

21 – Messages From Beyond the Stars (The Spirit of Prophecy)



1

God Still Speaks Through His Prophets



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In case we're not here alone, scientists, using powerful radio telescopes, are listening for signals from outer space. They hope that maybe someday they will hear a message from intelligent beings on some other world! Maybe they will have a message for us!



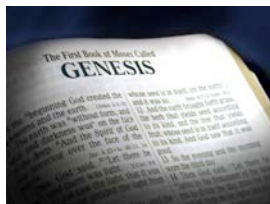
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Actually, there is evidence that a message has been beaming to Earth for thousands of years now – but few are listening to it. It's a message from the Creator of this planet—a message of love from a God trying to win back His rebellious children.



4

God and humanity haven't always been separated. There was a time when mankind enjoyed face-to-face communication with our Creator! This was God's intention for our creation. We were made in His image, capable of fellowship with the King of the universe.



5

But, sad to say, this relationship of love and togetherness lasted only for two chapters in the Bible. Genesis, chapter 3, tells a tragic story. Adam and Eve sinned.



6

They rebelled against God's rule of perfect love. And they soon discovered the awful reality -- sin separates. Sin and God are incompatible. Adam and Eve could no longer have direct communication and fellowship with God.

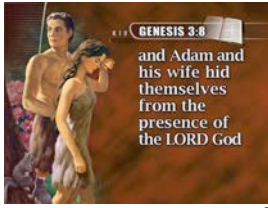


7

(Text: Genesis 3:8)

The Bible says, "And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day:

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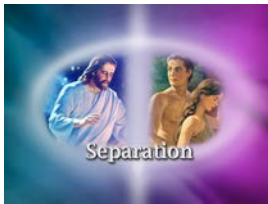
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and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God



9

amongst the trees of the garden." Genesis 3:8.
Adam and Eve were hiding!
They didn't want to meet God.
They just wanted to hide.
That's what sin does.



10

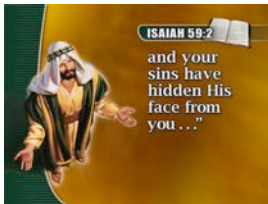
It separates us from our Heavenly Father and shatters love relationships between God and man, and between man and others.



11

(Text: Isaiah 59:2)

The prophet Isaiah wrote: "But your iniquities have separated you from your God;



12

and your sins have hidden His face from you..." Isaiah 59:2.

Yes, sin separated us from God, but it didn't separate us from His love.

Love always finds a way of keeping in touch!

God found a way of still communicating with sinful man.



13

He chose men and women He could trust to be His mouthpiece, to communicate His love and plans to mankind.



14

Among those He chose were Moses, Miriam, Samuel, Elijah, Huldah, Deborah, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and many more.

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15

Prophets and prophetesses were spokespersons for God! This was God's way of saying, "I love you; I care about you, and I have a plan to help you."



16

The Bible records many conversations between the Lord and different Bible characters, but it wasn't the same as the conversations and fellowship that Adam and Eve had enjoyed in the Garden of Eden.



17

Sometimes God spoke through the Holy Spirit, sometimes by the holy angels, and at other times through people whom He chose to be His messengers.

However, the most frequently chosen channel God used to communicate with His people has been the channel of prophets and prophetesses – men and women who spoke for God at the moving of the Holy Spirit.



18

(Text: Amos 3:7)

This shouldn't be too surprising, for the Bible clearly states: "Surely the Lord God does nothing, unless He reveals His secret to His servants the prophets." Amos 3:7.

Let's notice how these prophets received their messages:



19

(Text: 2 Peter 1:21)

"For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man:



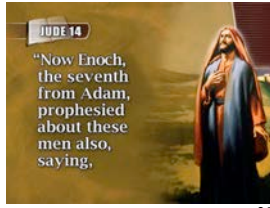
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but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit."

2 Peter 1:21

God had prophets, of course, even before the great Flood of Noah's day.

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21

(Text: Jude 14)

Enoch proclaimed Christ's second coming: "Now Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about these men also, saying,



22

'Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of His saints.'"

Jude 14.

Enoch is the first person mentioned in the Bible who had the gift of prophecy.

But there were others!



23

(Text: Acts 3:21)

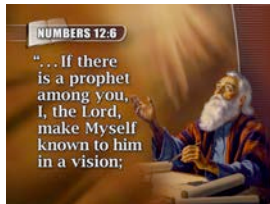
The Bible says, "God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began." Acts 3:21.

Noah, another prophet, foretold the destruction of the world by the flood 120 years before it came to pass.



24

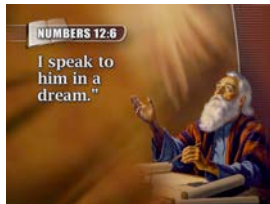
After the Flood, we find many prophets and prophetesses – including Miriam, Deborah, Jeremiah, Isaiah, Ezekiel, and others. They were teachers of righteousness. They were moral and spiritual guides, speaking for God. God revealed His message to them through visions and dreams.



25

(Text: Numbers 12:6)

The Lord said: "... If there is a prophet among you, I, the Lord, make Myself known to him in a vision;



26

I speak to him in a dream." Numbers 12:6.

Sometimes God's messengers were instructed to speak for God; sometimes they were to write or record a message from Him.

In fact, the Bible is the product of the ministry of prophets.

Every author was a part of God's plan.



27

All spoke or wrote for Him "moved by His Spirit."

Through them God sent a love letter to His children on earth.

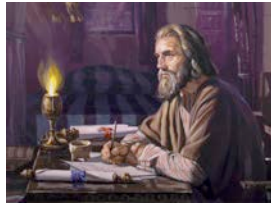
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28

It's His way of saying, "I love you, and I want to keep in touch with you."

And especially He wants us to know that He longs for the time when we can fellowship together face-to-face!



29

All of the authors of the New Testament—Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Paul, James, Peter, and Jude—were a part of that plan. All had the gift of prophecy.

Of course, there were others during that time who were speaking for God: Simon, Agabus, Barnabas, and Anna.



30

(Text: Acts 21:9)

The deacon, Phillip, had four daughters "...which did prophesy." All were instruments God used to reveal His will and to encourage the early Christian church.



31

Of course the greatest revelation of God's love for man was when Jesus came to personally demonstrate by words and actions what God is really like.

Never has the world witnessed a more eloquent Communicator of God's love and concern.



32

But not everyone accepted the message. Jesus was crucified on Calvary's cross for our sins. Yet the message of God's love would continue to be given! When Jesus returned to heaven, the Bible says He gave gifts unto men – gifts which would strengthen and encourage His followers:



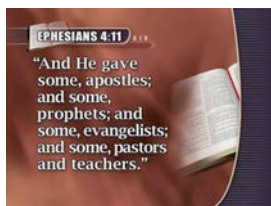
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(Text: Ephesians 4:8)

"Wherefore He saith, when He ascended upon high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men."

Ephesians 4:8.

What were these gifts?



34

(Text: Ephesians 4:11-15)

The Bible says, "And He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists, and some, pastors and teachers."

Ephesians 4:11.

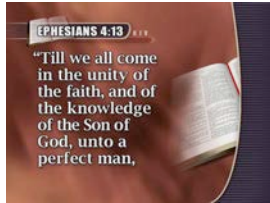
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35

Why did Jesus choose to give gifts to the church?

Verse 12 says, "For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ."



36

How long were these gifts to remain in the church? "Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man,

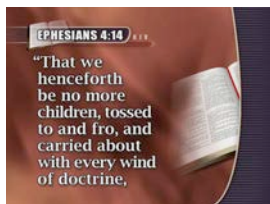


37

unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ."

Verse 13.

The Bible says that these gifts would give stability to the church and strengthen the people.



38

"That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine,



39

by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive."

Verse 14.

Notice where the gift of prophecy stands in the list of "spiritual gifts," as Paul calls them.



40

(Text: 1 Corinthians 12:28)

"And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets..."

1 Corinthians 12:28.



41

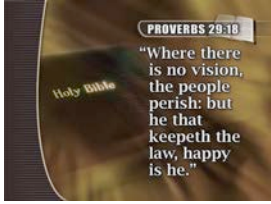
The gift of prophecy ranked second only to that of apostleship, so it was to be a very important and necessary gift to help the church function properly.

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42

Paul likened the gifts of the Spirit to the various parts of the human body. He showed that the eyes, head, mouth, and other body parts are all necessary for the body to function harmoniously and efficiently. Just so with the church. Without vision, for example, the church is blind!



43

(Text: Proverbs 29:18)

“Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he.”

Proverbs 29:18.



44

But, you say, “What happened to the gift of prophecy after Christ returned to heaven and all His disciples died?”



45

Not many generations passed until the church became careless, compromising, and unfaithful to God and His law.

Jeremiah records what happened when Israel apostatized for a period of time:



46

(Text: Lamentations 2:9)

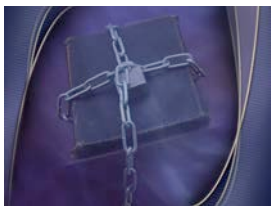
“The law is no more, and her prophets no longer find visions from the Lord.”

Lamentations 2:9.



47

As the early church adopted pagan rites and practices and discarded fundamental truths of the Bible, one by one the spiritual gifts were withheld.



48

During the time of the church’s apostasy, or the Dark Ages, Bibles were chained to monastery walls.

In general they were written in Hebrew, Greek and Latin.

The common people were forbidden to own or read the Scriptures. Only priests were allowed to read and interpret the Bible.

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49

A few faithful Christians remained true to the Bible and its truths. Despite persecution, they shared the portions of the Scriptures they possessed. They planted the seeds of the Reformation long before Wycliffe, Luther, and Huss.



50

Martin Luther and others translated the Bible into the common languages of the people. Persecution came, but it only caused a greater desire for God's Word.



51

And as people began to diligently search the Scriptures, old truths hidden for centuries were discovered. These truths were brought to the attention of the people, and a great religious awakening resulted.



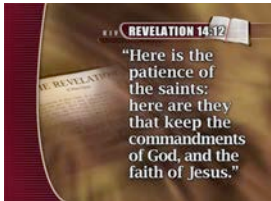
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About this time there came into being a new religious movement—a group of dedicated Christians, some Baptist, some Methodists, Presbyterians, and others – all of them searching the Scriptures and praying for light, so they could better understand them.



53

As they searched the Bible, they discovered in the fourth commandment of God the great memorial of His creation – a day God asked His people to “remember.” They read the Book of Revelation and saw the description of God's last-day people:



54

(Text: Revelation 14:12)

“Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.”

Revelation 14:12.



55

As they continued to study, they were impressed that keeping the commandments of God involved keeping the Bible Sabbath. They accepted this memorial to creation and proclaimed the Sabbath truth to the world.

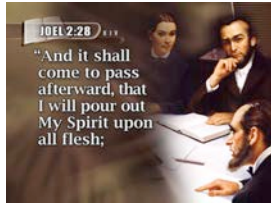
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56

What about the gift of prophecy? Would God raise up the special gift of prophecy among this end-time Sabbath-keeping people? Would it not be reasonable to expect that God might have something special to say to this generation?

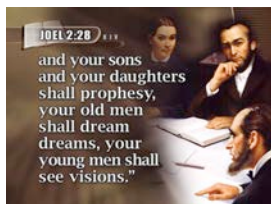
Notice what He said would happen in the last days:



57

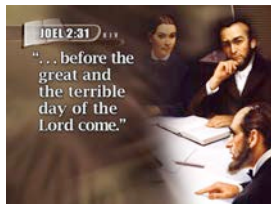
(Text: Joel 2:28, 31)

“And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out My Spirit upon all flesh;



58

and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions.”



59

“...before the great and terrible day of the Lord come.”
Joel 2:28, 31.

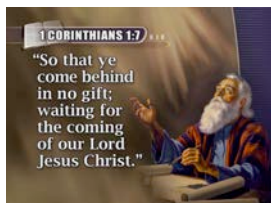


60

Notice that God said this would take place just prior to the “Great and terrible day of the Lord” – or just before the coming of Christ the second time!

God’s people are to have the gift of prophecy in their midst during the closing hours of earth’s history.

Communicating with the church at Corinth, Paul made this statement concerning God’s followers:



61

(Text: 1 Corinthians 1:7)

“So that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

1 Corinthians 1:7.

Revelation describes God’s last day people as having this gift:

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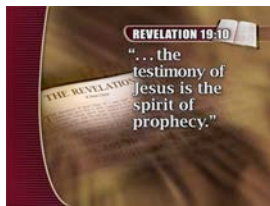
(Text: Revelation 12:17)

“And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed,



63

which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.” Revelation 12:17.



64

(Text: Revelation 19:10)

The Bible tells us that “the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.”

Revelation 19:10.

According to Revelation, the church that remains as God’s channel of communication in the last days is characterized as having the faith of Jesus, keeping all the commandments of God, and being blessed with the gift of prophecy.



65

So in Revelation 12:17 and 14:12 we find that God’s last-day people will –

Have the faith of Jesus.

Keep all of God’s commandments.

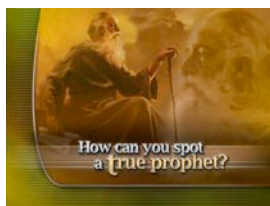
Have the testimony of Jesus, or of the gift of prophecy.



66

Yes, God still wants to “keep in touch.”

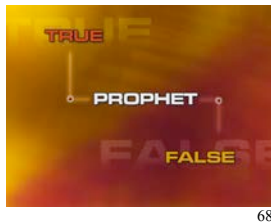
He still has something to say to this generation.



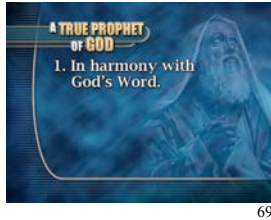
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“But,” you might ask, “What about the possibility of deception? How can we tell the difference between a genuine prophet of God and a false prophet?”

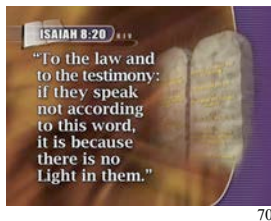
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The possibility of deception has always existed. Throughout history there have been false and true prophets. We don't have to be concerned about false ones, though, if we know how to recognize the genuine ones. The Bible gives specific characteristics that identify a true prophet:

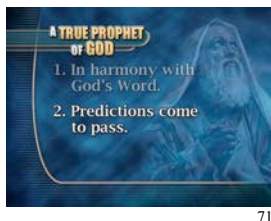


A true prophet's message will be in complete harmony with God's Word and His law.

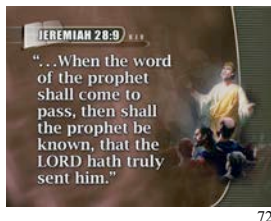


(Text: Isaiah 8:20)

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



A true prophet's predictions must come to pass or be fulfilled!



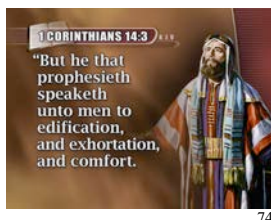
(Text: Jeremiah 28:9)

“...When the word of the prophet shall come to pass, then shall the prophet be known, that the Lord hath truly sent him.” Jeremiah 28:9.



A true prophet prophesies to edify the church.

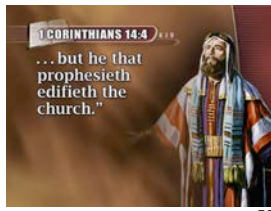
One of the reasons God has given the gift of prophecy is to build up His church. If we are to discover the true gift, we must discover the true church. They are linked together.



(Text: 1 Corinthians 14:3, 4)

“But he that prophesieth, speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort . . .

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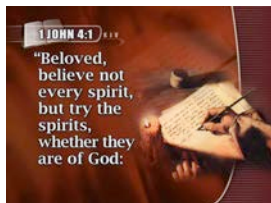
75

but he that prophesieth edifieth the church.”
1 Corinthians 14:3, 4.



76

A true prophet will exalt Christ as the Son of God and the Savior of mankind:



77

(Text: 1 John 4:1, 2)

“Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits, whether they are of God,



78

because many false prophets are gone out into the world.”



79

“Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God.”
1 John 4:1, 2.KJV



80

A true prophet or prophetess can be known by his or her life and works.



81

(Text: Matthew 7:16, 18)

“By their fruit you will recognize them. . . .

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82

A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit."

Matthew 7:16, 18.



83

Based on these texts, it becomes obvious that not everyone who professes to be a prophet of God is a true prophet.

So no matter who claims to speak for God, apply the tests!

If they fit, thank God!

If they don't, follow Christ's warning to "watch out" for them.



84

Let me share the story of how God chose to "keep in touch" with His people. It was during the Great Religious Awakening early in the 19th century.

There was tremendous interest in Bible study and prayer.

The prophecies of Daniel and Revelation held special interest.



85

Faithful Bible students studied these prophecies and eventually came to the conclusion that Jesus would come in their day.



86

As they continued to study they settled on the date of October 22, 1844. However, October 22 passed and the glorious return of Jesus did not take place.



87

It was a most bitter disappointment. It provoked much ridicule, scoffing, and misrepresentation.

Later, after much prayer and further Bible study, the group discovered the date was correct, but the event was wrong!



88

They had thought the "sanctuary" mentioned in Daniel 8:14 was the earth, but they were mistaken.

Instead of the earth being cleansed by fire on that date, the sanctuary in heaven was to be cleansed. This involved the final demonstration of God's character of love through His people.

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89

Excitedly the believers continued to study, and began to find more truths that had been forgotten for centuries.

At this crucial moment, God chose to restore the gift of prophecy to His people.

It is a fascinating story!



90

He chose a frail 17-year-old girl and gave her a vision of the triumph of God's cause. Ellen Harmon was given her first vision in December, 1844, soon after the Great Disappointment.

She was shown the advent people traveling an elevated road to heaven, with a brilliant light from Jesus illuminating the pathway.



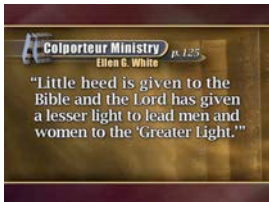
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What an encouragement this message was to this small, scattered group of advent believers, who would later become known as Seventh-day Adventists!



92

Young Ellen soon married James White, another youthful Bible student, and, for more than 70 years, she spoke, wrote, taught, and counseled for God. Although the scope of her ministry and expertise is astounding, her greatest work, as she put it, was “to lead men and women to the ‘greater light’”—the Bible.



93

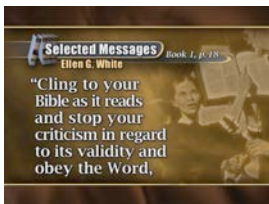
She wrote: “Little heed is given to the Bible and the Lord has given a lesser light to lead men and women to the ‘Greater Light.’”
--Colporteur Ministry, p. 125.



94

She championed the Holy Scriptures as the final court of appeal in all doctrinal questions.

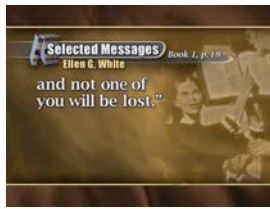
To some who were criticizing the Word of God, she wrote:



95

“Cling to your Bible as it reads and stop your criticism in regard to its validity and obey the Word,

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96

and not one of you will be lost.”
Selected Messages, Bk. 1, p. 18.



97

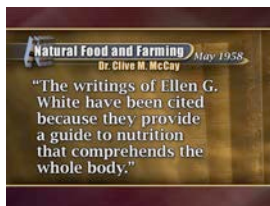
No woman author has ever written as prolifically as Ellen White. Her messages of counsel and reproof received from God were shared with His people throughout books, magazine articles, tracts, pamphlets, and personal letters.



98

Her writings include counsel on victorious Christian living, diet, health, prenatal care, drugs, marriage and the home, child guidance, education, and much, much, more. Many of her writings have been validated by modern scientific discoveries.

She has been quoted by professors, doctors, news commentators, and others, as an authority in many of these fields.



99

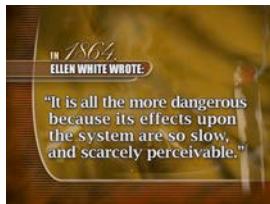
Dr. Clive M. McCay, the late professor of nutrition at Cornell University, stated:

“The writings of Ellen G. White have been cited because they provide a guide to nutrition that comprehends the whole body.”
-Natural Food and Farming, May, 1958.



100

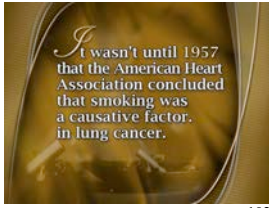
As far back as 1864, Ellen White wrote: “Tobacco is a poison of the most deceitful and malignant kind....”



101

It is all the more dangerous because its effects upon the system are so slow, and scarcely perceivable.”

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102

However, it wasn't until 1957 that the American Cancer Society and the American Heart Association concluded that smoking was a causative factor in lung cancer!

In her day, it was thought that tobacco and cigar smoke were an effective cure for lung disease!



103

In 1902, Ellen White warned that San Francisco and Oakland would be visited by the Lord because they were becoming like Sodom and Gomorrah. (Manuscript 1902, p. 114.)



104

On April 18, 1906 at 5:12 a.m., the Great San Francisco Earthquake occurred.

The prophecy was true.

The predicted destruction did take place exactly as foretold.

Mrs. White's achievements are all the more astounding when we consider the overwhelming obstacles and handicaps which confronted her throughout her lifetime.



105

On November 26, 1827, she and her twin sister Elizabeth were born near the little village of Gorham, Maine, to Eunice and Robert Harmon.

Ellen was the last of eight children.



106

At the age of nine, an accident changed her life forever.

While returning home from school, Ellen was seriously injured by a stone thrown by a classmate.



107

For three weeks she was unconscious, and it appeared that she would not live long. Though she survived, she was unable to continue her schooling beyond third grade.

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108

Her suffering led her to consider her spiritual life, and she came to exercise personal faith in Jesus. Ellen became an avid student of the Bible. She attended camp meetings, revivals, and cottage meetings.



109

After attending a Methodist camp meeting in Buxton, Maine, Ellen was baptized on June 26, 1842. She became a member of the Methodist church.



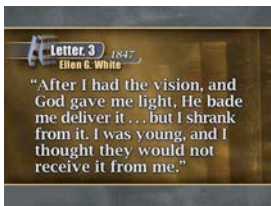
110

Later, Ellen and her family attended some meetings held in Portland, Maine. The speaker was William Miller, a former army captain, who had been diligently studying the Bible. Because he advocated the soon coming of Christ, he and his followers were labeled “Adventists” or “Millerites.” The Harmon family was convinced of the truthfulness of Miller’s messages.



111

However, after the Great Disappointment of October 22, 1844, Ellen was devastated. She wept, prayed, and studied God’s Word for an answer, as did many of the “Advent” believers. Then it was that God called her to be His prophetess. Physically, she didn’t appear to be what you’d expect of a prophetess. She was a 17-year-old girl, fighting tuberculosis and a heart condition. Yet in December of 1844, God chose to speak to Ellen in a vision. In her own words, she tells of her reaction:



112

“After I had the vision, and God gave me light, He bade me deliver it . . . but I shrank from it. I was young, and I thought they would not receive it from me.”

—Ellen G. White Letter 3, 1847.



113

Although feeling inadequate and physically incapable of the responsibilities of this calling by God, in faith she accepted the mission for God that would last her lifetime.

21 – Messages From Beyond the Stars (The Spirit of Prophecy)



114

Ellen and her husband James White worked together in sharing the light God gave.



115

Their triumphs and their devotion are shared in many of her writings. Throughout her life, Ellen White was a committed Christian, a tireless servant of God, and a devoted mother. She was loved by her husband, her family, and thousands around the world.



116

On August 6, 1881, Ellen's husband James died in Battle Creek, Michigan. Standing by his graveside was Ellen—pledging to press on in the work they both had sacrificed and relentlessly pursued for over 35 years!



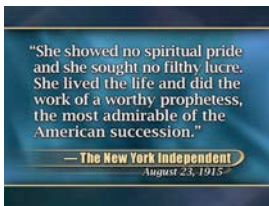
117

Some of Ellen's most beautiful and inspiring writings appeared after this date. She worked alone for another 34 years. Her prophetic ministry took her to several countries—guiding, instructing, and counseling the believers as the Lord led her.



118

The life and labors of Ellen Gould White closed on July 16, 1915. She was over 87 years old. She was buried beside her husband, in Oak Hill Cemetery in Battle Creek, Michigan. A few weeks after her death, a newspaper carried this statement:



119

“She showed no spiritual pride and she sought no filthy lucre [riches]. She lived the life and did the work of a worthy prophetess, the most admirable of the American succession.”-The New York Independent, August 23, 1915.



120

Yes, her voice is stilled – her pen is at rest. But the priceless words of counsel, admonition, instruction and encouragement of this faithful spokesperson for God will continue to guide God's people to final victory!

21 – Messages From Beyond the Stars (The Spirit of Prophecy)



Her legacy to the world is a gift of love -- a message to earth from across the universe, from a God of love who still wants to “keep in touch” with His children here until Christ comes.

Then the “lesser light” will pale, as we stand in His splendorous presence. Then, once again we will see God face-to-face in all His glory and enjoy our fellowship with Him!



[Tell this story, if possible, rather than read it.]

A number of years ago, in the vast desert wastes of Bechuanaland, South Africa, lived a primitive bushman named Sukuba.

He lived an isolated life as a member of a nomadic people.

One winter night he crept into his shelter and prepared to sleep.

But suddenly the night became brighter than day.

A shining being appeared to him and told him to find the people of the “Book.” He must find the people who worshiped God.

Sukuba wasn’t sure what that meant. What book? How could he read it if he found it? The language of the bushman contained clicks and guttural sounds that were quite unlike the language of other African tribes. It has never been reduced to writing.

But this “Shining One,” as Sukuba called the angel who appeared to him, had said, “The book talks. You will be able to read it.”

Sukuba traveled for days with his family in search of the book. He reached the hut of some Bantu farmers and asked if they knew of the people with the Book.

The tribesman was startled to hear the bushman somehow speaking his Bantu language. He immediately took Sukuba to his pastor. The pastor was deeply moved by Sukuba’s story.

And he said, “Your journey is over.” Sukuba was very happy.

But that night the Shining One appeared to him again.

He said that these were not the people he was looking for.

He must find “the Sabbath-keeping church and Pastor Moye.”

Pastor Moye would have a Book and also “four brown books that are really nine.”

The next day Sukuba prayed for a sign. He needed some direction for his journey.

When he did, a cloud appeared in the sky. Sukuba set off after it and followed it for seven days.

It disappeared over a certain village.

There Sukuba asked for Pastor Moye and was quickly directed to his home.

21 – Messages From Beyond the Stars (The Spirit of Prophecy)



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After Sukuba told his story in the local dialect, Pastor Moye brought out his worn Bible. “That is it!” Sukuba exclaimed. “That is it! But where are the four books, that are really nine?” Well, as it turned out, Ellen White, years before, had written nine volumes of instruction to God’s church called Testimonies for the Church. In one of the printings, these had been bound into four volumes, and Pastor Moye had this edition!

Sukuba’s search was over. He had found the people of the Book. He had found a Sabbath-keeping people, a people blessed with the prophetic gift. Eventually he and his family accepted Christ and were baptized. He became a missionary to his own people.

God is working in marvelous ways today to lead men and women to His end-time message

The fact that you are hearing this story is no accident. Like Sukuba, you are being guided. God is guiding you into His truth.

God is giving you courage to face the future.

Perhaps you’ve been searching for truth for years. I believe you’ve been divinely guided to this destination.

You, like Sukuba, can exclaim, “This is it! God’s truth!”

The Bible promises:



124

(Text: 2 Chronicles 20:20)

“Believe in the Lord your God, and you shall be established; Believe His prophets, and you shall prosper.”

God wants the very best for us! He wants us to have every advantage for these trying days in which we live.

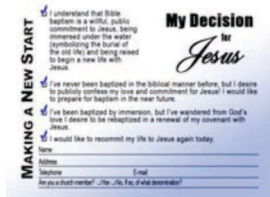
So He gives His people messages from beyond the stars.

Messages from His heart of love. This is so important that He identifies His last day people with primarily two characteristics in Revelation 12:17: they keep the commandments of God and have the gift of prophecy.

Would you like to be a part of this special movement? Would you like to be blessed by this special gift God has given His people? I would invite you this evening to kneel with me as we pray.

[Suggested prayer on next slide]

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[Suggested Prayer]

“Dear Father in Heaven,

Thank you for loving us enough to stay in communication with us. Thank you for giving men and women the prophetic gift and, through them, giving us the Bible, Your Word. And thank you that in these last days You still have a message for us – a message that can help us live happier, healthier, longer, and more productive lives.

Tonight we thank you for that gift. And we thank you for the way it helps us to identify Your last-day movement. Thank you for the opportunity to know these truths and to be a part of sharing them with the world. We kneel here before you as Your children. We kneel here to say, “we love You” and “we want to be a part of Your last-day people.” Please give us grace and strength as we continue learning and continue growing in Your truth, for we pray it in Jesus’ name, Amen.”