

Did Someone Change EGW's Writings?

(By Jeannie McReynolds)

Recently I have been hearing, promoted also by a dear friend of mine, a theory which has concerned me a great deal. It is the idea that, during the lifetime of the prophet, people were making changes in the writings of Ellen G. White. It is said that others, including her son, Willie, were making significant changes in the wording of her later books. For this reason they claim that the later books are not to be trusted.

Now I have no problem with the early books. But a theory which weakens people's faith in even part of the books written by Ellen White, as this one does in the later ones, deserves to be examined very carefully. This is especially true when we are specifically told that, at the end time, Satan would work through different means to undermine faith in the Spirit of Prophecy. *"Satan is . . . constantly pressing in the spurious--to lead away from the truth. The very last deception of Satan will be to make of none effect the testimony of the Spirit of God. 'Where there is no vision, the people perish.' (Prov. 29:18.) Satan will work ingeniously, in different ways and through different agencies, to unsettle the confidence of God's remnant people in the true testimony."* Letter 12, 1890.

This theory is especially credible to conscientious, conservative Adventists, because they often have come to distrust the leadership of the denomination. They have seen so many apostasies in high places that it is easy for them to believe that some leaders may have even been capable of changing Ellen White's writings. So, believing that they are protecting the Spirit of Prophecy, and finding the "pure truth," many are accepting this teaching. But is it true? Or is it another trap of Satan, to weaken our faith in the Spirit of Prophecy?

My first question was, *"Did she say that this is true?"* I was given reports of what she supposedly said to someone who supposedly said it to someone else. But in spite of requesting it again and again, no one has been able to produce anything from her pen saying that any unauthorized changes were being made, other than a few by Fannie Bolton, which we will detail later.

To my mind, this is very significant. She certainly had no problem with speaking out, even in a most forceful manner, to the top men of the organization. She reproved the General Conference presidents again and again. *Was she too shy or frightened to protest her own writings being adulterated?*

Anyone who thinks that simply does not know Ellen White! Our leaders feared her, and with good reason. On one occasion the angel told her to go to the California Conference Constituency meeting. Her helpers were surprised when she asked to be taken there. When she arrived, she walked up to the platform and asked to speak. No one had expected her that day. The startled officer in charge allowed her to speak. She told the assembled conference leaders and delegates that the conference president needed to be replaced. This was promptly done. She had a lot of influence with the people.

Or did she not know that others were changing her writings? Did she never read what they printed? *Did the God, who revealed so many secrets to her, fail to reveal to her that others were undermining her writings?*

What if she *did* know, but her protests were in vain, and they wouldn't stop? What would she have done? She would have done just what she *did* do in 1888 when the leaders opposed her. They would not accept the 1888 message, which she said that God had sent to the people. So she *took it to the people herself!*

She spoke before the people very frequently. It would have been a simple matter to stand before those congregations and say, "*Someone is changing my writings! The books that are printed are not the same as what I have written! This must stop!*" But she never, ever said that. The leaders were afraid of her. They knew the power she had with the people. There was plenty she could have done if they had been changing her writings in ways that she did not approve!

She could have taken her books to other publishing houses if she distrusted the men at the top. In the mid 1890's she was in such conflict with the leaders that they threatened not to publish her new book, *Steps to Christ*. That didn't bother her for a minute. She just took it to a non-Adventist publishing house and had it printed there!

Why do we think that we have an accurate Bible today? We have no original documents, only copies of copies. *But we believe that the God who inspired the Bible has been able to preserve it for us for the last two thousand years without any change of serious significance.*

If that is the case, and the *Spirit of Prophecy* is the inspired word of God also, *has He been unable to preserve it for us for even one hundred fifty years?*

There is not one of the charges that are leveled against the Spirit of Prophecy that cannot be leveled also against the Bible. In fact, when Walter Rea spoke before a large congregation of Adventists in the Walla Walla area, after completing his message of attack against the Spirit of Prophecy, he started to sit down. Then he went back to the microphone and said, "Now don't you do to the Bible what I have just done to Ellen White's writings!" He was quite aware that every charge he had leveled against the Spirit of Prophecy could also be made convincingly against the Bible.

Why do God's people listen to those who are trying to tear down their faith in the Word of God? Ellen White said:

"I saw that God had especially guarded the Bible, yet learned men, when the copies were few, had changed the words in some instances, thinking that they were making it more plain, when they were mystifying that which was plain, in causing it to lean to their established. Views, governed by tradition. But I saw that the word of God, as a whole, is a perfect chain, one portion of scripture explaining another. True seekers for truth need not err for not only is the word of God plain and simple in declaring the way to life, but the Holy Spirit is given to guide in understanding the way of life revealed in his Word." 1SG 117.

So have a few of the words of scripture been changed by men? Yes, God's prophet says that it is so. Has this destroyed the Bible so that it is no longer God's word, and our light to light our way to heaven? Not at all. Does this give us license to pick and choose which part of the Bible we are going to believe? No!

To say that God has not protected His Word is to make a serious charge against Him. And if that were true, what hope have we of eternal life? Are we to say that God sent His Son to die in order to save us, then allowed men to so distort His words that we cannot hear and understand the message? God would never do that. We can trust Him. And if the Spirit of Prophecy is God's Word to us also, then in the same way, we must trust Him to keep it for us.

If we are to make it safely to the kingdom of heaven, we had better rely on every word of the Bible *and* the Spirit of Prophecy. "Then I saw that God knew that Satan would try every art to destroy man therefore He had caused his Word to be written out, and had made his designs to man so plain that the weakest need not err. Then, after he had given his Word to man, he had carefully preserved it, so that Satan and his angels, through any agent or representative, could not destroy it." 1SG 116.

So have the few changes that have been made "destroyed" God's word, so that we cannot trust in it? Never. God has made sure that no changes have been made that prevent His Word from being our refuge and guide. We must trust Him.

I also have to ask, if the leaders were making all those changes, then why didn't they get rid of the strong reproofs that were directed against them? Some of them must have hated those reproofs! Wouldn't they have changed or eliminated them if they had dared?

To this day many of the leaders are so unhappy about the reproofs in the Testimonies that they have prevented them from being translated into other languages. A friend of mine spoke with a man who had accepted \$10,000 from the General Conference to NOT translate the Testimonies! If you doubt my word, I will give you the name and number of the friend so you can call him yourself!

And why didn't they add words to tell the people to trust and obey the leaders? Wouldn't they have liked the Spirit of Prophecy to say that to the people? Why didn't they just insert a few statements like that?

If men changed the Spirit of Prophecy, they would only have done it to change the meaning. They would certainly have brought in false doctrine. Yet if every word had been changed that they claim was changed, where is all the false doctrine that was brought in? Does the Spirit of Prophecy now teach dangerous error? If so, where is it?

This is illustrated by the fact that they have added footnotes and headings, etc.. Have you noticed that the footnotes and headings sometime contradict the text? If men add things, you can tell! If they had dared to change the text, you would also be able to tell. There would be contradictions.

I found that one thing that was causing confusion was a lack of knowledge about how inspiration works. *If God gives the prophet the exact words that he/she is to write or speak, then not even the prophet has the right to change a word.*

But if God gives the prophet the idea to be expressed, and the prophet states that idea in his/her own words, then the prophet would have the right to change or allow others to change, the words in order to express the idea more perfectly.

Which is it? Does the prophet tell us? Does the Bible tell us? Was the Bible inspired in the same way as the Spirit of Prophecy?

I decided to study some of the issues that had been raised by searching the CD-rom for statements bearing on this subject. Here are the results of my search:

How the Writings were Done:

"Although I am as dependent upon the Spirit of the Lord in writing my views as I am in receiving them, yet the words I employ in describing what I have seen are my own, unless they be those spoken to me by an angel, which I always enclose in marks of quotation." Review and Herald, Oct. 8, 1867.

About the writing of *Great Controversy*, she said:

"As the Spirit of God has opened to my mind the great truths of his Word, and the scenes of the past and the future, I have been bidden to make known to others what has thus been revealed, --to trace the history of the controversy in past ages, and especially to so present it as to shed a light on the fast-approaching struggle of the future. In pursuance of this purpose, I have endeavored to select and group together events in the history of the church in such a manner as to trace the unfolding of the great testing truths that at different periods have been given to the world, that have excited the wrath of Satan, and the enmity of a world-loving church, and that have been maintained by the witness of those who 'loved not their lives unto the death.' . . .

"The great events which have marked the progress of reform in past ages, are matters of history, well known and universally acknowledged by the Protestant world they are facts which none can gainsay. This history I have presented briefly, in accordance with the scope of the book, and the brevity which must necessarily be observed, the facts having been condensed into as little space as seemed consistent with a proper understanding of their application. In some cases where a historian has so grouped together events as to afford, in brief, a comprehensive view of the subject, or has summarized details in a convenient manner, his words have been quoted but except in a few instances no specific credit has been given, since they are not quoted for the purpose of citing that writer as authority, but because his statement affords a ready and forcible presentation of the subject. In narrating the experience and views of those carrying forward the work of reform in our own time, similar use has occasionally been made of their published works."

GC, The Author's Preface, pp. g-h.

"After I come out of vision I do not at once remember all that I have seen, and the matter is not so clear before me until I write, then the scene rises before me as was presented in vision, and I can write with freedom. Sometimes the things which I have seen are hid from me after I come out of vision, and I cannot call them to mind until I am brought before a company where the vision applies, then the things which I have seen come to my mind with force.

"I am just as dependent upon the Spirit of the Lord in relating or writing the vision as in having the vision. It is impossible for me to call up things which have been shown me unless the Lord brings them before me at the time that He is pleased to have me relate or write them. *Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 2, pp. 292, 293.

"I am exceedingly anxious to use words that will not give anyone a chance to sustain erroneous sentiments. I must use words that will not be misconstrued and made to mean the opposite of that which they were designed to mean".--Manuscript 126, 1905.

When Ellen White wrote *Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 2, it was an account of her own experiences. She wrote about how she had done this:

"In preparing the following pages, I have labored under great disadvantages, as *I have had to depend in many instances on memory*, having kept no journal till within a few years. In several instances I have sent the manuscripts to friends who were present when the circumstances related occurred, for their examination before they were put in print. I have taken great care, and have spent much time, in endeavoring to state the simple facts as correctly as possible.

"I have, however, been much assisted in arriving at dates by the many letters which I wrote".--Preface to *Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 2.

In the appendix to the first 400 copies, she wrote:

"A special request is made that if any find incorrect statements in this book they will immediately inform me. The edition will be completed about the first of October therefore send before that time."

The Bible was written in the same way:

"It is not the words of the Bible that are inspired, but the men that were inspired. Inspiration acts, not on the man's words or his expressions, but on the man himself, who, under the influence of the Holy Ghost, is imbued with thoughts. But the words receive the impress of the individual mind. The divine mind is diffused. The divine mind and will is combined with the human mind and will thus the utterances of the man are the Word of God." Manuscript 24, 1886 (I SM 21)

If we look at the Bible carefully, it is obvious that this is so. Each different writer speaks in his own way, and his own personality shows in the writings. Yet the different writers present a perfect and unified whole because it is the same Spirit that inspired them all.

Ellen White Made and Authorized Changes:

Ellen White did not have much formal education. Especially at first her English was not very polished, and she needed others to correct the grammar on her writings. At the beginning this work was done by James White, and later by others. Later in life she educated herself so that she continually improved. But there were always some corrections to be made. These she authorized and approved. In the early years she wrote:

"This morning I take into candid consideration my writings. My husband is too feeble to help me prepare them for the printer, therefore I shall do no more with them at present. *I am not a scholar. I cannot prepare my own writings for the press.* Until I can do this I shall write no more. It is not my duty to tax others with my manuscript."--Manuscript 3, 1873. (Diary Jan. 10, 1873.)

Later she explained:

"While my husband lived, he acted as a helper and counselor in the sending out of the messages that were given to me. We traveled extensively. Sometimes light would be given to me in the night season, sometimes in the daytime before large congregations. *The instruction I received in vision was faithfully written out by me, as I had time and strength for the work. Afterward we examined the matter together, my husband correcting grammatical errors and eliminating needless repetition. Then it was carefully copied for the persons addressed, or for the printer.*

"As the work grew, others assisted me in the preparation of matter for publication. After my husband's death, faithful helpers joined me, who labored untiringly in the work of copying the testimonies and preparing articles for publication.

"But the reports that are circulated, that any of my helpers are permitted to add matter or change the meaning of the messages I write out, are not true."-- Letter 225, 1906, 3SM 89.

When she was preparing the Testimonies, she wrote:

"During the last nine years, from 1855 to 1864, I have written ten small pamphlets, entitled, Testimony for the Church, which have been published and circulated among Seventh-day Adventists. *The first edition of most of these pamphlets being exhausted, and there being an increasing demand for them, it has been thought best to reprint them, as given in the following pages, omitting local and personal matters, and giving those portions only which are of practical and general interest and importance. Most of Testimony No. 4 may be found in the second volume of Spiritual Gifts, hence, it is omitted in this volume.*" 3 SM 95.

She said that God had instructed her to publish papers and books in the original, rough form, and then polish them later:

"I wish to state some matters, which you can do what you please with. These statements you have heard me make before--that I was shown years ago that we should not delay publishing the important light given me because I could not prepare the matter perfectly. My husband was at times very sick, unable to give me the help that I should have had and that he could have given me had he been in health. On this account I delayed putting before the people that which has been given me in vision.

"But I was shown that I should present before the people in the best manner possible the light received then as I received greater light, and as I used the talent God had given me, I should have increased ability to use in writing and in speaking. I was to improve everything, as far as possible bringing it to perfection, that it might be accepted by intelligent minds." 3 SM 96.

"As far as possible every defect should be removed from all our publications. As the truth should unfold and become widespread, every care should be exercised to perfect the works published." 3 SM 97.

When the *Testimonies*, volumes 1-4 were to be printed, Ellen White wanted the grammar corrected and improved. At her urging, a committee was set up to do this in November of 1883. The resolution to set up this committee was printed in the *Review and Herald* for Nov. 27, 1883.

Those who are complaining about the changes made often quote this resolution. They say, "See, it says right here that they were going to make changes." But if there had been any secret about what they were doing, they would hardly have printed it publicly in the *Review*. And the following statement, from a letter to Uriah Smith, makes it very clear that Ellen White was approving of what they did:

"Now, Brother Smith, I have been making a careful, critical examination of the work that has been done on the *Testimonies*, and I see a few things that I think should be corrected in the matter brought before you and others at the General Conference [November, 1883]. But as I examine the matter more carefully I see less and less that is objectionable. Where the language used is not the best, I want it made correct and grammatical, as I believe it should be in every case where it can be without destroying the sense. This work is delayed, which does not please me. . . .

"My mind has been exercised upon the question of the *Testimonies* that have been revised. We have looked them over more critically. I cannot see the matter as my brethren see it. I think the changes will improve the book. If our enemies handle it, let them do so. [This remark is because she was aware that others would criticize the fact that changes had been made.]

"I think that anything that shall go forth will be criticized, twisted, turned, and boggled, but we are to go forward with a clear conscience, doing what we can and leaving the result with God. We must not be long in delaying the work.

"Now, my brethren, what do you propose to do? I do not want this work dragging along any longer. I want something done, and done now."--Letter 11, 1884. (Written from Healdsburg, California, Feb. 19, 1884.)

She considered it not only her right, but also her duty, to leave out some portions of the testimonies she had written to individuals, when these were presented to the church. Many of these individuals were still living, and she left out things that would identify the person. God instructed her that much of what she had written to certain individuals applied to many in the church, and would be a benefit to all. But these things were not to be made public in a way to injure the individuals who had been addressed. When she was putting together the material for *Testimonies* Vol. 6, she wrote:

"I must select the most important matters for the Testimony (vol. 6) and then look over everything prepared for it, and be my own critic for I would not be willing to have some things which are all truth to be published because I fear that some would take advantage of them to hurt others.

"After the matter for the Testimony is prepared, every article must be read by me. I have to read them myself for the sound of the voice in reading or singing is almost unendurable to me.

"I try to bring out general principles, and *if I see a sentence which I fear would give someone excuse to injure someone else, I feel at perfect liberty to keep back the sentence, even though it is all perfectly true.*"--Letter 32, 1901.

"We have decided to have the printers [at the Review and Herald office in Battle Creek] go on my book and not transport these books across the plains again. Part of the book is here already printed. We shall not have them stereotyped, [*which would make changes impossible*] because *we shall not wait to have matters of my book so very, very exact, but get out this first edition and get it in market. Then we can take time to get out a more perfect edition on Pacific Coast and have [it] stereotyped. [And, of course, 'a more perfect edition' would be changed somewhat from the first.]* Then your father's and my life will be written and printed in the Pacific Printing Office. But we have all used our best judgment and think we had better remain here [Battle Creek] till December and complete this edition."--Letter 45, 1876.

After the manuscripts were prepared, she read them over:

"I read over all that is copied, to see that everything is as it should be. I read all the book manuscript before it is sent to the printer. So you can see that my time must be fully occupied. Besides writing, I am called upon to speak to the different churches and to attend important meetings. I could not do this work unless the Lord helped me."--Letter 133, 1902.

So while the early books are precious, and are fully the word of God, yet if we are to prefer any of them above the others, it should be the later books. For many, many years God continued to give more and more light to Ellen White. She added this light into her later books, so that they contain a fuller revelation. The grammatical and spelling errors have been removed, and they have been perfected. But I also find details in the earlier books that were omitted in the later, so they are all of great value. None should be downgraded or omitted.

Her Helpers: Marian Davis

In her later years, she employed helpers that assisted in getting out her books. One of the most important of these was Marian Davis. She wrote this about her work:

"She does her work in this way: She takes my articles which are published in the papers, and pastes them in blank books. She also has a copy of all the letters I write. In preparing a chapter for a book, Marian remembers that I have written something on that special point, which may make the matter more forcible. She begins to search for this, and if when she finds it, she sees that it will make the chapter more clear, she adds it.

"The books are not Marian's productions, but my own, gathered from all my writings. Marian has a large field from which to draw, and her ability to arrange the matter is of great value to me. It saves my poring over a mass of matter, which I have no time to do.

"So you understand that Marian is a most valuable help to me in bringing out my books."--Letter 61a, 1900. 3SM 91-92.

Marian sometimes made suggestions which Ellen White appreciated:

"Tell her [Marian Davis] I have just one minute ago read the letters in which she has specified the improvements to be made in articles for Volume 1 [Patriarchs and Prophets]. I thank her. Tell her that she has a point about Zedekiah's having his eyes put out. That needs to be more carefully worded--also the rock, when the water flowed--something in reference to this. I think I can make the articles specified more full."--Letter 38, 1885.

Rather than making free with Ellen White's writings, Marian was sometimes too picky about asking about every detail. Ellen White wrote to her daughter-in-law:

"Mary, Willie is in meeting early and late, devising, planning for the doing of better and more efficient work in the cause of God. We see him only at the table. Marian will go to him for some little matters that it seems she could settle for herself. She is nervous and hurried and he so worn he has to just shut his teeth together and hold his nerves as best he can. I have had a talk with her and told her she must settle many things herself that she has been bringing Willie. Her mind is on every point and the connections, and his mind has been plowing through a variety of difficult subjects until his brain reels and then his mind is in no way prepared to take up these little minutia. She must just carry some of these things that belong to her part of the work, and not bring them before him nor worry his mind with them. Sometimes I think she will kill us both, all unnecessarily, with her little things she can just as well settle herself as to bring them before us. Every little change of a word she wants us to see. I am about tired of this business." Letter 64a, 1889, p. 1.

Manuscript Release No. 728, p.22. (About the writing of *Desire of Ages*)

"I feel very thankful for the help of Sister Marian Davis in getting out my books. She gathers materials from my diaries, from my letters, and from the articles published in the papers. I greatly prize her faithful service. She has been with me for twenty-five years, and has constantly been gaining increasing ability for the work of classifying and grouping my writings".--Letter 9, 1903. 3 SM 93.

Then Marian became very ill. Ellen White wrote:

"I am leaving tomorrow for Battle Creek. Yet my soul is drawn to the dying girl who has served me for the last twenty-five years. We have stood side by side in the work, and in perfect harmony in that work. And when she would be gathering up the precious jots and tittles that had come in papers and books and present it to me, 'Now,' she would say, 'there is something wanted [needed]. I cannot supply it.' I would look it over, and in one moment I could trace the line right out." 3 SM 93.

"I would have been very glad, could I have felt free to remain another week in Battle Creek. I would have done this, but Marian's sickness called me home. Her case was a heavy weight on my mind. We received letters every day telling us of her increasing weakness. The thought that I must part with her was a great trial to me. She had been with me for twenty-five years, and we blended nicely in our work. I knew that if she should die, I could not find another to supply her place. *Our ideas in regard to the work were one*, and we often talked together. Every word that I spoke to make a point clearer, she would write out at once." 9MR 271.

Marian, and a number of others, were faithful helpers to Ellen White, and helped her do the work on her manuscripts. But she said of them:

"My copyists you have seen. They do not change my language. It stands as I write it." Letter 61A, 1900.

"But my writings have not stopped. They go out as I have written them. No words of my copyists are put in the place of my own words. This is a testimony that cannot be contraverted." Manuscript Release 926, p 78.

Ellen White says that this cannot be controverted! But many today are contradicting her statements.

But there was one of her helpers who did make trouble, and did try to change her language.

Fannie Bolton: the Helper Who Did Make Changes

The story of Fannie Bolton is an interesting one. She was already a writer when she was employed by Ellen White as a helper. She proved to be a very difficult case. *She did make some changes in the manuscripts. God showed Ellen White in vision what was happening. If God did this in the case of Fannie Bolton, why would He not have done the same thing if anyone else was making changes which were improper?*

In Manuscript Release 926, she wrote:

"Again I was listening (in vision) to earnest talk between herself and Marian, and it was of that character that gave me great pain of heart. A voice spoke to me, 'Beware and do not place your dependence upon Fannie to prepare articles or to make books. She cuts out words that should appear, and places her own ideas and words in their stead, and because she has done this she has become deceived, deluded, and is deceiving and deluding others. She is your Adversary. Additions and subtractions are made that do not represent your simplicity. She is not true to her duty, yet flatters herself that she is doing a very important work.'

"I am now brought where I lay down my pen. I cannot write even on the Life of Christ, until I understand whether my writings are to come forth with Fannie's ideas and language, or with Marian's ideas and fixing up and the productions are claimed to be Marian's and Fannie's. [*The only time Ellen White had any trouble with Marian was when Fannie was making problems. Fannie made Marian discontented by complaining that they were not getting enough credit for their work. As soon as Fannie was gone, Marian was just fine.*] Let this impression be made on the minds of our ministers, and of what value or force will the testimonies be to them. [*Here she refers to the impression that Fannie was changing the writings.*] I have called a halt and here I stand until some things are decided. I request Elder Daniells, Elder Rousseau and Willie C. White come to help me just as soon as you can adjust your business and let us counsel together, and see some way to adjust these matters. I have plainly but kindly told Fannie, I have no confidence in her as far as her reformation within the last three or four weeks is concerned. Her ardent love for praise and ambition was very similar to that presented to me in regard to the workings of Satan in the heavenly courts to bring disaffection among the angels, and she would repeat the same course she had pursued, and I could not trust her and depend on her. I beg you will come to my help just as soon as possible, but I am not willing Elder Olsen should return to America before these matters have a most thorough, careful investigation. I do not think I can in the future have any copy placed in the hands of Fannie. I would come at once to you but do not think that that would be wisdom." p. 20.

"When I take the position which I am sorry, very sorry, to take, that I cannot consistently continue the connection with Fannie by entrusting her with my writings as I have done, some will misjudge me because they think she has sincerely repented but the fact that she has not had respect for the writings, will endanger the work I am called of the Lord to do. The fact that her mind could be tampered with so often again and again by the enemy, that she could be led to regard the writings as she has regarded them, will be a temptations to place them at a disadvantage. This past experience has given a mold to the thoughts, and has fashioned the mind and judgment. I can see no safety in trusting the matter the Lord shall give me in the hands of one of such unstable, unreliable developments of character that a balance wheel is needed constantly, else she will be running off on a side track where Satan may choose to lead the way. . . . The work which she has handled, she does not always appreciate as necessary or essential, and if she dared, would mold them all over." pp. 26-27.

About a visit that Fannie made to the Prescotts, Ellen White wrote:

"She had underscored some words in a book, 'Christian Education,' 'beautiful words,' she called them, and said that she had put in those words, they were hers. If this were the truth, I ask, who told her to put in her words in my writings? She has, if her own statement is correct, been unfaithful to me."

"Sister Prescott however says that, in the providence of God that very article came to them (Brother and Sister Prescott) uncopied and in my own handwriting, and that these very words were in that letter. So Fannie's statement regarding these words is proved to be untrue.

"She becomes at times as verily possessed by demons as were human beings in the days of Christ. And when these paroxysms are upon her, many think she is inspired of God. She is fluent, her words come thick and fast, and she is under the control of demons. Then she claims that she has done the very things in my service I have told her in no case to do, that she has substituted her words for my words. This is bad enough. But when she takes the position that she has made my books, my articles and is responsible for the beautiful language, it is evident that Satan can through her do me any amount of harm. She can do more to implant doubts and sow seeds of evil than any person I know. She is a dangerous helper to me. She shall never have a chance again of mingling Fannie Bolton's wonderful talent with my work." MR 926, pp. 43-44.

"She appears in great distress and grief, weeping. Sister Prescott, while in Cooranbong, asked her what was the matter. She held back apparently reluctant to speak, and finally she did just exactly that which she calculated to do--make her statement and complained of the little attention 'poor little Marian' and she received 'for all the talent they gave to Sister White's work.' These my workers were set down in a corner and hid. Well, Sister Prescott met her decidedly, also Brother Prescott. They told her this was all the work of the devil. They knew Sister White's work and writings before she touched it, and they received letters from her just as they came from her pen and that the very words she claimed to put into the writings were her own imagination. All the ideas, all the material, was furnished her to prepare into articles, etc., etc.

"When I called back all the writings placed in her hands, then she began to think I was in earnest. I told her decidedly she must have no connection with me and my work. She could represent me and my work as her originating, that this 'beautiful expression' was hers, and that was hers, and make of none effect the testimony of the Spirit of God." [I want you to notice that Ellen White said that when Fannie Bolton claimed to have changed the words she was "making of none effect the testimony of the Spirit of God. I wonder what she would say to those today who claim that others did the same thing?] MR 926, pp. 54-55.

"No, I am entirely separated from Fannie. Never while time lasts will another article of mine pass into her hands. She has sought to betray me, to turn traitor, to say things that leave untrue impressions upon minds. She has educated herself in theatrical methods, and can act out to life in apparent sincerity a thing that is false." Ibid. 60-61.

She wrote to Fannie:

"Your words regarding me and my writings are false, and I must say that you know them to be false. Nevertheless, those unacquainted with you take your words as being the words of one who knows. Because you have been acquainted with me, and connected with me, you can state what you please, and you think that your tracks are so covered that they will never be discovered. But my writings have not stopped. They go out as I have written them. No words of my copyists are put in the place of my own words. This is a testimony that cannot be controverted. My articles speak for themselves.

"When I heard that McCullagh had apostatized, I said, I am glad that all my connection with him has been of the tenderest character. I thought that there was nothing they could have to say against me. But both he and his wife bore the same report that Sister Malcolm bore to me. McCullagh stated in a large congregation that it was reported by one who knew that I picked up things written in books, and sent them out as something the Lord had shown me. At the Bible Institute in Cooranbong, McCullagh told me that you had made a statement to him and his wife similar to the statement made to Sr. Malcolm. Your sowing is producing its harvest. Many in Melbourne have been repeating the same things, things which you have

told them, and which they thought must be true." Ibid. 77-78. [*And these very things are still being passed around today.*]

"I have told you these things that you may understand about the matter. We had the affair between Fannie and Caldwell all through the Armadale camp meeting. I talked with them both separately, and told them that the Lord had a controversy with them both. They denied that there was anything like particular attachment between them. I knew better but the Lord helped me to work through the meeting. Just before the meeting closed, Fannie came to me, and said, 'O Sr. White, I have come to you as to a mother. I do love Bro. Caldwell with all my heart, and my heart is just broken. Three times has this cup of bliss been presented to me, and then been snatched away.' Then the girl said, 'I prayed that if it was right for us to get married, his wife might get a divorce from him, and it was not many weeks before she did get a divorce. Now don't you think the Lord heard my prayer?' I dared not talk with her for I had to speak that day before a large congregation. If Sr. Prescott is in Battle Creek, she will be able to tell you the particulars.

"Well, from that time I cut loose from Fannie, never, as I thought, to connect with her again. But a little while after this, Fannie was in Sydney, and wrote me another confession. I thought that I could not take her back, but the Spirit of the Lord rested upon me, and said, 'Give her another trial.' So I decided that I would see Fannie, and tell her that I would take her back. This I did, and she remained with me several weeks, but was not able to do any work and then she decided that she wanted to go home to her mother, and I told her that she might feel free to do so. And now after all the suffering and distress that I have passed through because of the actions of these two, and the downright lies they told, to have Fannie Bolton put these articles in the paper, exalting her poor, miserable, blind, poverty-stricken soul, Miss Ashbury is a little too large a mouthful for me to swallow. It tastes strong of the dish. If I can find them, I will send you copies of letters written to both Fannie and Caldwell....

"In the past she has expressed wonderful sorrow for her wicked course of action, but she does not stay penitent. She does not continue to be contrite in heart. She flashes forth, thinking she is inspired by God. While she was praying the Lord that if it was right for her to marry Caldwell, his wife might get a divorce from her husband, she told me that as she talked and gave Bible readings, the people turned pale to hear her talk, and she thought she was inspired by God. Her imagination is very strong, and she makes such exaggerated statements that her words are not trustworthy." Ibid. 80.

"You may reason with others on this line: Wherein do my articles in the papers now differ from what they were when Fannie was with me? Who is it that now puts in words to supply the deficiencies of my language, my deplorable ignorance? How was this done before Fannie Bolton had anything to do with my writings?

"Cannot people who have reason see this? If Fannie supplied my great deficiency, how is it that I can now send articles to the papers?

"What Fannie says in regard to this is all a sham. Does she not know it? Or does Satan work on her imagination in such a way that she thinks what she says is true?

"I tell you that there is not a semblance of truth in her statements. . . .

"This is the difference between the workers. As I have stated, Fannie has been strictly forbidden to change my words for her words. As spoken by the heavenly agencies, the words are severe in their simplicity and I try to put the thoughts into such simple language that a child can understand every word uttered. The words of someone else would not rightly represent me

"I have written thus fully in order that you may understand the matter. Fannie Bolton may claim that she has made my books, but she has not done so. This has been Marian's field, and her work is far in advance of any work Fannie has done for me.

"I have written this letter between half past twelve and four o'clock a.m. I must now leave it to write other letters. But I wish to ask, If Fannie is converted and is used by the Lord, why is not her vision clear in reference to her past representation of the work she has done for me? I think the first work the Holy Spirit would do for her would be to lead her to confess that by false statements she has

misrepresented me to others. The Lord would clear away the mist and fog from her mind, leading her to see the great injury she has done me by saying that she made over all my writings.

"When the Lord teaches her and reveals to her how she has unsettled and undermined the faith of many in the testimonies of the Spirit of God, as she has unsettled and undermined the faith of Brother Bartholf in the work the Lord has given me to do, by making the statement that she was directed to write a testimony to A. R. Henry, she will see where she is standing. The statement in regard to the testimony for A. R. Henry is an absolute falsehood.

"Those who receive such statements are without excuse. 'By their fruits ye shall know them.' My work has been in the field since 1845. Ever since then I have labored with pen and voice. Increased light has come to me as I have imparted the light given me. I have very much more light on the Old and New Testament Scriptures, which I shall present to our people if my way is not blocked by such influences as the influence exerted by Fannie Bolton. Such a work as hers calls for my pen and voice to contradict her statements, in order to save poor souls from being entirely swamped by her assertion that she has received the Holy Ghost. This is another phase of her desire to exalt herself as ordained by the Lord to bear a message to His people. The Lord did not send her, yet she ran. She will not honor the cause of God, but will mislead others.

"Some may ask, why was Sr. Bolton allowed to be so long connected with the work, if this desire for praise, this tendency to self-exaltation was manifested? At different times I labored with her faithfully, pointing out her danger, and endeavoring to help her to understand the character of the work, and the relations of the human agent to it. Many times she acknowledged the mistakes that her approbateness had led her to make, and confessed her weakness, and love of praise. She would declare that the lesson had now been thoroughly learned, and that thereafter she would guard against self-exaltation. And she was always anxious to retain her connection with the work, sometimes begging with tears not to be disconnected from it." Ibid. 93-95.

Letter 166, 1900, pp. 1,2. (To Bro. and Sr. Haskell, and Bro. G. A. Irwin, April 25, 1900.)

"Something is being sent to you in regard to Fannie Bolton. You need to say to all our people that she is not the Lord's messenger, and she should in no way be encouraged. She would mingle the theatrical with her spiritual actions, that would not elevate, but degrade the cause of God. She is a farce. I have several copies of letters in her own handwriting, confessions, which I cannot possibly get copied. They must not go out of my hands until they are copied. Caldwell took a testimony from her hands that related to them both, and burned it up, and then told her she need not worry any more about [it] she nor Sister White would ever see it again. Then he was pressed by me for the Testimony. Caldwell said he would bring it to me, and then said he could not find it and then when I told him I knew what he had done with it, he said he must have burned it with some of his letters he did not care to keep and then afterward he confessed his falsehoods, and said he burnt it designedly. Well, I have quite a large amount of letters concerning this matter between Fannie and me. If it needs to be all exposed before the people will be undeceived, I will send these letters after they are copied. But tell our people I do not want to expose Fannie, unless I am obliged to do this to save the cause of God from being corrupted."

The experience with Fannie Bolton is a sad one. Yet we can learn a lot from it. *We can learn that as soon as someone tried to change the writings, God warned Ellen White. She took action to stop them, and warned others about that person.* She also wrote it down, so we have the information. You can be sure that if others were trying to change her writings, similar things would have happened.

Her Son, Willie

I have been hearing people saying that Willie White tampered with his mother's writings. I decided to check out what she herself said to and about him in all her writings. I made a search on "Willie," which is what she called him. There were 835 references. I could not find a single reproof

directed at him, nor complaint about him. The same was not true of her older son, Edson. I have copied here a few of her references to Willie that seemed significant as to the character of his work with her.

Sands, Va., Sabbath, Nov. 8, 1890. "We have beautiful weather. Willie White spoke in the morning with great freedom and his discourse made a favorable impression on all who heard him. This is the very work the Lord would have him to do. His work will be more in this line, as he will necessarily have to accompany me from place to place as I journey among the people of God. *I have had neither of my sons to accompany me.* I have been alone with Sara McEnterfer as my companion. *It is time this order of things changed.* Willie is correspondent of foreign missions and *I need him, and he must be prepared to preach the gospel to the people wherever he goes.*" 2 MR 326.

On Oct. 23, 1907, Ellen White wrote the following letter to F.M. Wilcox.

"About a year after the death of my husband (1882), I was very feeble, and it was feared that I might live but a short time. At the Healdsburg campmeeting, I was taken into the tent where there was a large gathering of our people. I asked to be raised up from the lounge on which I was lying, and assisted to the speaker's platform, that I might say a few words of farewell to the people. As I tried to speak, the power of God came upon me, and thrilled me through and through. Many in the congregation observed that I was weak, and that my face and hands seemed bloodless but as I began to speaking they saw the color coming into my lips and face, and knew that a miracle was being wrought in my behalf. I stood before the people healed, and spoke with freedom.

"After this experience light was given me that the Lord had raised me up to bear testimony for Him in many countries, and that He would give me grace and strength for the work. *It was also shown me that my son, W.C. White, should be my helper and counselor, and that the Lord would place on him the spirit of wisdom and of a sound mind. I was shown that the Lord would guide him, and that he would not be led away, because he would recognize the leadings and guidance of the Holy Spirit.*

"The assurance was given me . . . 'The Lord will be your instructor . . . You will meet with deceptive influences they will come in many forms, in pantheism and other forms of infidelity but follow where I shall guide you, and you will be safe. *I will put My Spirit upon your son, and will strengthen him to do his work. He has the grace of humility. The Lord has selected him to act an important part in His work. For this purpose was he born.*'

"This word was given me in 1882, and since that time I have been assured that the grace of wisdom was given him. More recently, in a time of perplexity, *the Lord said: 'I have given you my servant, W.C. White, and I will give him judgment to be your helper. I will give him skill and understanding to manage wisely.'*" "The Writing and Sending out of the Testimonies to the Church."

Ellen White wrote about a vision she had in regard to her two sons:

"He [God] had chosen my sons to be my helpers. My son Willie especially was assigned the work of ministry with me to advise and counsel how to prepare the communications that were to come to the people.

"I will be his wisdom, I will be his judgment, and he shall work out in connection with his mother the important matter to come before the people. Select helpers must be given, for a great work was to be done. I will be your wisdom, I will be your judgment, for your son to carry out understandingly the matters I shall reveal to you that which is for the churches must be brought out distinctly in print that the churches may have it.

"I will appoint both your children that they shall strengthen your hands in sound judgment. *But your youngest son shall carry the work with you,* and I have appointed the eldest his work to do. They must be united firmly in harmony, and in no way fail or be discouraged. They are to aid one another to stand firmly, unitedly, in heart and mind. But the youngest will I endow with special wisdom to work intelligently for a special performance of this responsibility.

" Both will be your helpers, in perfect agreement, conducting different lines in missionary work, standing firmly, unitedly, for great battles are to be fought. Your sons are of different temperaments. Your youngest will be your dependence, but the eldest shall be my minister to open the Word to very many people and to organize the work in various lines.

" Temptations will come to the eldest that preference in judgment shall be given him above the youngest. But this cannot be. Both are to be guided by the light given their mother and stand in perfect harmony. Trials will come, but unitedly victories will be gained.

" There will be the character in the youngest that he will be counselor in large degree, and receive the words I shall give you and act upon them. Let no jealousy come in because of the position I have appointed the youngest. I have put My Spirit upon him. and if the eldest will respect the position given the youngest, both shall become strong to build up the work in different lines. The eldest must be standing as ready to be counseled by the youngest, for I have made him My counselor. And because I have given him from his birth special traits of character which the eldest has not, there is to be no contention, no strife, no division, but [they are to be] sanctified in the same work to bring about the desired end.'

"Much more was definitely explained in the words I may hereafter write, but I would not pen them now.

"The Lord said, 'I will prove them both, but both must stand distinct and separate from influences which will be brought to bear to break up the plans I have marked out. But the youngest is fitted for a work that will make him counselor, receiving the words from his mother. Both must carefully consider matters that I shall give, for there are times and places for the subjects to be taken up and certain times and certain places for the subjects to be left.

" The Lord will be your guide if you work obedient to all that I shall command you. This matter is not to be opened to your children, for both are to be proved. The time will come when you may have to speak all that I shall give you, but both sons are to be workmen and are to be at perfect agreement if they accomplish the work. They are to [be] faithful in performing [it]. They are to stand distinct and not bound up with men, to be influenced by them. I am your Counselor and theirs. 21 MR 141-142."

Much criticism of Willie White came about because of the 1888 conflict. He stood with his mother and Jones and Waggoner, and those on the other side said bitter, angry things about him and about Ellen White. These were sometimes written, and are picked up by critics today who believe the lies that were said. Here is the account of a vision EGW had right after 1888, showing the attitude of these men.

"I listened to words uttered that ought to make every one of those ashamed who uttered them. Sarcastic remarks were passed from one to another, ridiculing their brethren A. T. Jones, E. J. Waggoner, and Willie C. White, and myself. My position and my work were freely commented upon by those who ought to have been engaged in the work of humbling their souls before God and setting their own hearts in order. There was seemingly a fascination in brooding over imaginary wrongs and expressions of imagination of their brethren and their work, which had no foundation in truth, and in doubting and speaking and writing bitter things as the result of skepticism and question and unbelief." 1888 Materials, p. 277.

Some of these men continued to hate Ellen White, Willie, and Jones and Waggoner. They, and later Kellogg, all of whom were reproved by the Spirit of Prophecy, yet did not receive the reproof, were bitter. They told lies, which are sometimes accepted today as truth.

Uriah Smith

Some people believe that Uriah Smith made many changes. Uriah Smith is different than Willie. Smith was not true to God at all time. He took the wrong side in the 1888 conflict, and had a very hard time really recovering his Christian experience. It is hard to say if he ever completely recovered.

It is probable that he would have loved to change many things in the Spirit of Prophecy, since he was often in conflict with Ellen White. But did he? Ellen White reproved him a number of times for different things, and that sometimes publicly. She could easily have stated that he was changing the wording in her writings. Yet she never did. She certainly was not afraid of him. Would she have stood by and allowed him to change her writings? That is ridiculous!

Some people claim that he changed a great deal in the *1888 Great Controversy*. That would be really strange, since he fought that book in underhanded ways for a long time. First he and the men who agreed with him put off printing it as long as they could, then he put out *Bible Readings* and persuaded all the canvassers to sell that instead of *Great Controversy*, which he prevented from getting out to the people. Ellen White had to complain strongly and publicly to get them to put it out. Now if he had written a lot of that book, would he have fought it, and kept it back?

Of the 1888 Great Controversy she wrote: "Great Controversy should be very widely circulated. It contains the story of the past, the present, and the future. In its outline of the closing scenes of this earth's history, it bears a powerful testimony in behalf of the truth. I am more anxious to see a wide circulation for this book than for any others I have written for in the Great Controversy the last message of warning to the world is given more distinctly than in any of my other books." Letter 281, 1905. (Colporteur Ministry, p. 127.)

The 1911 Great Controversy

There are some who say that the *1911 Great Controversy* cannot be trusted, because it was changed from the earlier editions. Here is what the prophet herself said about it:

--Sanitarium, Cal., July 25, 1911

Dear Brother [F. M.] Wilcox:

"A few days ago I received a copy of the new edition of the book *Great Controversy*, recently printed at Mountain View, and also a similar copy printed at Washington. *The book pleases me. I have spent many hours looking through its pages, and I see that the publishing houses have done good work.*

"The book *Great Controversy* I appreciate above silver or gold, and I greatly desire that it shall come before the people. While writing the manuscript of *Great Controversy*, I was often conscious of the presence of the angels of God. And many times the scenes about which I was writing were presented to me anew in visions of the night, so that they were fresh and vivid in my mind.

"Recently it was necessary for this book to be reset, because the electrotype plates were badly worn. It has cost me much to have this done, but I do not complain for whatever the cost may be, I regard this new edition with great satisfaction.

*"When I learned that *Great Controversy* must be reset, I determined that we would have everything closely examined, to see if the truths it contained were stated in the very best manner, to convince those not of our faith that the Lord had guided and sustained me in the writing of its pages.*

"As a result of the thorough examination by our most experienced workers, some changing in the wording has been proposed. These changes I have carefully examined, and approved. I am thankful that my life has been spared, and that I have strength and clearness of mind for this and other literary work." 3 SM 123-124.

The Conflict of the Ages Set

(Speaking of the Conflict of the Ages books) "Sister White is not the originator of these books. They contain the instruction that during her lifework God has been giving her. They contain the precious,

comforting light that God has graciously given His servant to be given to the world." Colporteur Ministry, p. 125.

She Did Not Believe Her Editors Were Changing Her Words

"I have a large amount of matter which I desire to have come before the people, but I have no one to consider these matters with me. If I could have Sister Peck and Willie, I could get off many important things much more perfectly. I ought to have someone to whom I can read every article before sending it to the mail. This always helps the writer for the writer, after reading the matter before one who is interested, often discerns more clearly what is wanted, and the slight changes that should be made. It is an important matter to keep in its simplicity all that matter which I write. *I am sure my two editors endeavor to preserve my words, not supplying their own in the place of them.*"--Letter 76, 1897, pp. 1, 2. (To George A. Irwin, July 22, 1897.) 8 MR 56.

The One EGW Says Manipulated Her Writings

"There are those who say, 'Someone manipulates her writings.' I acknowledge the charge. It is One who is mighty in counsel, One who presents before me the condition of things."--Letter 52, 1906.

The Ones Who Pick and Choose

The results of this teaching is that people feel they can pick and choose what is the words of the prophet, and what is not. This makes this deception very deadly. It destroys the ability of the Spirit of Prophecy to rescue the person who believes it from any error.

What did she say about picking and choosing which statement is true, and which is not?

"I have my work to do, to meet the misconceptions of those who suppose themselves able to say what is testimony from God and what is human production. If those who have done this work continue in this course, satanic agencies will choose for them." 3 SM 70.

The Bible Written the Same Way

In the introduction to the *Great Controversy*, it explains how inspiration worked in the Bible:

"The Bible points to God as its author yet it was written by human hands and in the varied style of its different books it presents the characteristics of the several writers."

This is an important point. If God gave the writers of the Bible the very words that they were to say, then why did they each write in their own style? God gave them the thoughts, the ideas, the visions, and they put the truths God had taught them into their own words.

"The truths revealed are all 'given by inspiration of God' (2 Tim. 3:16) yet they are expressed in the words of men. The Infinite One by his Holy Spirit has shed light into the minds and hearts of his servants. He has given dreams and visions, symbols and figures and those to whom the truth was thus revealed, have themselves embodied the thought in human language.

"The ten commandments were spoken by God himself, and were written by his own hand. They are of divine, and not human composition. But the Bible, with its God-given truths expressed in the language of men, presents a union of the divine and the human. Such a union existed in the nature of

Christ, who was the Son of God and the Son of man. Thus it is true of the Bible, as it was of Christ, that 'the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.' John 1:14.

"Written in different ages, by men who differed widely in rank and occupation, and in mental and spiritual endowments, the books of the Bible present a wide contrast in style, as well as a diversity in the nature of the subjects unfolded. Different forms of expression are employed by different writers often the same truth is more strikingly presented by one than by another. And as several writers present a subject under varied aspects and relations, there may appear, to the superficial, careless, or prejudiced reader, to be discrepancy or contradiction, where the thoughtful, reverent student, with clearer insight, discerns the underlying harmony.

"As presented through different individuals, the truth is brought out in its varied aspects. One writer is more strongly impressed with one phase of a subject he grasps those points that harmonize with his experience or with his power of perception and appreciation another seizes upon a different phase and each, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, presents what is most forcibly impressed upon his own mind a different aspect of the truth in each, but a perfect harmony through all. And the truths thus revealed unite to form a perfect whole, adapted to meet the wants of men in all the circumstances and experiences of life.

"God has been pleased to communicate his truth to the world by human agencies, and he himself, by his Holy Spirit, qualified men and enabled them to do this work. He guided the mind in the selection of what to speak and what to write. *The treasure was intrusted to earthen vessels, yet it is, none the less, from Heaven. The testimony is conveyed through the imperfect expression of human language yet it is the testimony of God* and the obedient, believing child of God beholds in it the glory of a divine power, full of grace and truth." GC, The Author's Preface, pp. c-d.

Changes in the Bible?

Those who promote this theory of changes in the Spirit of Prophecy, do so by showing that the words have been changed in the later books, from what they were in the earlier ones. They infer by this that someone has been "messing up" the writings of the Spirit of Prophecy. But the very same method, if used on the Bible, would show similar changes:

---Which temptation of Jesus came last, being carried to a pinnacle of the temple and challenged to jump off (Luke 4:9-13)?

Or being tempted by all the kingdoms of the world (Matt. 4:8-10)?

---What did the devil say to Jesus in this temptation?

"All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me"? Matt. 4:9. Or--

"All this power will I give thee and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me and to whomsoever I will I give it. If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine." Luke 4:6-7?

What really happened? Did someone change the words and the order of what was written? Or did the two authors tell the story in their own words?

---When Jesus healed Peter's wife's mother, how did He do it?

Did He take her by the hand and lift her up, and the fever left her, (Mark 1:31),

Or did He touch her hand and the fever left her (Matt. 8:15),

Or did He stand over her and rebuke the fever and it left her (Luke 4:39)?

---The next morning when He refused to go back to Capernaum, did He say:

"Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also for therefore came I forth (Mark 1:38)"

Or "I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also for therefore am I sent (Luke 4:43)"?

Did someone change the words? Or does the inspired writer state things in his own words--is it the meaning that is inspired?

---When Christ, in the synagogue, healed the man with the withered hand, did He say:

"Is it lawful to do good on the Sabbath days, or to do evil, to save life, or to kill?" Mark 3:4.

Or, "What man shall there be among you that shall have one sheep, and if it fall into a pit on the Sabbath day, will he not lay hold on it and lift it out? How much, then, is a man better than a sheep! Wherefore it is lawful to do well on the Sabbath days." Matt. 12:11-12.

Or, "I will ask you one thing: Is it lawful on the Sabbath days to do good, or to do evil? to save a life, or to destroy it?" Luke 6:9.

Who changed what? Or were part of His words left out? Who had the right to do that?

---In the sermon on the mount did Jesus say, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect (Matt. 5:48)" or

"Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful. (Luke 6:36)"?

The whole sermon on the mount sounds different, but if you read the whole thing, it is obvious it is the same sermon. Who changed the words? Whole sections are left out. Who had the right to do that? Did someone change the Bible? Did one of the authors change the words of Christ?

---Again in Mark 4 and Matt. 13 we have two accounts of the same sermon. In this case also, some of the words are different. In Matt. 13 we have a quote from Isaiah in the sermon, for instance, that is missing in Mark's account. Who could have changed the words of Jesus, or left out some of them?

---The morning after Jesus stilled the sea, he healed the Gadarene demoniac--or was it demoniacs? In Mark and Luke there are one of them. But Matt. says there were two. (See Mark 5:1-3, Luke 8:26-27, and compare with Matthew 8:28.)

Did someone change the Bible? Or did God allow the apostles to tell the story as they remembered it? Or was this one of those cases where a copyist "helped out" by making a small change? Does it matter in the least to our salvation if there was one demoniac or two?

Such things are all the way through the gospels. If some changes of wording in the Spirit of Prophecy is a sign that the later books are not trustworthy, then what are you going to do with the gospels? You might as well throw them out too.

Wouldn't it be a lot better to recognize that, as Ellen White says, human authors were given dreams and visions, and then allowed to express them in their own words? Sometimes they were just given experiences, and then told by the Holy Spirit to share their memories.

Was it possible for them to get a few details wrong? Of course it was. Can we trust the Holy Spirit to make sure the essentials are clear and accurate? Of course we can.

Was it even possible and proper for them to tell the whole thing under some circumstances, and leave out part under others? Was it proper for them to use some words at one time, and change the words at another time. If the words were their own, then why not?

Either we accept what Ellen White says about inspiration, or the Bible is a real problem too. Once we understand how inspiration works, then none of these things are problems. And all of the writings are inspired, and profitable. And anything that breaks down faith in them is causing harm to people .

The greatest danger of this theory is that once people believe it, it is almost impossible to help them. If you bring them a statement that contradicts the theory, they will simply say, "That must be one of the statements that they changed."

It is unfortunately true that the statements that we most need from the Spirit of Prophecy are the ones we disagree with! This is the way that it corrects our errors. And if we feel free to discard statements that we disagree with, assuming that they must have been changed, the Spirit of Prophecy can no longer correct our errors. It has lost its power to help us. We are in danger of being in the same condition as those in Battle Creek to whom Ellen White said:

"What voice will you acknowledge as the voice of God? What power has the Lord in reserve to correct your errors, and show you your course as it is? What power to work in the church? You have, by your own course, closed every avenue whereby the Lord would reach you. Will He raise one from the dead to speak to you?" 3SM 69-70.

"God will never remove every occasion for doubt. He gives sufficient evidence on which to base faith, and if this is not accepted, the mind is left in darkness." PP 432.

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