

E. G. WHITE AND END-TIME PROPHECY

In 1881 E. G. White noted that “the prophetic word shows clearly that we are living near the close of this world’s history, and that we may soon expect the coming of the Son of man in the clouds of Heaven.”¹

That belief and confidence was a crescendoing attribute of her writings after 1844. This brought criticism of that predictive hope because He didn’t come.

In 1883 she defended that confidence: “As the subject was presented before me, the period of Christ’s ministration seemed almost accomplished. Am I accused of falsehood because time has continued longer than my testimony seemed to indicate? How is it with the testimonies of Christ and His disciples? Were they deceived?

“Paul writes to the Corinthians: “But this I say, brethren, the time is short: it remaineth, that both they that have wives be as though they had none; and they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not’ (1 Cor. 7:29, 30).”²

Numerous end-time letters and articles followed this 1883 document. She always perceived that we were on the verge of the eternal world. Then in 1901 a change: She noted that “We may have to remain here in this world because of insubordination many more years, as did the children of Israel.”³ That was a crucial turning point in her writings. A corporate blame became painfully evident.

In 1909 came this stern note: “If every soldier of Christ had done his duty, if every watchman on the walls of Zion had given the trumpet a certain sound, the world might ere this have heard the message of warning. But the work is years behind. While men have slept, Satan has stolen a march upon us.”⁴

In an indepth study of her final earth’s history statements, she notes that there is expectancy, appeals to be constantly ready and an always present beautiful message of the advent hope. But – the nature and spirit of her end-time discourses began to change in the mid to late 1880’s as she was finishing her manuscripts for *The Great Controversy*. They became more tempered at a time when her writings were heavily focused on the end of time, when apostasy was accelerating within the church and when she appears to be having increasing light regarding Daniel and Revelation.

In that amazing book she warned: “Why, then, this widespread ignorance concerning an important part of Holy Writ [Revelation]? Why this general reluctance to investigate its teachings? It is the result of a studied effort of the prince of darkness to conceal from men that which reveals his deceptions. For this reason, Christ the Revelator, foreseeing the warfare that would be waged against the study of the Revelation, pronounced a blessing upon all who should read, hear, and observe the words of the prophecy.”⁵ She observed a unique contradiction between expectancy and lack of Biblical knowledge and preparation!

Later that year she said: "Increased light will shine upon all the grand truths of prophecy, and they will be seen in *freshness* and *brilliancy*, because the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness will illuminate the whole."⁶ Resistance to deeper understanding of truth was mounting. It represented not only the result of the 1888 challenge over *justification by faith*, but became the early seeds of apostasy against truth within the denomination. In the church paper she expressed painful concerns: "A spirit of Phariseeism has been coming in upon the people who claim to believe the truth for these last days. They are self-satisfied. They have said, 'We have the truth. There is no more light for the people of God.' But we are not safe when we take a position that we will not accept anything else than that upon which we have settled as truth. We should take the Bible, and investigate it closely for ourselves. We should dig in the mine of God's word for truth."⁷

Soon to be "banished" to Australia, her pen became sharper and more objective: "We must not for a moment think that there is no more light, no more truth, to be given us. We are in danger of becoming careless, by our indifference losing the sanctifying power of truth, and composing ourselves with the thought, 'I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing.'" [REV. 3:17.] While we must hold fast to the truths which we have already received, we must not look with suspicion upon any new light that God may send."⁸ Was her alarm only related to salvation and Christ's righteousness?

"He who commanded the light to shine out of darkness has issued the command to us, Let your light shine before me. Go forth as a lamp that burneth. Diffuse light. Each period of the fulfillment of prophetic history is a preparation for the advanced light which will succeed each period. As the prophecy comes to an end, there is to be a perfect whole."⁹

In spite of the monumental work of *The Great Controversy*, a deeper understanding of prophetic truths yet remained to be discovered. She not only saw the church in apostasy and defiance with its terrible consequences, but she began to share her unfolding insights into the future.

In 1899 she strongly affirmed: "The time has come for Daniel to stand in his lot. The time has come for the light given him to go to the world as never before. If those for whom the Lord has done so much will walk in the light, their knowledge of Christ and the prophecies relating to Him will be greatly increased as they near the close of this earth's history."
[Future to 1899] [This is a fascinating issue theologically called "now but not yet." – *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 21, p. 407. Daniel standing in his lot (Daniel 12:13) relates to the three time prophecies in that chapter. Is the urgency of a pre-1844 understanding to be a momentous message for the world? Hardly. She was seeing something not yet addressed before this time. The next year she focused more on these prophetic issues: "The books of Daniel and the Revelation are one. One is a prophecy, the other a revelation; one a book sealed, the other a book opened."¹⁰

She enlarged on these issues: "In the past teachers have declared Daniel and the Revelation to be sealed books, and the people have turned from them. ***The veil whose apparent mystery has kept many from lifting it, God's own hand has withdrawn from these portions of His Word*** [It now can be understood]. The very name 'Revelation' contradicts the statement that it is a sealed book. Revelation means that something of importance is revealed. The truths of this book are addressed to those living in these last

days. We are standing with the veil removed in the holy place of sacred things. We are not to stand without, we are to enter; not with careless, irreverent thoughts, not with impetuous footsteps, but with reverence and godly fear. We are nearing the time when the prophecies of the book of Revelation are to be fulfilled. [Future application]

“This book ***demands close, prayerful study***, lest it be interpreted according to the ideas of men, and false construction be given to the sacred word of the Lord, which in its symbols and figures means so much to us. ***There is so much that we positively must understand in order that we may shape our course of action so that we shall not receive the plagues which are coming upon the world*** [Truths yet to unfold for God’s people – there is expectancy, yet the people aren’t ready]. In the Revelation the deep things of God are portrayed. Those whose hearts are wholly sanctified to God will be brought nigh to see priceless gems through the telescope of faith. And as they apply the truth to practice, the still deeper mysteries are stamped on the soul. *Those thus honored are to communicate to others that which they have received* [the mission of those who understand]. And as they do this, angels make the impression on hearts.

“When the books of Daniel and Revelation are better understood, believers will have an entirely different religious experience. They will be given such glimpses of the open gates of heaven that heart and mind will be impressed in regard to the character all must develop in order to realize the blessedness which is to be the reward of the pure in heart. The Lord will bless all who will seek humbly and meekly to understand that which is revealed in the Revelation. This book contains so much that is large with immortality and full of glory that all who read and search it earnestly receive the blessing to those “that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein.”¹¹

Two years later (1902) she *again* emphasized that there were issues in Revelation that needed clarification: “Let us give more time to the study of the Bible. ***We do not understand the Word as we should.*** The book of Revelation opens with an injunction to us to understand the instruction that it contains. ‘Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy,’ God declares, ‘and keep those things which are written therein; for the time is at hand.’ When we as a people understand what this books means to us, there will be seen among us a great revival. We do not understand [new truths yet to be revealed] fully the lessons that it teaches, notwithstanding the injunction given us to search and study it.”¹² These stunning admissions were not heeded. The church was in the middle of a spiritual and administrative crisis. Interest in end-time matters became compromised. Her pen did not remain silent however. Over the decades since, there has not been the cautious review of her writings in relationship to when they were created. Thus, statements that were from an era when little light was given are often used as prophetic dogma. Thus we can see that the incredible book *Early Writings* and later *The Great Controversy* served as introductory tools for the unveiling of greater light.

New Prophetic Light

Is her appeal to get back digging into Uriah Smith’s Daniel and Revelation? She did say in 1899 while still in Australia: “The interest in Daniel and the Revelation is to continue as long as probationary time shall last. God used the author of this book as a channel through

which to communicate light to direct minds to the truth. Shall we not appreciate this light, which points us to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, our King?"¹³

Was that the major issue? Her concern, if we carefully study the quotations on new truth and light, invite us to look directly at the Bible. Smith's work would remain a reference book, but she had already noted (after arriving in Australia): "The rebuke of the Lord will be upon those who would be guardians of the doctrine, who would bar the way that greater light shall not come to the people. A great work is to be done, and God sees that *our leading men have need of greater light, that they may unite with the messengers whom he shall send harmoniously to accomplish the work that he designs they should.*"¹⁴

That is profound! There will be greater understanding of truth of *doctrine*. That will not come through the leading men. Special messengers will be chosen of God to unfold those truths. Then a shocker: "***There is no excuse for any one in taking the position that there is no more truth to be revealed, and that all our expositions of Scripture are without an error.*** The fact that certain doctrines have been held as truth for many years by our people, is not a proof that our ideas are infallible. [New views of Biblical truth may come that correct error.] Age will not make error into truth, and truth can afford to be fair. No true doctrine will lose anything by close investigation. We are living in perilous times, and it does not become us to accept everything claimed to be truth without examining it thoroughly; neither can we afford to reject anything that bears the fruits of the Spirit of God; but we should be teachable, meek and lowly of heart. There are those who oppose everything that is not in accordance with their own ideas, and by so doing they endanger their eternal interest as verily as did the Jewish nation in their rejection of Christ."¹⁵

If there is:

1. New light and new truth to unfold
2. Far more than Uriah Smith, new understanding of Biblical prophecy is to unfold.
3. These issues go beyond the fresh and beautiful Righteousness by Faith matters that were introduced in 1888 to this denomination.
4. With such profound counsel, God must have given E. G. White more specific information regarding end-time prophecy that we could evaluate! And He did.

"Why, then, this widespread ignorance concerning an important part of Holy Writ? [Daniel and Revelation – specifically, the Bible] Why this general reluctance to investigate its teachings? It is the result of a studied effort of the prince of darkness to conceal from men that which reveals his deceptions."¹⁶

This was so fundamental to her deepening burden that in 1903 she warned:

"*The solemn messages* that have been given in their order in the Revelation ***are to occupy the first place*** in the minds of God's people. ***Nothing*** else is to be allowed to engross our attention."¹⁷ Something profound must be yet discovered. It is a priority.

In the 1960's a young man in Central California who had not finished high school by the name of Carl (Hill) began to study the Bible like few others.

- He was given a Sabbath School class.
- One of its members was a physician.
- He encouraged Carl to finish high school – which he did.
- Then the physician offered to pay his college tuition to Pacific Union College.
- He enrolled, got a job to cover his room and board.
- Then he looked at curriculum – said, “No, I’m not wasting my time with Shakespeare and topics unrelated to Scriptural truth.” He quit.

You see, sometimes this young man would take 2-3 days just to study out one verse.

- He moved to Phoenix and started to attend the Camelback church.
- The pastor there had heard of Carl and had him take a Sabbath School class.

Then the pastor asked him to present an end-time application on Revelation for prayer meeting.

- They had previously 20-30 attend those meetings. Now it would be different
- The first night 100 people came.
- That remained his average for months.
- A revival of Godliness transformed that church.

Then Carl was taken seriously ill. He died shortly thereafter.

“The book of Revelation opens with an injunction to us to understand the instruction that it contains. “Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy,” God declares, “and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.” When we as a people understand what this book means to us, there will be seen among us a great revival. ***We do not understand fully the lessons that it teaches***, notwithstanding the injunction given us to search and study it.”¹⁸

Carl had a revival because with Daniel and Revelation are some of the most exciting and timely heart changing truths within the Bible. God longs for the same spirit to grip the church.

Deepening Insights

“The things revealed to Daniel were afterward complemented by the Revelation made to John on the Isle of Patmos. These two books should be carefully studied. Twice Daniel inquired, How long shall it be to the end of time? [Daniel 12]” – *Testimonies to Ministers*, pp. 114-115 (1896). Jesus responded to Daniel’s questions: “Go thy way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end” (Daniel 12:9).

- End of time – What period does she refer to? In her first application when the first angel’s message was proclaimed.
- It then involved messages that carry one forward to the final events of earth’s history. She later looks into the future.

What was sealed and then unsealed?

“The book that was sealed was not the book of Revelation, but that **portion** of the prophecy of Daniel which related to the last days. The Scripture says, ‘But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased’ (Dan. 12:4). When the book was opened, the proclamation was made, ‘Time shall be no longer.’ (See Revelation 10:6.) The book of Daniel is now unsealed, and the revelation made by Christ to John is to come [future] to all the inhabitants of the earth. By the increase of knowledge a people is to be prepared [the preparation of God’s people is to come through deepening knowledge of Daniel and Revelation] to stand in the latter days.”¹⁹ [That includes the ram, he-goat and little horn (8:17, 19) and the time prophecies of his last chapter (12:4, 7, 9, 13).

There is a minor application to the 1844 era, but the greater meaning is for the very end of time: “Daniel stood in his lot to bear his testimony which was sealed until the time of the end, when the first angel’s message should be proclaimed to our world. These matters are of infinite importance in these last days.”²⁰

She now merged a forward-looking understanding: “Study Revelation in connection with Daniel, for history will be repeated.”²¹

She affirms a reapplication of this prophecy related to the Revelation 14 angels.

“Daniel shall stand [future tense] in his lot at the end of the days. John sees the little book unsealed. **Then Daniel’s prophecies** have their proper place in the first, second, and third angels’ messages **to be given** [future tense] to the world.”²²

Lest there be a misunderstanding of this reapplication, she noted in 1906: “A message will soon be given [future] by God’s appointment that will swell into a loud cry. Then Daniel will stand in his lot, to give his testimony.”²³

What is Daniel’s testimony?

- The sealed portion of Daniel is very specific.
- It’s the place Jesus said we should look for the “rest of the story” (Matthew 24:15).
- It is where the vision talks about the “abomination that leads to desolation.”
- It is a portion of Daniel 8–12.

It is interesting that in those chapters Jesus personally appeared before Daniel three times. Each of those times:

- He gave a timing message
 - 2300 evening and mornings (Daniel 8)
 - Time of the latter rain (Daniel 10)
 - Daniel 12 time periods (Daniel 12)

- The era E. G. White progressively focused on (which relates to us) was the last generation.

“The **prophetic periods** of Daniel, extending to the **very eve of the great consummation**, throw a flood of light upon events **then to transpire**. The book of Revelation is also replete with warning and instruction for the last generation. The beloved John, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, portrays the fearful and thrilling scenes connected with the close of earth’s history, and presents the duties and dangers of God’s people. None need remain in ignorance, none need be unprepared for the coming of the day of God.”²⁴

What prophetic periods extend to the eve of Jesus’ second coming, that are part of the loud cry and the three angels’ messages? The three time prophecies of Daniel 12. Jesus said so in Matthew 24:15-30.

Way back in Daniel 8:17 and 19, Gabriel (we assume it was he) told Daniel that the ram, he-goat and little horn messages were to be for the time of the end – at the “appointed time” (*moed*). In Daniel 12 Jesus noted the time times and half, using the word *moed*, would end persecution and bring deliverance to God’s people. He is making it clear that that is the appointed time. If that is the case, and Jesus said it was, then the little horn message of Daniel 8, associated with the ram and he-goat, must have an end-time (second rise of the papacy) application. And it does!

Challenging Quotations

In light of the foregoing review of E. G. White’s positions, there are a few “favorite quotations” that people like to use *against* an end-time application of Daniel.

Why is this mentioned in such a forum such as this?

- Prejudice
- We find certain quotations from the “red books” (expositor White) that are often nothing more than an excuse to not evaluate the Biblical issues in Daniel and Revelation.
- Here is the first message: “Our position has been one of waiting and watching, with no time-proclamation to intervene between the close of the prophetic periods in 1844 and the time of our Lord’s coming.”
- This, taken out of its context, can be made to say varied things.
- The words just preceding this quote are:

“The world placed all time-proclamation on the same level and called it a delusion, fanaticism and heresy. **Ever since 1844** I have borne my testimony that we were now in a period of time in which we are to take heed to ourselves lest our hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and **so that day come** upon us unawares.”

1. The first second coming time proclamation was 1844 and the world called it a delusion, fanaticism, and heresy.
2. Now we are to be careful, since 1844, to be fully prepared. Why?
3. So that day won't come upon us unaware.
4. Then she counseled there would be no time proclamation between 1844 and the second coming ***when Jesus will come.***
5. Implication: We don't know the day and hour.
6. The time periods of Daniel do not predict a date or "time" of the second coming.
7. They only relate to events within a period of time, which urgently shows it is near.

Some say the old landmarks are being removed!

- What landmarks?
- In the 1888 materials (E. G. White), p. 518, listed them:
 1. Cleansing of sanctuary
 2. Three angels' messages
 3. Ten commandments and faith of Jesus
 4. Heavenly temple with ark and ten commandments
 5. Sabbath
 6. Immortality of the soul

Then she said: "I can think of no other." The end-time application of the prophecy has nothing to do with the landmarks.

Another challenging quotation: "This time, which the angel declares with a solemn oath, is not the end of this world's history, neither of probationary time, but of prophetic time, which should precede the advent of our Lord. That is, the people will not have another message upon definite time. After this period of time, reaching from 1842 to 1844, there can be no definite tracing of the prophetic time. The longest reckoning reaches to the autumn of 1844."²⁵

- There will be no longer any prophecy that we can look forward to state a definite time that an event will occur.
- There will no longer be any time prediction for His coming.
- There will no longer be any use of prophetic time – a day for a year.

Daniel's prophecies mark timing blocks (periods) that incorporate many key events. Those periods go right up to the eve of the second coming – Daniel says when the deliverance of God's people occurs.

"The light that Daniel received direct from God was given especially for these last days. The visions he saw by the banks of the Ulai and the Hiddekel, the great rivers of Shinar, are now in process of fulfillment, and all the events foretold will soon have come to pass [future] (Letter 57, 1896)."²⁶

“Let us read and study the twelfth chapter of Daniel. It is a warning that we shall all need to understand before the time of the end.”²⁷

Prophetic truths yet unseen lie ready to be discovered. The richest mines of gold are in Daniel and Revelation. Timing issues are to be seen and understood. They are to take priority within our Biblical studies. A clear and precise grasp of future application of prophecy is to be defined.

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