORD "PROPHET" A NUMBER OF WILD THOUGHTS MAY FLOOD THE MIND, SUCH AS CULT LEADERS TRICKING THEIR FOLLOWERS INTO DRINKING POISONOUS KOOL-AID. SHOOT OUTS WITH THE ATF AND FBI, POLYGAMOUS COMMUNES, ETC. WITH ALL OF THE STIGMA BEHIND PROPHETIC CLAIMS, MOST PEOPLE REJECT THE IDEA OF PROPHETS OUTRIGHT, AND UNDERSTANDABLY SO.

HOWEVER, DID YOU KNOW THAT THE BIBLE ACTUALLY RECORDS PROPHETS AND PROPHETESSES EXISTING AFTER JESUS' ASCENSION (ACTS 11:27-30; 21:9-12)? LIKEWISE, ONE OF THE SPIRITUAL GIFTS FOR THE CHURCH IS THE GIFT OF PROPHECY (1 COR. 12:28; EPH. 4:11-13). BUT JESUS ALSO WARNED OF FALSE PROPHETS WHO WOULD PERFORM SIGNS AND WONDERS, SEEKING TO DECEIVE THE FLOCK (MATT. 7:15; 24:24). SO HOW DO WE KNOW WHO IS A TRUE OR FALSE PROPHET?

GOD DOES NOT LEAVE US IN THE DARK CONCERNING THIS QUESTION, FOR IN HIS WORD HE OUTLINES A NUMBER OF "TESTS" WHICH CAN BE APPLIED TO SUPPOSED PROPHETS TO SEE IF THEY ARE OF GOD OR NOT. MANY "PROPHETS" PASS SOME OF THESE TESTS, BUT ONLY A GENUINE PROPHET OF GOD CAN PASS THEM ALL.

THE AIM OF THIS WORK IS TO CONSIDER EACH OF THESE TESTS AND THEN APPLY THEM ON TWO OF THE MOST WELL KNOWN PROPHETS OF THE 19TH CENTURY: JOSEPH SMITH OF MORMONISM AND ELLEN WHITE OF ADVENTISM.